

10-1996

Broadcast News and Elderly People: Attitudes of Local Television Managers

Michael L. Hilt

University of Nebraska at Omaha, mhilt@unomaha.edu

Jeremy Harris Lipschultz

University of Nebraska at Omaha, jeremy.lipschultz@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/commfacpub>

 Part of the [Family, Life Course, and Society Commons](#), and the [Mass Communication Commons](#)

Please take our feedback survey at: https://unomaha.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8cchtFmpDyGfBLE

Recommended Citation

Hilt, Michael L. and Lipschultz, Jeremy Harris, "Broadcast News and Elderly People: Attitudes of Local Television Managers" (1996). *Communication Faculty Publications*. 67.

<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/commfacpub/67>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Communication at DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Communication Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.

BROADCAST NEWS AND ELDERLY PEOPLE: ATTITUDES OF LOCAL TELEVISION MANAGERS

Michael L. Hilt
Jeremy H. Lipschultz

Department of Communication, University of Nebraska at Omaha,
Omaha, Nebraska, USA

The Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Scale was used to measure local television manager attitudes toward elderly people. Census projections have shown that the elderly population will increase dramatically in the next century. The importance of local television news in the lives of the elderly makes the study of the attitudes of broadcasters about older people relevant. A national survey of two groups of television managers—general managers and news directors—found that younger news directors had a more positive attitude toward older people, while the older general managers had a less positive attitude.

The older population in the United States is increasing dramatically (Barrow, 1989). Census projections have shown that by the year 2040, the nation could have more people over the age of 65 than under the age of 21; more than one in four Americans will be aged 65 or older (Usdansky, 1992). In the 1990 census figures, adults aged 65 and over accounted for one out of eight Americans, compared to 1 in 25 at the beginning of this century.

Recent research conducted for the ABC television network found that viewers aged 50 and older were significantly more interested in news than younger generations (Wurtzel, 1992). Elderly people are major consumers of television news, preferring television news over other media forms (Doolittle, 1979), because they view it as a way to become aware of current events rather than as a diversion (Davis & Davis, 1985). However, information about elderly people and broadcast news, particularly issues of importance to the elderly in television newscasts, has been inadequate (Hess, 1974).

Previous studies of elderly persons have examined the use of all media (newspapers, radio, television) by older adults or television entertainment programs' depiction of older adults. The issue that has been overlooked has been television managers' attitudes toward eld-

erly people, who constitute a significant part of the viewing audience (Hilt, 1992).

The present study seeks to identify the attitudes of two groups of television managers—general managers and news directors—toward the elderly, and how these attitudes toward the elderly relate to the general managers' and news directors' views about news coverage.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Aging and its inherent problems occur over time and are usually considered too complex to be adequately covered in the simple formats that typically are characteristic of television news programming. The media are accused of showing a bias against elderly people by failing to report information about aging, which may leave some elderly feeling socially insignificant and powerless (Powell & Williamson, 1985).

Disengagement Theory

The social gerontology disengagement theory is a useful framework for examining attitudes about older people. The disengagement theory (Cumming & Henry, 1961; Young, 1979; Passuth & Bengston, 1988) argues that society and the elderly are mutually obliged to withdraw from each other. The authors of this theory, Cumming and Henry, maintained that the process is functional to both society and the individual; it enables society to make room for more efficient young people while, at the same time, allowing the elderly time to prepare for their eventual total withdrawal from social life—death. Cumming and Henry argued that disengagement theory should actually be considered an interpersonal communication theory. Mass communication researchers say television serves as a substitute for interpersonal contacts: "In television, especially, the image which is presented makes available nuances of appearance and gesture to which ordinary social perception is attentive and to which interaction is cued" (Horton & Wohl, 1986, p. 185).

Another reason given for increased use of the media by elderly people is that television and newspapers become substitutes for interpersonal contacts (Rubin & Rubin, 1982). Atkin (1976) suggested that the elderly's preference for news and information in television viewing is a direct attempt to compensate for their stable and unexciting world. Schramm (1969) interpreted this behavior as their way of keeping up with society rather than a means of disengagement. He wrote that older people use television to keep in touch, combat progressive disengagement, and maintain a sense of belonging to society. Lowenthal and

Boler (1965) found that those aged adults who voluntarily disengaged from their social activities decreased their use of media, and those involuntarily disengaged increased their use.

The theory of disengagement has generated much criticism. Barrow (1989) contended that one might just as well speak of society excluding the elderly as disengaging them; perhaps the withdrawal of older people is a reaction to a society that excludes them.

Television Use by Elderly People

Numerous studies have shown that use of the media increases during middle age through the retirement years (Dimmick, McCain, & Bolton, 1979). More than 30 years ago Glick and Levy (1962) referred to the elderly as "embracers" of television; they seemed to have a "close identification with television, a rather indiscriminating and accepting attitude toward it, and usually (make) great use of the medium" (p. 44). Frequency of television use and total viewing time increases with age up to about 69 years, before showing a slight decline (Louis Harris and Associates, Inc., 1975). People aged 55 years and over watch an average of 7 hr of television more per week than younger adults (Nielsen, 1975). Nielsen found elderly people watch between 30 and 35 hr of TV per week.

Bower's study (1973) found that the 55 year and over age group had the highest rate of any age group for viewing news and information and public affairs. Steiner (1963) had reported similar findings: people aged 55 to 64 years watched 16.4 television news and information programs per week, and those aged 65 years and older watched 22.4 programs per week.

Doolittle (1979) found television news usage was the highest for old seniors (aged 67 to 74 years). Overall, these respondents gave the highest credibility to television. In a study conducted by Kent and Rush (1976), 99% of elderly persons surveyed said they watched television news. This heavy use of television news remained consistent 14 years later, when Goodman (1990) found that older men and women favored television for their national news and information, but preferred newspapers for local news.

Several explanations have been given for age-related trends in media use. Kubey (1981) found that television may be a substitute for the information network that the individual had access to when he or she went out into the community to work. The increased leisure time that accompanies retirement may account for some of the higher consumption rates of television news by elderly people. Comstock and his col-

leagues (1978) grouped the elderly, the poor, and ethnic minorities into the category of disadvantaged. They said this group depends on television more than any other news medium for knowledge and information. The elderly audience's use of the broadcast medium may be related to the ease with which it can be received. Once a television set has been purchased, broadcast viewing is free except for the expense of electricity. In addition, failing eyesight can make reading difficult or impossible (Chaffee & Wilson, 1975).

Television News and Elderly People

Local television is rapidly becoming a prime source of news for all age groups (Peale & Harmon, 1991). The people responsible for the news decisions that transform everyday events into the sights and sounds of the evening newscast also are held responsible for building the public agenda of issues and events.

In a study of television's effect on adults, Gans (1968) found that one-third of the respondents felt that television helped them understand their personal problems and make decisions, particularly when they could identify with the situation being presented. Gans' findings suggested that examining television programming to identify messages about human life in general is appropriate, and can be applied to specific categories of individuals, such as older adults.

A number of studies have focused on gratifications sought and obtained from television news (Davis & Edwards, 1975; Rubin & Rubin, 1981; Wenner, 1984). These studies suggested that television may reduce feelings of social isolation. Increased viewing of local television news does not mean an increase in the perception of personal safety (Perse, 1990), but it may influence an older viewer's thinking toward an issue of direct importance to them, for example Social Security (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987).

Television News Content

Content analyses of network and local television newscasts have shown an absence of stories related to social issues that might be of importance to elderly people (Stempel, 1988). Adams (1978) conducted an analysis of 10 Pennsylvania television stations, and found an emphasis on local politics, as opposed to sensational and human interest stories. Nonpolitical community and organization activity received less than 1½ min of coverage, consisting of about 9% of total news time. Pollack (1989) argued that the media have done an incomplete job of educating themselves about social policy questions that affect the eld-

erly, and that too many editors see the problems of elderly people as too boring or depressing for regular coverage.

We believe that the editorial process at television stations is influenced by broadcast managers. At local television stations across the country, general managers and news directors set policy affecting news coverage of older people (Goedkoop, 1988). In our study, we tested the attitudes of television general managers and news directors toward elderly people using the Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Scale (Kogan, 1961).

METHODOLOGY

We used the Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Scale (Kogan, 1961) to gather data from U.S. commercial television station general managers and news directors. These data were used to describe their attitudes toward elderly people. Based on the social disengagement theory (Cumming & Henry, 1961), the broadcast managers should have higher Kogan scores, which would mean a less positive attitude toward the elderly.

Shaw and Wright (1967) found the Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Scale to be carefully developed and used with some success in subsequent studies. However, they found that some response bias may exist. They suggested that the matched positive and negative items should reduce response bias. This scale has been used in the study of attitudes of college students (Kogan, 1961; Thorson, 1975; Thorson & Perkins, 1981; Powell, Thorson, Kara, & Uhl, 1990), nursing home nurses (Bagshaw & Adams, 1986; Chandler, Rachal, & Kazelskis, 1986), and practicing physicians (Hellbusch, 1992).

Definition of Terms

Any research dealing with elderly people is not without a methodological problem: defining what is meant by "elderly people." For the purposes of our study, we used the socially defined chronological age of 65 (U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, 1987).

Description of the Instrument

The Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Scale consists of 17 statements, each of which is phrased positively and then negatively. Half of the statement scores were reversed. Statement responses were scored using a Likert format numbered 1 to 7, from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Blank statements were assigned a score of 4. Using

this method, the lower a respondent's total or mean score, the more positive were that person's attitudes toward elderly people. The television managers also were asked to respond to a series of statements about issues of importance to elderly people, and whether their station adequately reports on these issues. Hypothetical stories affecting younger and older people were used as a measure of interest. Finally, respondents answered various demographic questions. An open-ended question provided respondents the opportunity to identify survey problems.

Population and the Sampling

General managers and news directors at U.S. commercial television stations were selected in a probability sample. Market size was utilized in a stratified random sample (Babbie, 1992) using the 1993 *Broadcasting & Cable Market Place*. This yearbook is more comprehensive than other directories in that it lists by station rather than by membership of individuals, and is commonly used in mass media research (Wimmer & Dominick, 1994).

General managers and news directors were randomly selected to represent each of the 209 television markets. The sample represented roughly equal numbers of general managers and news directors for comparative purposes.

Data Collection Procedures

A total of 418 management-level employees were identified for the survey mailing list. Each person on the mailing list received a prenotification letter explaining the purpose of the survey, and informing them that they would receive a survey within 72 hr. The survey was self-administered. The Total Design Method (Dillman, 1979) for mail surveys was used.

Analysis of the Data

General managers and news directors were compared as occupational groups. Index scores for the occupation groups were computed. *T*-tests were executed for independent samples based on occupational groups, as well as the statements.

RESULTS

Demographics of the Sample

Of the 418 general managers and news directors sampled, 162 returned the survey for a response rate of 38.8%. This response pattern

is typical for a mail survey (Wimmer & Dominick, 1994) Within each occupational group, 81 news directors responded to the survey, 76 general managers responded, and five returned surveys did not provide adequate information. Based on more than a decade of demographic data from the Radio-Television News Directors Association, this sample appeared to be representative.

Of the respondents, only three general managers were aged 65 or older. In the 50-plus age category, there were 34 general managers (44.7%) and 11 news directors (13.6%). The median age for general managers in the sample was 49, and the median age for news directors was 40. White males dominated both occupational groups—97% of general managers were men compared with 79% of news directors, and 97% of general managers were White compared with 91% of news directors.

Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Statements

The broadcast managers that responded to this survey had an overall mean for the sum of the 34 item scores of 103.50.

The general managers and news directors responded to the 34 statements that compose the Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Scale. The general managers' mean score was 105.01, while the news directors' score was 102.07. Table 1 compares the results of this study with the results of other studies that surveyed other groups' attitudes using the same scale. The statement with the strongest overall mean in this study was "The elderly have the same faults as anybody else" (5.97). The statement with the lowest overall mean was "Most elderly make one feel ill at ease" (2.00).

In general, news directors were more positive in their attitudes toward the elderly than general managers. There were statistically significant differences between the general managers and news directors on six statements (Table 2). Those statements were: "If the elderly expect to be liked, they should eliminate their irritating faults"; "It is foolish to claim that wisdom comes with old age"; "Most elderly bore others by talking about the 'good old days'"; "Most elderly spend too much time prying into the affairs of others"; "People grow wiser with the coming of old age"; and, "Most elderly let their homes become shabby and unattractive." In each case, the more positive attitude toward the elderly was held by the news directors.

Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Scale Index

The overall mean for general managers and news directors on the Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Scale Index was 3.06. The mean

TABLE 1 Comparison of Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Scores

Study	<i>N</i>	Score	<i>SD</i>
Current study			
Television managers	157	103.50	16.20
General managers	76	105.01	16.72
News directors	81	102.07	15.66
Kogan (1961)			
Boston University undergrads	168	119.01	21.94
Northeastern University undergrads I	128	118.97	20.70
Northeastern University undergrads II	186	114.59	22.75
Thorson (1975)			
University of Georgia graduates and undergraduates	212	108.51	21.95
Powell, Thorson, Kara, & Uhl (1990)			
Creighton University medical students			
Freshman	277	102.56	16.14
Seniors	232	99.95	16.79
Hellbusch (1992)			
Practicing physicians in Omaha	200	96.87	15.25

for the general managers was 3.09, and the mean for the news directors 3.00. The mean for the male respondents was 3.06, and the mean for the female respondents was 2.96. The mean for "younger" (born during or after 1949) respondents is 3.00, and the mean for "older" (born before 1949) respondents is 3.05 (see Table 3). As was stated earlier, the lower the score, the more positive the respondent's attitude was toward elderly people.

Responses of the broadcast managers on the Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Scale Index were correlated with demographic questions. The strongest positive correlation was between education and individual income (.25). The strongest negative correlations were between age and individual income (−.50), and age and education (−.17). Those three correlations were statistically significant at the .05 level. However, there were no statistically significant relationships between the index and the demographic variables.

Views About News Coverage

The general managers and news directors responded to 10 statements concerning their views about news coverage. The statement with the strongest overall mean was "Exciting video helps a story" (6.01). The

statement with the lowest overall mean was "Issues about or of concern to older people are hard to explain on TV" (2.31).

There was a significant statistical difference between the two groups on four statements: "Stories that take a long time to unfold are not good TV"; "My viewers are more likely to watch an older anchorman"; "My viewers are more likely to watch an older anchorwoman"; and, "Newsrooms today are more likely to target older demographics." In each case the news directors' mean responses leaned toward a more positive view of the elderly. For example, general managers tended to disagree and news directors tended to agree that newsrooms are more likely to target older demographics.

Correlation of Index with Views About News Coverage and Importance of Certain News Stories

Responses of the broadcast managers on the Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Scale Index were correlated with statements concerning

TABLE 2 Comparison of Differences Between Television General Managers and News Directors on Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Statements

Statement (overall <i>m</i>)	Group	<i>M</i> ^a	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> value ^b
People grow wiser with the coming of old age. (4.51)	GMs	4.28	1.42	2.01 ^b
	NDs	4.73	1.40	
It is foolish to claim that wisdom comes with old age. (3.50)	GMs	3.79	1.83	2.00 ^b
	NDs	3.22	1.72	
If the elderly expect to be liked, they should eliminate their irritating faults. (2.57)	GMs	2.79	1.45	2.02 ^b
	NDs	2.36	1.23	
Most elderly bore others by talking about the "good old days." (2.39)	GMs	2.61	1.30	2.18 ^b
	NDs	2.20	1.04	
Most elderly spend too much time prying into the affairs of others. (2.26)	GMs	2.43	1.10	2.31 ^b
	NDs	2.10	0.68	
Most elderly let their homes become shabby and unattractive. (2.03)	GMs	2.14	0.78	2.13 ^b
	NDs	1.91	0.57	

Note. GMs = general managers (*N* = 76); NDs = news directors (*N* = 81).

^aThe scale is: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = slightly disagree; 4 = no response/neutral; 5 = slightly agree; 6 = agree; 7 = strongly agree.

^b*t* values are pooled variance estimates. Statistically significant differences at the .05 alpha level.

TABLE 3 Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Scale Index

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Minimum	Maximum	Median
Overall (<i>N</i> = 162)	3.06	0.49	2.06	4.35	2.96
General managers (<i>N</i> = 76)	3.09	0.49	2.06	4.35	3.02
News directors (<i>N</i> = 81)	3.00	0.46	2.06	4.18	2.97
Male (<i>N</i> = 138)	3.06	0.49	2.06	4.35	2.99
Female (<i>N</i> = 19)	2.96	0.36	2.38	3.77	2.97
Younger (<i>N</i> = 76) ^a	3.00	0.45	2.06	4.18	2.96
Older (<i>N</i> = 77) ^a	3.05	0.45	2.09	4.24	2.97

Note. As indicated earlier, 17 of the 34 items in the Kogan Scale were recoded with reverse scoring, and the 34 statements were summed to create a single index score. The lower the total score, the more positive the respondent was toward elderly people. The index yielded acceptable levels of internal consistency (Chronbach's $\alpha = .81$) for the measure (Wimmer & Dominick, 1994, p. 57).

^aThe Younger and Older groups were defined by the median age of the responding broadcast managers. Younger respondents were those born between the years 1949 and 1969. Older respondents were those born between the years 1922 and 1948.

their views about news coverage, and the importance of certain news stories.

Out of 10 items about their news coverage, two statements had statistically significant relationships with the Kogan Index: "Issues about or of concern to older people are hard to explain on TV" ($r = .23$); "News stories about the elderly are becoming increasingly important" ($r = -.26$). There was a negative relationship between these two statements ($r = -.20$).

Four news stories were statistically significant with the Kogan Index, and all four had negative relationships. The four news stories were: lower mortgage rates ($r = -.22$); age discrimination lawsuits ($r = -.22$); nursing home abuses ($r = -.20$); and advancements in cataract surgery ($r = -.16$). In fact, all but one of the news stories were negative relationships with the Kogan Index.

DISCUSSION

This research sought to identify the attitudes of commercial television general managers and news directors toward the elderly, and how these attitudes relate to the broadcast managers' views about news coverage.

In terms of the first question, one measure of the attitudes of broadcast managers toward the elderly is how they compare with other groups that have taken the Kogan Attitudes Toward Old People Scale.

For example, the general managers and news directors responding to this survey had a more tolerant attitude toward the elderly than undergraduate students at Boston University and Northeastern University (Kogan, 1961), and graduates and undergraduates at the University of Georgia (Thorson, 1975). The broadcast managers had a less tolerant attitude toward the elderly than medical students (Powell, Thorson, Kara, & Uhl, 1990) and practicing physicians (Hellbusch, 1992). Within the present sample, there was no significant difference in the Kogan score for news directors (102.07) and general managers (105.01, ($t = 1.14$; $p < .26$).

On the second question of how the managers' attitudes relate to their views about news coverage, there was strong agreement with the statements "Exciting video helps a story" (6.01), "News stories about the elderly are becoming increasingly important" (5.79), "My viewers are concerned with issues critical to older Americans" (5.57), and "A slow-moving news story turns off viewers" (5.25). Conversely, there was strong disagreement with the statements "Issues about or of concern to older people are hard to explain on TV" (2.31), "My viewers are more likely to watch an older anchorwoman" (3.56), and "Newsrooms today are more likely to target older demographics" (3.87). What these findings suggest is that the broadcast managers perceive a viewer interest in issues of concern to elderly people, but such news coverage needs to hold viewer attention.

Groups interested in increasing the amount of news coverage about issues affecting older people should offer the news media story opportunities that provide exciting, fast-paced video. Stories that show the elderly in action will be more likely to be covered as news.

However, there were differences between the general managers and news directors in their views about news coverage. While general managers leaned toward agreement that "Stories that take a long time to unfold are not good TV" (4.42), news directors leaned toward disagreement (3.70). There was a significant difference between the two groups ($t = 2.68$; $p < .05$).

On three other statements there were also significant differences between the two groups: "Newsrooms today are more like to target older demographics" (general managers = 3.50, news directors = 4.21; $t = -2.84$; $p < .05$); "My viewers are more likely to watch an older anchorman" (general managers = 3.88, news directors = 4.42; $t = -2.35$; $p < .05$); and, "My viewers are more likely to watch an older anchorwoman" (general managers = 3.30, news directors = 3.80; $t = -2.23$; $p < .05$). In each statement, news directors tended to agree more than general managers. This pattern indicates that news directors seem to be more open-minded than general managers about the coverage of

elderly issues. News directors seem to welcome the coverage of these stories, as long as those stories meet the needs of action-oriented television news. Perhaps one reason why Stempel (1988) did not find many stories relating to social issues of importance to the elderly is that the news sources failed to offer broadcast newsrooms exciting video or fast-moving news stories. Certainly, it is not always possible to frame an important social issue in a form enticing to local television news. But when this is accomplished, it is much more likely to make the newscast. If local television stations were to report more information about older people, then such mass media messages might contribute to elderly people feeling more socially significant and powerful.

REFERENCES

- Adams, W. C. (1978). Local public affairs content of TV news. *Journalism Quarterly*, 55(4), 690-695.
- Atkin, C. K. (1976). Mass media and the aging. In H. J. Oyer & E. J. Oyer (Eds.), *Aging and communication* (pp. 99-119). Baltimore, MD: University Park Press.
- Babbie, E. R. (1992). *The practice of social research* (6th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Bagshaw, M., & Adams, M. (1985-1986). Nursing home nurses' attitudes, empathy, and ideologic orientation. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 22, 235-246.
- Barrow, G. M. (1989). *Aging, the individual, and society* (4th ed.). St. Paul, MN: West.
- Bower, R. T. (1973). *Television and the public*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- R. R. Bowker. *Broadcasting & cable market place*. (1993). New Providence, NJ: Author.
- Chaffee, S. H., & Wilson, D. G. (1975, August). *Adult life cycle changes in mass media use*. Paper presented to the Association for Education in Journalism, Ottawa, Canada.
- Chandler, J., Rachal, J., & Kazelskis, R. (1986). Attitudes of long-term care nursing personnel toward the elderly. *The Gerontologist*, 26, 551-555.
- Comstock, G. A., Chaffee, S., Katzman, N., McCombs, M., & Roberts, D. (1978). *Television and human behavior*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Cumming, E., & Henry, W. E. (1961). *Growing old: The process of disengagement*. New York: Basic Books.
- Davis, R. H., & Davis, J. A. (1985). *TV's image of the elderly*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath.
- Davis, R. H., & Edwards, A. E. (1975). *Television: A therapeutic tool for the aged*. Los Angeles: University of Southern California.
- Dillman, D. A. (1979). *Mail and telephone surveys, the total design method*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

- Dimmick, J. W., McCain, T. A., & Bolton, W. T. (1979). Media use and the life span. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 23(1), 7-31.
- Doolittle, J. C. (1979). News media use by older adults. *Journalism Quarterly*, 56, 311-317, 345.
- Gans, H. J. (1968). *The uses of television and their educational implications*. New York: The Center for Urban Education.
- Glick, I. O., & Levy, S. J. (1962). *Living with television*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing.
- Goedkoop, R. J. (1988). *Inside local television news*. Salem, WI: Sheffield Publishing.
- Goodman, R. I. (1990). Television news viewing by older adults. *Journalism Quarterly*, 67(1), 137-141.
- Hellbusch, J. S. (1992). *A survey of physicians' attitudes toward aging*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, NE.
- Hess, B. B. (1974). Stereotypes of the aged. *Journal of Communication*, 24, 76-85.
- Hilt, M. L. (1992). Television news and elderly persons. *Psychological Reports*, 71, 123-126.
- Hilt, M. L., & Lipschultz, J. H. (1994). *Broadcast news and elderly people: Attitudes of local television managers*. Paper presented at the Enduring Spirit Conference, Omaha, Nebraska.
- Horton, D., & Wohl, R. R. (1986). Mass communication and para-social interaction: Observation on intimacy at a distance. In G. Gumpert, & R. Cathcart (Eds.), *Intermedia, interpersonal communication in a media world* (3rd ed., pp. 185-206). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Iyengar, S., & Kinder, D. R. (1987). *News that matters*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Kent, K. E., & Rush, R. R. (1976). How communication behavior of older persons affects their public affairs knowledge. *Journalism Quarterly*, 53(1), 40-46.
- Kogan, N. (1961). Attitudes toward old people: The development of a scale and examination of correlates. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 62, 44-54.
- Kubey, R. W. (1981). Television and aging: Past, present, and future. *The Gerontologist*, 20(1), 16-35.
- Louis Harris and Associates, Inc. (1975). *The myth and reality of aging in America*. Washington, DC: National Council on Aging.
- Lowenthal, M. F., & Boler, D. (1965). Voluntary vs. involuntary social withdrawal. *Journal of Gerontology*, 20, 363-371.
- Nielsen, A. C. (1975). Nielsen estimates: National audience demographics report. *Nielsen '75*. Chicago: Author. (Data from November 1974).
- Passuth, P. M., & Bengston, V. L. (1988). Sociological theories of aging: Current perspectives and future directions. In J. E. Birren & V. L. Bengston (Eds.), *Emergent theories of aging* (pp. 333-355). New York: Springer.
- Peale, B., & Harmon, M. (1991, August). *Television news consultants: Explo-*

- ration of their effect on content. Paper presented to the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Boston, MA.
- Perse, E. M. (1990). Cultivation and involvement with local television news. In N. Signorielli & M. Morgan (Eds.), *Cultivation analysis* (pp. 51-69). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Pollack, R. F. (1989). Granny bashing: New myth recasts elders as villains. *Media & Values*, 45, 2-4.
- Powell, F. C., Thorson, J. A., Kara, G., & Uhl, H. S. M. (1990). Stability of medical students' attitudes toward aging and death. *The Journal of Psychology*, 124(3), 339-342.
- Powell, L. A., & Williamson, J. B. (1985). The mass media and the aged. *Social Policy*, 21, 38-49.
- Rubin, A. M., & Rubin, R. B. (1981). Age, context and television use. *Journal of Broadcasting*, 25(1), 1-13.
- Rubin, A. M., & Rubin, R. B. (1982). Older persons' TV viewing patterns and motivations. *Communication Research*, 9(2), 287-313.
- Schramm, W. (1969). Aging and mass communication. In M. W. Riley, J. W. Riley, & M. E. Johnson (Eds.), *Aging and society, volume two: Aging and the professions* (pp. 352-375). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Shaw, M. E., & Wright, J. M. (1967). *Scales for the measurement of attitudes*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Steiner, G. A. (1963). *The people look at television*. New York: Knopf.
- Stempel, G. H., III. (1988). Topic and story choice of five network newscasts. *Journalism Quarterly*, 65(3), 750-752.
- Thorson, J. A. (1975, June). *Variations in attitudes toward the aged held by selected groups in the southern United States*. Paper presented to the 10th International Congress of Gerontology, Jerusalem, Israel.
- Thorson, J. A., & Perkins, M. L. (1980-1981). An examination of personality and demographic factors on attitudes toward old people. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 12(2), 139-148.
- U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging. (1987). *Aging America: Trends and projections*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Usdansky, M. L. (1992, November 10). "Nation of youth" growing long in the tooth. *USA Today*, p. 10A.
- Wenner, L. A. (1984). Gratifications sought and obtained in program dependency: A study of network evening news programs and 60 Minutes. *Communication Research*, 11, 537-562.
- Wimmer, R. D., & Dominick, J. R. (1994). *Mass media research*. (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Wurtzel, A. (1992). *The changing landscape of network television*. ABC Television Network, 77 West 66th Street, New York, NY 10023-6298.
- Young, T. J. (1979). Use of the media by older adults. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 23(1), 119-136.