



Springer

WILEY

How You "Act Your Age" When You Watch TV

Author(s): Mary Chayko

Source: *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (Dec., 1993), pp. 573-593

Published by: Springer

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/684964>

Accessed: 14-10-2016 16:19 UTC

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://about.jstor.org/terms>



Springer, *Wiley* are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Sociological Forum*

How You “Act Your Age” When You Watch TV¹

Mary Chayko²

Americans watch a great deal of television. But the factors traditionally considered to determine or explain television usage—availability of free time, low income or class status, low education, emotional difficulties, and lack of structured social interactions—are not generalizable across the adult life span. The television viewing of people over the age of 30 has been understudied—a research bias that mirrors society’s youth orientation and essentially excludes older adults from this model. The author analyzed data collected in the National Opinion Research Center’s 1988 General Social Survey to assess the determinants of television viewing for adults of all ages. Results indicate that as persons perceive themselves to be in different stages of life and take on age-appropriate roles, tasks, and perspectives, they have distinctively different reasons for viewing. Second, the factors considered to determine TV viewing in the “traditional” model fit the pattern of younger adults’ viewing best while predicting the behavior of the elderly least. The author proposes an interpretation of the findings, and discusses future research avenues including the development of age-sensitive models and theories.

KEY WORDS: television; mass media; life stages; life course; age stratum identification; culture; cognitive sociology; community.

INTRODUCTION

Television viewing habits vary by age. Both the young and the old tend to watch more television than persons in the middle-age strata, a finding consistent over almost two decades (Bower, 1973; Danowski, 1975; Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Although researchers have detailed the overall heavy use of television by modern individuals (Schramm

¹An earlier version of this article was presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society in April 1992.

²Department of Sociology, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903.

and Porter, 1982:169–252, for a summary of findings; also Finn and Gorr, 1978; Nordlund, 1978; Gans, 1980), there has been little more than speculation on the different factors influencing television viewing for people of different ages. Factors that have traditionally been seen as determinants of heavy television use—availability of free time, low income or class status, low education, emotional difficulties, and lack of structured social interactions—are assumed to be more or less unilaterally applicable across ages and age groupings (Kubey and Csikszentmihalyi, 1990:168–169, review this literature; see also Bower, 1985, and Comstock *et al.*, 1978). This article explores the possibility that television viewing may be explained by a different configuration of factors for people of different ages, using a sample of 967 adults questioned on their television viewing and lifestyle habits in the National Opinion Research Center's 1988 General Social Survey.

To a large degree, age norms anchor and structure our lives (e.g., Clausen, 1986:6–7; Hagestad and Neugarten, 1985; Riley, 1985; Zuckerman and Merton, 1972). Every age carries with it expectations of certain roles that should be performed and statuses that should be attained if one is to be considered (by his or herself *and* others) to be “on time” (Chudacoff, 1989; Foner, 1986:6). By identifying with others in age-related “life-stages,” individuals make decisions about what they should be feeling and doing (getting married, building a career, retiring) based on what they perceive others in their “stage” to be doing (Miller *et al.*, 1980; Gurin *et al.*, 1980; Riley, 1985:376; Karp, 1988; Ward, 1977; Spandel and Hiscox, 1988:12–14). Association with a life stage, then, can be an important organizing perspective for individuals; it can operate as a reference group for persons seeking to make life decisions “appropriately” (see Shibutani, 1955; Miller *et al.*, 1980; Stryker, 1972). In this context, however, the term “life stage” does not have a developmental meaning (I refer to “life stage” as persons identify with age peers at a given point in time only). Individuals in an age stratum at any point in time (a birth cohort) have a unique historical background, career orientations and opportunities, and a *zeitgeist* that they share, relate to, and carry throughout their life course (see Ryder, 1965; Mannheim, 1952). Simultaneously, though, the emphasis here is that they also *perceive themselves to be in a particular stage of life*, a perception that can and does inform their tasks, behaviors, and perspectives. Certainly, differences among cohorts can be due to a variety of factors, and in a cross-sectional study such as this specific patterns cannot be assumed to continue in the future. Nevertheless, the cross-sectional data do provide an excellent snapshot of society's current configuration of cohorts, and the way in which people organize their social lives—in this

case, their television viewing—in conjunction with these all-important reference groups.

Given their different tasks, behaviors, and perspectives, it seems likely that people in different life stages will have very different reasons for watching television. For example, old people, who must often cope with the transformation and loss of familiar roles (such as retirement, loss of intimates through death or moving away, a diminishment in one's health, shifts in the nature of various relationships), may enjoy the relative stability and ease with which they can "connect" with others through television viewing, while young people may find television mainly a source of knowledge about "what's hip," which is essential to the playing out of their very different roles. Persons in the middle-age strata, more concerned with building careers and rearing children, may watch television primarily to relax or even to provide a shared family experience. The factors that influence television viewing, then, most likely vary across the life span, but any such differences have thus far gone unstudied and uninterpreted. Here, two specific hypotheses are presented.

In applying a "traditional" model of television viewing to subjects in five age-related life stages, I attempt to determine the relative strength of the model in each stage, expecting, first, that *adults in different age strata will have distinctly different patterns of television use*. Second, I hypothesize that the *traditional model of TV use will predict the reasons for younger persons' television use best, and older persons' least*. Much research has resulted in a model of television viewing that emphasizes the experience of younger adults rather than older ones. This perspective can perpetuate, whether intentionally or unintentionally, a bias against older people (see, e.g., Brown *et al.*, 1990; Downs, 1990; Larson *et al.*, 1989; Greenfield and Beagles-Roos, 1988; Austin *et al.*, 1990; Gans, 1980; Atkin, 1976; Woelfel, 1976; Marks and Thompson, 1991; Townsend, 1990). Although researchers are increasingly correcting for this bias by addressing variations across the adult life span in such areas as income loss (see, e.g., Shaver, 1991; Lorence, 1985; Burkhauser and Duncan, 1989), work patterns (Henretta, 1992; Coltrane and Ishii-Kuntz, 1992), residential change (Clarke and Davies, 1990), divorce (White and Booth, 1991; South and Spitze, 1986) deviance (Sampson and Laub, 1990; Steffensmeir *et al.*, 1992) and bereavement (Perkins and Harris, 1990; Smith and Zick, 1986), much less has been done on cultural choices among older people (as Townsend, 1991, Elder, 1985:23–27, and Atkin, 1976, also argue). This study seeks to add to this body of "correctional" knowledge by exploring the way in which our most popular and, arguably, influential "pop culture" activity, watching television, is done by adults of all ages.

A Note on Life Stages

Every society is age graded, or can be divided at least roughly into a system of age strata (Riley, 1985; Chudacoff, 1989; Hendricks & Hendricks, 1986). As persons move through their individual life courses, they do so in a particular sociohistorical context, and come to display capacities, motivations, performance patterns, and ways of thinking similar to others who are similarly age located (Riley, 1978; Clausen, 1986; Ryder, 1965; Elder, 1985). They are limited to “a specific range of potential experience” and thus share “a certain characteristic mode of thought and experience” (Mannheim, 1952:291). In other words, persons at the same stage of the life course have much in common with one another that cannot be shared or understood by persons in different stages. Differences across life stages can be due to many factors, including historical change, career stage differences, various cohort experiences, etc., which cannot be easily disentangled, especially in cross-sectional research. But findings of differences and commonalities can always inform our search for the ways that people behave as they identify with others in their particular unique birth cohort.

To be sure, there are problems in separating “cohorts” and delineating life stages: the socially constructed boundaries that would separate them are vague, always shifting, and can be too easily reified (as can the stages themselves). Persons can begin to display adolescent, or middle aged, or any age-typical behavior simply because it has become socially expected at a certain stage. But the seriousness and ritual with which many societies mark passages across these boundaries attests to the social significance of age strata and their transition points (see Wilson, 1951, Riley, 1985:376, Matras, 1990:117–122, Featherman *et al.*, 1984, and especially, Van Genneep 1980/1960).

Furthermore, age stratum identification and consciousness is generally quite strong. For persons 60 years or older, identification with an age group has been found to be more pronounced than sex identification, and approximately equal to class and race identification (Gurin *et al.* 1980). Young people, as well, have tended to demonstrate strong age peer identities (Chudacoff, 1989:102–108). Such identification can reinforce the commonalities of persons sharing a life stage, giving age peers a potentially strong sense of themselves as a grouping, a social entity. Thus, their common ways of thinking and behaving may be quite pronounced.

If persons who share life stages are, indeed, a socially significant category of persons, they will, at the minimum, have an identity or sense of themselves as members, and significant commonalities born of shared experiences and knowledge (Mannheim, 1952:288–292; Chayko, 1991; Cerulo, Ruane and Chayko, 1992). Empirical investigation—such as that conducted

here on cultural choices—is required to uncover the nature of these commonalities. First, however, the boundaries that will separate the life stages in this (or any) study must be drawn.

There is considerable public consensus (in the United States) over time as to the identification of major "phases" of adulthood, each associated with changes in family and work roles (see Neugarten and Peterson, 1957; Shanas, 1962; Cameron, 1969; Drevenstedt, 1976; Fry, 1976; Peterson, 1957; Hagestad and Neugarten, 1985:39). Five specific stages, each reflecting salient life tasks commonly considered "age normative," can be identified (Spandel and Hiscox, 1988:12–14). In the "Young" stage, individuals aged 18–24 begin to enter the adult world, often through a rite of passage such as marriage or a first job. In the "Building" stage, persons aged 25–35 generally attempt to "build" careers and families. In the "Settling" stage, ages 35–49, they tend to try to "settle into" lifestyles that are meaningful to them. The "Established" stage, ages 50–64, represents the beginning of life's "second half," in which one is expected to be fairly "settled" in the workplace, and children begin to leave the nest, entering their own "building" stage, perhaps with the assistance of the parents. Finally, in the "Elderly" stage, encompassing ages 65 plus, retirement and the passing away of peers are most often experienced (on the further usefulness of approximating life stages such as these, see Clausen, 1986:16–31; Hagestad and Neugarten, 1985; Kohli, 1986; Matras, 1990:104–125; Hendricks and Hendricks, 1986:221–223). Of course, in the "real world" (one that is not "frozen" in time and space for a cross-sectional study), people move through stages of life and encounter unique experiences as they do—the young, for example, will one day become builders, and eventually elderly, but will respond to their new tasks in their own way, very likely with more education and a different sense of their roles and careers than prior cohorts had. In other words, people of different ages will initiate social change in very different ways (Ryder, 1965; Elder, 1985:25–27).

This conceptualization, then, stands as a means of approximating age-related groupings *as we tend to identify with them, cognitively, as reference groups*. These are social groupings; it does not matter that some individuals in each group might not behave "accordingly" or want to place themselves within it, but that *society* itself tends to recognize such boundaries and that there is widespread adherence to age-related norms. We are extremely conscious of what we "should" and "should not" be doing at different points in the life course based on what we see others doing and our perceptions of what they, and we ourselves, should be doing (Chudacoff, 1989). At this point in time, for example, individuals over the age of 65 are not expected to—and generally do not expect themselves to be—in the "building a career" mode; neither are the young expected to be established in careers,

nor the middle-aged to retire (although these age-normative behaviors are, again, highly subject to sociohistorical change). As we tend to refer to current age norms in evaluating “how we’re doing” *vis-à-vis* others in our age stratum and our society (i.e., whether we’re “on” or “off” time), these currently delineated stages help us understand something of what it means to be old or young (or somewhere in between) at a given place and time, and how persons organize their lives in terms of these meanings.

I use these life stage delineations to test two specific hypotheses. First, those factors of television watching traditionally considered to determine our heavy societal use of the medium—availability of free time, low income or class status, low education, emotional difficulties, and lack of structured interactions—explain the behavior of young persons better than those in any other life stage, and explains the behavior of the elderly least well. Second, the relative importance of these factors will wax and wane across the five life stages, as different tasks, concerns, and mind-sets serve to determine, in part, members’ behavior.

METHODS

Data

The data are from the National Opinion Research Center’s 1988 General Social Survey, with the target population the total noninstitutionalized English-speaking population, aged 18 and older, in the continental United States. Subjects were asked a battery of demographic, opinion, and lifestyle questions. The sample is restricted to include only subjects who gave valid (nonmissing) data on each variable measured here, which resulted in a sample size of 967. (See appendix for means and standard deviations of the variables, indicating the pertinent characteristics of the sample.)

Measurement of Variables

The dependent variable is *hour of television viewed per day*, or *TV hours*. Subjects estimated the number of hours of television they watched on an average day. Such a report is limited as to its explanatory usefulness; for example, we do not know which kinds of programs were watched, nor how intensively they were viewed. As research has suggested that even passive “background” viewing can psychologically “engage” the viewer, and that persons often become unknowingly and unintentionally “engaged” in television offerings, a raw, self-reported approximation of amount of time

spent viewing can suffice for purposes of this analysis (see Kubey and Csikszentmihalyi, 1990:220; Gans, 1980:56–57; Bargh, 1988; Singer, 1980; McLuhan, 1964; Merton, 1946; Beniger, 1987; Nordlund, 1978; Caughey, 1984:31–76; Meyrowitz, 1985; Wenner and Gantz, 1989:243; Intintoli, 1984:181–225; Schwartz, 1981:55–65; Goffman, 1961, 1974; Chayko, 1991; Cerulo *et al.*, 1992).

The main independent variable is *life stage*, or age-related life stage at the time of measurement, 1988. Respondents were categorized by age. Other independent variables were then selected to correspond as closely as possible to each factor of television use considered in the traditional model to be a determinant of heavy television viewing, and three demographic control variables were added.

Availability of free time or time available to watch television, assumed to be positively correlated with heavy viewing, is approximated with information obtained by the *work status* variable. In one category were collapsed all those who reported that they do not work outside the home, are retired, or attending school; they were considered "unwaged." All such individuals are considered to have much more opportunity to watch television than those in the other two categories, those who work part time or full time. I include these as a set of dummy variables, with the unwaged the reference group.

Subjective social class, usually found to be inversely related to television use, is determined through self-reports of subjective class status. Although not necessarily a good objective measure of social class, the use of self-reports is adequate if not preferred in a study of cognitive awareness of group membership such as this. Those subjects who considered themselves in either the lower or working classes were coded "lower class," those who reported membership in the middle class were coded "middle class," and those who considered themselves upper class coded "upper class." To closely examine differences among the groups, these are also included as a set of dummy variables, with lower class as the reference group.

Education, also usually found to be inversely related to television use, is given as a metric measure of number of years of schooling completed, which can range from 0 to 20 or more.

Emotional difficulties, expected to contribute to television viewing in the traditional model, are approximated here as the subject's overall self-reported state of *happiness*. Respondents were asked whether their general state of happiness was "very happy," "pretty happy," or "not too happy," and results were coded and included on an interval scale ranging from 1 (denoting very happy) to 3 (indicating *not too happy*). Obviously, this is a subjective and somewhat primitive approximation of a variable as complex as emotional state, and so is included here as a best effort to address this

issue within the limitations of these data rather than as a fully explanatory component of the model. Interpretations of this variable should be tentative and speculative. One might also attempt to infer emotional state from the social isolation variables to be described next, but, again, such a link or inference should only be made with caution.

Lack of structured interactions is predicted in the traditional model to be associated with heavy television use. The extent of an individual's isolation is approximated with a set of three *social isolation* variables that attempt to measure a person's distance from those who are most likely to provide social support—relatives, neighbors, and friends (Roberto and Scott, 1986:103). Subjects were asked "How often do you spend a social evening with _____ (relatives, neighbors, friends)?" Respondents could reply "almost daily" (coded 1), "several times a week" (2), "several times a month" (3), "once a month" (4), "several times a year" (5), "once a year" (6), or "never" (7). Responses were separately compiled for each of the three types of isolation, which I refer to as the variables *isolation from relatives*, *isolation from neighbors*, and *isolation from friends*.³

I also include three demographic variables as controls. *Sex* is coded 0 for female, 1 for male. *Race* is coded 1 for whites and 0 for blacks or other. The sample is largely white and differences among other racial groups were too small to be statistically significant. *Marital status* is also included as a dichotomous variable. Those subjects unmarried for any reason are coded 0, while married subjects are coded 1.

Procedures

I employ standard multiple regression techniques, estimating separate equations for all five life stages. The overall R^2 for a model of television viewing using the same variables included here except for life stage was .144, and the R^2 of a model that included life stage but no interactions with other variables was .151, a nonsignificant increase (F observed of 2.03 does not exceed F critical of 3.85 at .05 or .01 level). The overall R^2 for a model of TV viewing that included the interaction of life stage with all other variables is .244, a significant increase (F observed of 7.48 does exceed F critical of 3.04 at .01 level). I thus present separate equations by life stage, and examine the interaction between life stage and each of the

³Though all three measures seem to be good indicators of an individual's structured social interactions, they must be considered separately and did not meet the criteria for inclusion on a single scale, as indicated by factor analysis. All three variables loaded on one factor, but only one did so significantly; unrotated factor loadings (rotation was not possible with one factor) were .501 for neighbors, .383 for friends, and .315 for relatives.

other variables in influencing time spent viewing television. I examine the patterns of usage that are depicted by the different regression equations, paying special attention to the proportion of the variance explained by the traditional model in each life stage. The strength of the traditional model to explain and predict television use in each stage can thus be assessed, and potential biases of the model by age uncovered.

DETERMINANTS OF TELEVISION USE BY LIFE STAGE

In this section I examine the distribution of data in each life stage, the relative strength of the traditional model to explain television viewing across life stages, and the differential effects of variables in the traditional model on the television viewing of individuals in each stage of life. Recall that these findings are not appropriate for longitudinal interpretation, as the term "life stage" carries no developmental connotation here.

Distribution of Variables by Life Stage

Table I presents means and standard deviations for the sample by life stage.

As prior research predicts, the elderly do, indeed, watch the most television (with a mean of 4.05 hours a day), while the young, as expected, watch the next most (3.79 hours), followed by the building and established stages (each with 3.01 hours), and last (2.56 hours per day of viewing), those persons busily settling their lives. All these mean hours of television viewing by life stage fall comfortably within a single standard deviation (2.43) from the grand mean (3.17 hours).

As we also might expect, the elderly life stage has the highest concentration of females, while in other groups the proportion is closer to "50-50." Older persons are also, predictably, the least-educated group; the relatively low figure for the young can be explained by the fact that many in this group have not yet finished their schooling (this group is expected to, eventually, receive more education than any cohort that preceded them). The settling and established group are, as expected, the most likely to be married (as 62.5% and 64.9% are, respectively), while the young (29.5%) are least likely. The elderly are most likely to be unwaged (as are 90% of them—retired or not employed, probably), while the young who may have yet to enter the work force are second most likely to be unwaged (at 44.7%), and as can be expected, those who are focused on settling are least likely to be unwaged and overwhelmingly most likely to be employed full

Table I. Means and Standard Deviations for Variables by Life Stage^a

| | Young (18–24) | Builders (25–34) | Settlers (35–49) | Established (50–64) | Elderly (65+) |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Means | | | | | |
| Sex (1 = male) | .491 | .438 | .484 | .442 | .375 |
| Race (1 = white) | .777 | .795 | .870 | .824 | .890 |
| Education | 12.38 | 13.50 | 13.56 | 12.19 | 10.43 |
| Marital status (1 = married) | .295 | .496 | .625 | .649 | .458 |
| Subjective social class | | | | | |
| Lower | .571 | .558 | .467 | .487 | .390 |
| Middle | .393 | .442 | .502 | .461 | .589 |
| Upper | .036 | .000 | .022 | .052 | .021 |
| Work status | | | | | |
| Unwaged | .447 | .188 | .161 | .383 | .901 |
| Part time | .205 | .134 | .109 | .123 | .047 |
| Full time | .348 | .678 | .730 | .494 | .052 |
| Social isolation | | | | | |
| From relatives | 2.92 | 3.17 | 3.67 | 3.78 | 3.64 |
| From neighbors | 3.55 | 4.31 | 4.73 | 4.92 | 4.40 |
| From friends | 3.20 | 3.50 | 3.36 | 4.42 | 4.63 |
| Happiness (1 = very happy) | 1.76 | 1.89 | 1.85 | 1.86 | 1.86 |
| TV hours viewed | 3.79 | 3.01 | 2.56 | 3.01 | 4.05 |
| Standard deviations | | | | | |
| Sex | .502 | .497 | .501 | .498 | .485 |
| Race | 4.18 | .405 | .337 | .364 | .313 |
| Education | 1.91 | 2.22 | 2.94 | 3.32 | 3.58 |
| Marital status | .460 | .501 | .485 | .478 | .500 |
| Subjective social class | | | | | |
| Lower | .497 | .498 | .500 | .501 | .489 |
| Middle | .491 | .498 | .501 | .500 | .493 |
| Upper | .186 | .000 | .175 | .223 | .143 |
| Work status | | | | | |
| Unwaged | .499 | .392 | .369 | .488 | .299 |
| Part time | .406 | .341 | .312 | .330 | .212 |
| Full time | .478 | .468 | .445 | .502 | .223 |
| Social isolation | | | | | |
| From relatives | 1.61 | 1.59 | 1.61 | 1.63 | 1.83 |
| From neighbors | 2.03 | 2.04 | 1.90 | 1.94 | 2.14 |
| From friends | 1.60 | 1.37 | 1.49 | 1.47 | 1.72 |
| Happiness | .589 | 1.02 | 1.04 | 1.02 | .969 |
| TV hours viewed | 3.07 | 2.00 | 2.13 | 1.97 | 2.89 |
| <i>N</i> (sample size) | 112 | 224 | 285 | 154 | 192 |

^aSource: 1988 General Social Survey.

time (at only 16.1% unwaged). Thus, the distribution of data in these categories generally mirrors expectations, and the life stages presented here seem to generally reflect societal age demographics, thus further justifying the breakdown of stages.

It is also interesting to note that, overall, people in most groups are more physically isolated from their neighbors than from relatives and friends with the exception of the elderly. The elderly see friends least of all, less than once a month on average ($\bar{X} = 4.63$ on the 7-point scale of social isolation described in the previous section, compared to 4.40 for neighbors; recall that higher numbers equal greater social isolation), while people in other life stages see friends much more often than neighbors. And all life stages see relatives most of all, the young most often (the mean of 2.92 suggests they see relatives approximately several times a month on the average), and the established group least of all ($\bar{X} = 3.78$, or a little more than once a month).

Relative Strength of the Traditional Model Among Life Stages

Table II presents unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients by life stage and the R^2 for each life stage.

The pattern of significant effects among age groups, and the R^2 s in Table II, reveal the relative biases of the traditional model. The four variables found to predict viewing in the young, and the high proportion of the variance explained by these factors ($R^2 = .414$), show, as hypothesized, that the traditional model fits the experience of this group the best by far. Collectively, these variables explain the television viewing of the young far better than any other grouping. With three variables demonstrating significance and an R^2 of .270, the model fits the behavior of the builders less well. The settlers, who watch the least television overall, have their viewing habits predicted by four variables in this model, but their low R^2 of .133 indicates a great deal of variability in their overall pattern of viewing. The established have their habits consistently predicted only by work status; their R^2 of .205 represents a lack of goodness of fit of the traditional model to their experience as well. However, as expected, the traditional model explains the viewing experience of the elderly least of all; given their high level of viewing, their R^2 of .076 and that only one variable is found to significantly predict viewing (the education variable) shows the inability of this model to depict the behavior of the elderly. The contrast in R^2 with the young, who watch similarly high amounts of television, is especially dramatic. Clearly, the extensive use of television by the elderly is influenced by other factors. Factors accounting for the elderly's pattern of use, while distinctly different from

Table II. Regression Coefficients for a Model of Television Viewing, by Life Stage^a

| Independent variables | Dependent variable—TV hours viewed | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| | Young (18–24) | Builders (25–34) | Settlers (35–49) | Established (50–64) | Elderly (65+) |
| Unstandardized | | | | | |
| Sex (1 = male) | -.907 | .060 | .156 | .227 | .291 |
| Race (1 = white) | -2.00 ^b | -1.23 ^b | -.971 ^b | -.214 | .610 |
| Education | -.376 ^b | -.211 ^b | -.073 | -.010 | -.137 ^b |
| Marital status (1 = married) | .946 | .001 | .642 ^b | -.389 | -.862 |
| Subjective social class^c | | | | | |
| Middle | -.560 | -.198 | .177 | -.670 | .281 |
| Upper | -1.94 | .000 | -.492 | -1.08 | -.458 |
| Work status^c | | | | | |
| Part time | -1.22 | -.773 | -.984 ^b | -.498 | -.127 |
| Full time | -1.15 ^b | -1.20 ^b | -1.13 ^b | -1.56 ^b | .870 |
| Social isolation from | | | | | |
| Relatives | -.299 | -.012 | .146 | .035 | -.118 |
| Neighbors | .205 | .030 | .128 | -.126 | -.043 |
| Friends | -.530 ^b | .171 | -.047 | -.129 | .095 |
| Happiness (1 = very happy) | .333 | .107 | .258 ^b | .164 | .188 |
| Intercept | 12.36 ^b | 6.91 ^b | 3.37 ^b | 5.43 ^b | 4.85 ^b |
| R ² | .414 | .270 | .133 | .205 | .076 |
| Standardized^d | | | | | |
| Sex | -.048 | .015 | .037 | .057 | .048 |
| Race | -.272 ^b | -.251 ^b | -.154 ^b | -.040 | .066 |
| Education | -.234 ^b | -.239 ^b | -.101 | -.017 | -.170 |
| Marital status | .141 | .000 | .146 ^b | -.095 | -.149 |
| Isolation/relatives | -.177 | -.009 | .110 | .029 | -.075 |
| Isolation/neighbors | .136 | .033 | .115 | -.125 | -.032 |
| Isolation/friends | -.276 | .118 | -.033 | -.097 | .057 |
| Happines | .064 | .055 | .127 ^b | .085 | .063 |

^aSource: 1988 General Social Survey.

^bCoefficient significant, $p < .05$

^cOmitted categories for dummy variables are lower class and unwaged.

^dSince standardized coefficients for dummy variables with greater than two groups lack substantive interest, they are not included in the table.

those explaining the TV viewing of persons in the young (and every other) life stage, may be most difficult to identify and thus to understand.

Differences in Effects of Variables by Life Stage

Table II also reveals that each variable has a different effect in each life stage, supporting the contention that age must be considered in deter-

mining reasons for television viewing. Subjective social class, for example, has a different effect on viewing in each life stage, though no differences are significant. Thus the variable may not explain television viewing very well at all. Work status, in contrast, has an effect on viewing in all life stages except the elderly. Full-time workers tend to view significantly less television than the unwaged in each of the four younger stages, but in the elderly stage, there is no significant difference. Yet the elderly are not always "different from the others." Education has the predicted significant negative effect on television viewing in the young, building, and elderly stages. Its effect is in the same direction, but nonsignificant, in the other two stages. Thus, we see that these variables do not explain viewing unilaterally; there is much difference in their magnitudes and levels of significance across life stages.

The effects of social isolation and emotional state on viewing are even less likely to unilaterally explain television viewing in across stages. Though all findings on isolation from relatives and neighbors are nonsignificant, the scattering of positive and negative signs indicate that in each life stage there is a different tendency to watch television when isolated from relatives and neighbors; effects are variously patterned, though often nonsignificant. In the isolation from friends variable we see the only finding of clear significance in this block of variables; the young are much *less* likely to watch television when they are isolated and thus watch more TV the *more* they see friends, a trend also noted, though not at a level of significance, among settlers and the established. It is quite likely, then, that the young watch TV *with* their friends as a social activity, while there is no indication of such a pattern among, say, the builders.

Regarding emotional state or happiness, all stages seemed to view slightly more television with increased unhappiness; only among settlers, however, was this finding significant ($b = .258$). And interestingly, two of the control variables showed an effect on television viewing in at least one life stage. Race is an unexpected determinant of viewing in the three youngest stages; blacks and other racial groups watch on the average 2 hours more television a day than whites in the young stage, a gap that is progressively reduced with each life stage, until the finding becomes nonsignificant in the two oldest stages and even changes direction in the last (i.e., the white elderly in this sample watch more TV than other racial groups, though, again, this finding is not significant). And marital status is a good predictor of television viewing among the settlers. Married settlers are much more likely to watch TV than the married established and elderly, who are slightly (albeit nonsignificantly) less likely to watch. Again, we get a strong sense of the different ways that people are viewing television: settlers probably watch TV *with* their spouses or families.

In sum, the overall determinants of viewing are quite obviously different in each life stage. Variables that explain television use in one category have no effect in others. While marital status is a good indicator of viewing habits in the settled stage, it is of little use in the building stage, where it is more helpful to know an individual's level of education. Each stage, then, has distinct determinants of use which are quite different from each other stage.

DISCUSSION

We have seen that persons in different stages of life do tend to behave differently where television viewing is concerned. The so-called traditional factors said to determine television usage have only limited usefulness in explaining the reasons why age-related social groups watch television. In explaining best why the young view, and explaining very little about the elderly, it is, implicitly, a youth-oriented model.

Currently, the young have the most easily discernible determinants of viewing. Yet distinctly different patterns emerge among adults of all ages. Young people who are nonwhite, less educated, unwaged, and strongly connected to friends watch more television than their counterparts on each of these variables. Builders tend to watch television more if nonwhite, less educated, and unwaged. Settlers, who watch the least TV, are most likely to do so when nonwhite, unwaged, married, and unhappy. Those in the established stage of life watch more television when unwaged than when working full time; otherwise, their pattern is difficult to predict. And a low level of education is the only predictor for the elderly. Given their heavy use of the medium, the failure of the model to explain the viewing of our elderly is most troubling. If not for any of these reasons, then, why do the elderly currently watch so much television?

To address this complex issue, recall that persons seek to cognitively identify with age peers as they make their way through the life cycle. Given that such identification is an important organizing tool, serving as a reference group, for individuals seeking to make appropriate choices and to reach their goals, it certainly seems possible that television helps shape—and reflect—the orientations and behaviors of persons in different age strata who identify with characters and situations depicted in television shows. For example, it is likely that builders and settlers identify with the characters and situations in the television show *thirtysomething* to a greater extent than do the young, the established, and the elderly. As most television programs are oriented toward the lifestyle and seek an audience constituted of the three younger age strata delineated here (Atkin, 1976;

Townsend, 1990), older people are noticeably underrepresented in television programs, and are considered by programmers and marketers a less "desirable" audience. Thus, their cognitive orientations and behaviors—their ways of living—are not likely reflected by television to the extent that the younger strata's are.

This perspective may help us understand both the overall low level of viewing reported by persons in the established stage, and some of the "other" reasons why people in the younger age strata watch so much television (that is, the proportion of the variance unexplained by the traditional factors measured in this study). Yet it still does not explain the very high level of viewing of the elderly. It seems that the elderly watch TV neither primarily for purposes of cognitive identification nor for any of the more traditional factors considered here. This points out real limitations in current models of media use; obviously, there is still much more to be discovered about television viewing patterns *and* about the elderly, in general.

Let me propose a direction for future research that may help us uncover some of these answers. Television, like other facilitators of nonphysical co-presence (such as computer bulletin boards or radio talk shows) can give us a sense of community with others (what I call "electronic community"; see Chayko, 1991). It can be a way of mentally "connecting" to others that can give individuals a sense of common identity, shared experiences, and even social bonding with others (on seemingly "intimate" social relations with others via mass media, see also Horton and Wohl, 1956; Perse and Rubin, 1989; Caughey, 1984:31–76; Meyrowitz, 1985:118–124; Chayko, 1993; Cerulo *et al.*, 1992). As we become interested and involved participants in media-generated social worlds, we may begin to tacitly know and feel that we are not "alone," nor "cut off" from our surroundings; we are spatially and temporally "together" with others whom we feel we know. Having facilitated such "connectedness," at least in some cases, television can help individuals feel more "plugged into" the world around them, and can satisfy, at least in part, the need to be with others.

For the elderly, this can be a most valuable, even vital, service. Social relations remain important to old people, but they may be in many ways physically cut off from others—they tend to make less money, have more sensory or health losses, and have more difficulty in obtaining needed transportation than younger people (Oyer and Oyer, 1976:10–13; Kahn, 1979; Wan, 1982; Field and Minkler, 1988). Furthermore, and perhaps even more significantly, they can feel *mentally* cut off from the youth-oriented societal mainstream. In Western society, the young "belong" to the mainstream; the elderly do not. Rather, they are generally devalued and disempowered in our society, especially relative to their youth and to those members of younger strata who currently wield more power (Clausen, 1986:175; see also

Matras, 1990:182–185; Oyer and Oyer, 1976:10–11). It makes sense, then, that people in this situation might find the sense of community and connectedness that can be derived in television use inordinately satisfying and desirable. Television excludes virtually no one from its potential audience. Perhaps the elderly gravitate toward television viewing to help them feel a certain type of belonging and inclusion that the “real world” denies them.

Of course, most of us seek connectedness with others, especially in a busy, highly mobile society where individualism and isolation may sometimes seem to undermine it. It seems likely that people in all life stages may seek this sense of community in television use. If so, this could help account for much of the variance in television viewing in every life stage that remained unexplained by the traditional model. And if modern people do seek connectedness and community and can derive it in media use, perhaps the elderly simply *need it more*, given their exclusion from the societal mainstream.

Such a “sense of community” would be admittedly difficult to measure and document. But future research would benefit from the incorporation of such subtle types of data into models of television use and other cultural activities. A heightened sensitivity to the *meaning* of the viewing experience for persons—such as the one I have just suggested—may help us develop the understandings that our complex modern social situations require. Our goal must be richer, more fully explanatory theories of social behavior.

I have suggested both that persons in different stages of life watch television for different reasons, and that the reasons of the young are more easily quantified than are others'. Given the cross-sectional data presented here, however, we must be certain to recognize the effect of birth cohorts. As different individuals with different cohort experiences move through the life course in the future, their media use will not necessarily parallel that found in this study. As the builders become settlers and, eventually, reach old age, for example, they may not experience the same societal bias against the elderly (due to the sheer numbers and influence of those in this cohort) and thus they may not have the disproportionate need to experience community in television use that I postulate today's elderly to have. Events will continue to shape the experiences of those in each stratum (and those to follow), who will in turn influence and change future events. And as I have mentioned, the boundaries that conceptually separate the life stages delineated here are highly fluid and susceptible to change. Thus, these configurations and the specific findings they elicit will change over time.

It is likely, however, that the social situations of the young, the builders, the settlers, the established, and the elderly will remain different from one another in important ways, and will thus result in different determinants of television and media use and other cultural and lifestyle choices.

But it is unlikely that these future differences, and thus the operative variables to study, will parallel the types of differences found here. Therefore we need much more research to construct models of adult behavior and outcomes that will be sensitive to the changing nature of social life at each age, in each era. We must also strive for more complete and more explanatory models (with a better "goodness of fit") for people of all ages. And in particular, more serious attention needs to be paid to cultural and lifestyle choices—even, or perhaps especially, "pop" cultural activities such as television viewing that are integral, unavoidable, and increasingly indispensable to modern everyday life.

This study serves as a caution against disregarding age differences when trying to explain and understand any such social behaviors. It also calls for the development of behavioral models that take persons' subtle, hidden feelings and needs—their cognitive identification with one another, their desire for connectedness and community—into account when attempting to understand their behavior. We have much to learn, in particular,

Appendix. Means and Standard Deviations for Variables^a

| | Mean | Standard deviation |
|------------------------------|-------|--------------------|
| Dependent variable | | |
| TV hours viewed | 3.17 | 2.43 |
| Independent variables | | |
| Sex (1 = male) | .446 | .497 |
| Race (1 = white) | .840 | .365 |
| Education | 12.57 | 3.18 |
| Marital status (1 = married) | .527 | .500 |
| Subjective social class | | |
| Lower | .488 | .477 |
| Middle | .486 | .500 |
| Upper | .025 | .157 |
| Work status | | |
| Unwaged | .382 | .487 |
| Part time | .116 | .320 |
| Full time | .502 | .500 |
| Happiness (1 = very happy) | 1.85 | .976 |
| Life stage | | |
| Young (18–24) | .116 | .320 |
| Builders (25–34) | .232 | .422 |
| Settlers (35–49) | .295 | .456 |
| Established (50–64) | .160 | .366 |
| Elderly (65+) | .197 | .399 |
| <i>N</i> (sample size) | 967 | |

^aSource: 1988 General Social Survey.

about the habits and needs of the elderly. This paper provides one method by which age-sensitive models of social lifestyles can be developed and interpreted, and points out the need for much more research geared toward greater understanding of these issues. Without such future research, a youth-oriented bias will most likely continue to pervade our society and obscure our efforts to learn how people of all ages and experiences live and work and play.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful for the assistance and suggestions given by J. R. Bjerklie, Glen Elder, Anne Foner, and Patricia Roos.

REFERENCES

- Atkin, Charles K.**
1975 "Mass media and the aging." In Herbert J. Oyer and E. Jane Oyer (eds.), *Aging and Communication*: 99-118. Baltimore, MD: University Park Press.
- Austin, Erica Weintraub, Donald F. Roberts, and Clifford I. Nass**
1990 "Influences of family communication on children's television-interpretation processes." *Communication Research* 17:545-564.
- Bargh, John A.**
1988 "Automatic information processing: Implications for communication and affect." In Lewis Donohew, Howard E. Sypher, and E. Tory Higgins (eds.), *Communication, Social Cognition, and Affect*: 9-32. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Beniger, James**
1987 "Personalization of mass media and the growth of pseudo-community." *Communication Research* 14:35-371
- Bower, Robert T.**
1973 *Television and the Public*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
1985 *The Changing Television Audience in America*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Brown, Jane Delano, Kim Walsh Childers, Karl E. Bauman, and Gary G. Koch**
1990 "The influence of new media and family structure on young adolescents' television and radio use." *Communication Research* 17:65-82.
- Burkhauser, Richard V. and Greg J. Duncan**
1989 "Economic risks of gender roles: Income loss and life events over the life course." *Social Science Quarterly* 70:3-23.
- Cameron, P.**
1969 "Age parameters of young adult, middle-aged, old, and aged." *Journal of Gerontology* 24:201-202.
- Caughey, John L.**
1984 *Imaginary Social Worlds*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Cerulo, Karen A., Janet M. Ruane, and Mary Chayko**
1992 "Technological ties that bind: Media-generated primary groups." *Communication Research* 19:109-129
- Chayko, Mary**
1991 "Electronic communities: The formation of social bonds and communities in mass media use." Paper presented at the annual meetings of the American Sociological Association, sessions organized by the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction, Cincinnati, OH.
1993 "What is real in the age of virtual reality? 'Reframing' frame analysis for a technological world." *Symbolic Interaction* 16:171-181.

- Chudacoff, Howard P.**
1989 *How Old Are You? Age Consciousness in American Culture*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Clark, William A. V. and S. Davies**
1990 "Elderly mobility and mobility outcomes: Households in the later stages of the life course." *Research on Aging* 12:430-462.
- Clausen, John A.**
1986 *The Life Course*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Coltrane, Scott and Masako Ishii-Kuntz**
1992 "Men's housework: A life course perspective." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 54:43-57.
- Comstock, George, Steven Chaffee, Natan Katzman, Maxwell McCombs, and Donald Roberts**
1978 *Television and Human Behavior*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Danowski, James**
1975 "Informational aging: Interpersonal and mass communication patterns in a retirement community." Paper presented at Gerontological Society convention, Louisville, KY.
- Davis, James A.**
1988 *General Social Survey, Cumulative Data (MRDF)*, NORC ed. Chicago: NORC. Distributed by Roper Public Opinion Research Center, New Haven, CT.
- Downs, A. Chris**
1990 "Children's judgments of televised events: The real versus pretend distinction." *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 70:779-782.
- Drevenstedt, Jean**
1976 "Perceptions of onset of young adulthood, middle age, and old age." *Journal of Gerontology* 31:53-57.
- Elder, Glen H.**
1985 "Perspectives on the life course." In Glen H. Elder (ed.), *Life Course Dynamics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Featherman, David L., D. P. Hogan, and Annette Sorenson**
1984 "Entry into adulthood: Profiles of young men in the 1950s." *Life-Span Development and Behavior* 6:159-202.
- Field, Dorothy and Meredith Minkler**
1988 "Continuity and change in social support between young-old and old-old or very-old age." *Journal of Gerontology* 43:100-106.
- Finn, Seth and Mary Beth Gorr**
1988 "Social isolation and social support as correlates of television viewing motivations." *Communication Research* 15:135-158.
- Foner, Anne**
1986 *Aging and Old Age*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Fry, Christine L.**
1976 "The ages of adulthood: A question of numbers." *Journal of Gerontology* 31:170-177.
- Gans, Herbert J.**
1980 "The audience for television—and in television research." In Stephen B. Withey and Ronald P. Aberles (eds.), *Television and Social Behavior: Beyond Violence and Children*: 55-81. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Goffman, Erving**
1961 *Encounters*. Indianapolis IN: Bobbs-Merrill.
1974 *Frame Analysis*. New York: Harper Colophon.
- Greenfield, Patricia and Jessica Beagles-Roos**
1988 "Radio vs. television: Their cognitive impact on children of different socioeconomic and ethnic groups." *Journal of Communication* 38:71-92.
- Gurin, Patricia, Arthur H. Miller, and Gerald Gurin**
1980 "Stratum identification and consciousness." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 43:30-47.
- Hagestad, Gunhild O. and Bernice L. Neugarten**
1985 "Age and the life course." In Robert H. Binstock and Ethel Shanas (eds.), *Handbook of Aging and the Social Sciences*: 35-61. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Hendricks, John and C. Davis Hendricks**
1986 *Aging in Mass Society*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Henretta, John C.**
1992 "Uniformity and diversity: Life course institutionalization and late-life work exit." *The Sociological Quarterly* 33:265-269.

- Horton, D. and R. Richard Wohl**
1956 "Mass communication and para-social interaction: Observations on intimacy at a distance." *Psychiatry* 19:215-229.
- Intintoli, Michael James**
1984 *Taking Soaps Seriously*. New York: Praeger.
- Kahn, Robert L.**
1979 "Aging and Social Support." In Matilda W. Riley (ed.), *Aging from Birth to Death: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*: 77-92. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Karp, David A.**
1988 "A decade of reminders: Changing age consciousness between fifty and sixty years old." *The Gerontologist* 28:727-738.
- Kohli, Martin**
1986 "The world we forgot: A historical review of the life course." In Victor W. Marshall (ed.), *Later Life*: 271-303. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Kubey, Robert and Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly**
1990 *Television and the Quality of Life*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Larson, Reed, Robert Kubey, and Joseph Colletti**
1989 "Changing channels: Early adolescent media choices and shifting investments in family and friends." *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 18:583-599.
- Lorence, Jon**
1985 "Job involvement through the life course: A panel study of three age groups." *American Sociological Review* 50:618-638.
- Manheim, Karl**
1952 "The problem of generations." In Paul Kecskemeti (ed.), *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*: 276-322. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Marks, Jonathon and J. Walter Thompson**
1991 "Clusters plus Nielson equals effective marketing." *American Demographics* 13:16.
- Matras, Judah**
1990 *Dependency, Obligations, and Entitlements: A New Sociology of Aging, the Life Course, and the Elderly*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- McLuhan, Marshall**
1964 *Understanding Media*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Merton, Robert K.**
1946 *Mass Persuasion*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Meyrowitz, Joshua**
1985 *No Sense of Place*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Miller, Arthur H., Patricia Gurin, and Gerald Gurin**
1980 "Age consciousness and political mobilization of older Americans." *The Gerontologist* 20:691-700.
- Neugarten, Bernice L. and Warren A. Peterson**
1957 "A study of the American age grading system." From the Proceedings of the Fourth Congress of the International Association of Gerontology.
- Nordlund, Jon-Erik**
1978 "Media interaction." *Communication Research* 5:150-175.
- Oyer, Herbert J. and E. Jane Oyer**
1976 "Communicating with older people: Basic considerations." In Herbert J. Oyer and E. Jane Oyer (eds.), *Aging and Communication*: 1-16. Baltimore, MD: University Park Press.
- Perkins, H. Wesley and Lynne B. Harris**
1990 "Familial bereavement and health in adult life course perspective." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 52:233-241.
- Perse, Elizabeth M. and Rebecca B. Rubin**
1989 "Attribution in social and parasocial relationships." *Communication Research* 16:59-77.
- Riley, Matilda W.**
1985 "Age strata in social systems." In Robert H. Binstock and Ethel Shanas (eds.), *Handbook of Aging and the Social Sciences*: 369-414. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Roberto, Karen A. and Jean Pearson Scott**
1986 "Friendships of older men and women: Exchange patterns and satisfaction." *Psychology and Aging* 1:103-109.
- Ryder, Norman B.**
1965 "The cohort as a concept in the study of social change." *American Sociological Review* 30:843-861.
- Sampson, Robert J. and John H. Laub**
1990 "Crime and deviance over the life course: The salience of adult social bonds." *American Sociological Review* 55:609-627.

- Schramm, Wilbur and William E. Porter**
1982 *Men, Women, Messages and Media*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Schwartz, Tony**
1981 *Media: The Second God*. New York: Random House.
- Shanas, Ethel**
1962 *The Health of Older People: A Social Survey*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Shaver, Sheila**
1991 "Aging, the baby boom, and the crisis in retirement income." *The Gerontologist* 31:841-843.
- Shibutani, Tamotsu**
1955 "Reference groups as perspectives." *American Journal of Sociology* 60:562-569.
- Singer, Jerome L.**
1980 "The power and limitations of television: A cognitive-affective analysis." In Percy H. Tannenbaum (ed.), *The Entertainment Functions of Television*: 31-66. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Smith, K. R. and C. D. Zick**
1986 "The incidence of poverty among the recently widowed: Mediating factors in the life course." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 48:619-630.
- South, Scott J. and Glenna Spitze**
1986 "Determinants of divorce over the marital life course." *American Sociological Review* 51:583-590.
- Spandel, Vicki L. and Michael D. Hiscox**
1988 *Portrait of A Family*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Steffensmeir, Darnell, Cathy Streifel, and E. S. Shihadeh**
1992 "Cohort size and arrest rates over the life course." *American Sociological Review* 57:306-314.
- Stryker, Sheldon**
1972 "Symbolic interaction as an approach to family research." In Jerome G. Manis and Bernard N. Meltzer (eds.), *Symbolic Interaction*: 435-447. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Townsend, Bickley**
1990 "Going for the middle: An interview with David F. Poltrack." *American Demographics* 12:50-51.
- Van Gennep, Arnold**
1960 *The Rites of Passage*. (1908*) Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wan, Thomas T. H.**
1982 *Stressful Life Events, Social Support Networks, and Gerontological Health*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
- Ward, Russell A.**
1977 "The impact of subjective age and stigma on older persons." *Journal of Gerontology* 32:227-232.
- Wenner, Lawrence A. and Walter Gantz**
1989 "The audience experience with sports on television." In Lawrence A. Wenner (ed.), *Media, Sports, and Society*: 241-269. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- White, Lynn K. and Alan Booth**
1991 "Divorce over the life course: The role of marital happiness." *Journal of Family Issues* 12:5-21.
- Wilson, Monica**
1951 *Good Company: A Study of Nyakyusa Age-Villagers*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Woelfel, Joseph**
1976 "Communication across age levels." In Herbert J. Oyer and E. Jane Oyer (eds.), *Aging and Communication*: 63-74. Baltimore, MD: University Park Press.
- Zuckerman, Harriet and Robert K. Merton**
1972 "Age, aging and age structure in science." in Matilda W. Riley, Marilyn Johnson, and Anne Foner (eds.), *Aging and Society*: 292-256. New York: Russell Sage.

*Original publication date