FRAME WORKS INSTITUTE

Aging, Agency, and Attribution of Responsibility:

Shifting Public Discourse about Older Adults

Moira O'Neil

Abigail Haydon

Table of Contents

Introduction....3

Executive Summary....5

Methods....7

- Data....7
  - Media Sample....7
  - Advocacy Materials Sample....7

Media and Advocacy Narratives....9

- The Throwaway Generation Narrative....13
- The Vibrant Senior Narrative....14
- The Independent Senior Narrative....16
- The Demographic Crisis Narrative....17
- The Aging Workers Narrative....18
- The Government As Solution Narrative....19
- The Government As Problem Narrative....19

Comparison of Media and Advocacy Discourse....20

- Similarities....20
- Differences....21

Conclusion and Preliminary Recommendations....23

Appendix A: Organizational Data....26

About the FrameWorks Institute....28

Endnotes....29

Introduction

Advocates and experts working on behalf of older adults in America have long suspected that media representations of aging are skewed and inaccurate. This assertion is borne out in scholarly research — for example, older adults, and particularly older women, are grossly underrepresented in the media when compared to other age groups.[1] When the media feature older adults, they present them as one of two extremes: 1) as frail, diseased, senile, and in need of constant and expensive care, *or* 2) as active, healthy, wholly independent, and requiring no support.[2] These negative representations feed the public's already problematic perceptions of the aging process and stereotypes about older adults. Ironically, the media's positive images of aging are just as unproductive, as they link successful aging to individual lifestyle and consumption choices — such as *choosing* to eat well, *having the drive* to exercise regularly, and *being disciplined* in financial matters. By equating successful aging with individual choice, without reference to the kinds of social supports that are necessary to make these decisions, or structural factors that constrain them, media depictions infer that most older adults have failed to successfully choose or manage a better outcome.

These narrow media representations of aging pose substantial challenges to advocates seeking to build greater public understanding of older adults' needs, and support for policies designed to address those needs. First, the media act as a "gatekeeper," selecting and amplifying the messages that enter into public conversations about aging.[3] By consistently telling certain stories and excluding others, media discourse creates and reinforces public understandings over time. Scholars describe this as a "drip, drip" effect, as these stories steadily carve a channel in the public's imagination that automatically shapes the way members of the public think about a particular issue.[4] In order to shift public discourse about aging, advocates must make concerted efforts to influence the media's storytelling practices about their issue. Carefully deconstructing the media's narratives about aging, and comparing those narratives to the messages that advocates and experts want to disseminate, therefore constitutes a critical first step in developing effective communications strategies.

At the same time, the media are not the only source of information available to the public. An abundance of materials about older adults is disseminated by NGOs via websites, magazines, newsletters, issue briefs, reports, etc. These materials also contribute to the narratives that the public holds about the process of aging. To the degree that these materials reinforce media representations, they further contribute to the establishment of social norms about aging. To the degree that they offer alternative ways to think of aging, they expand people's mental repertoires. Understanding the stories being told by these pervasive and trusted sources allows us to paint a more complete picture of the "pictures in people's heads" on the topic of aging.

This report analyzes and compares media and advocacy organizations' narratives about aging and older adults. The goal of the report is to suggest communications strategies that advocates can use to push media discourse in more productive directions, and ultimately increase public support for the policies and programs necessary to promote the well-being of older adults, and ensure their full participation in American society. This research was conducted by the FrameWorks Institute, and is part of a larger, multi-method collaborative project sponsored by the Leaders of Aging Organizations, a group administered by Grantmakers in Aging that includes AARP, the American Federation for Aging Research, the American Geriatrics Society, the American Society on Aging, the Gerontological Society of America, the National Council on Aging, and the National

Hispanic Council on Aging. The project is managed by Laura Robbins of Laura A. Robbins Consulting, LLC. The collaboration seeks to develop a new, evidence-based narrative about the process of aging, and the roles and contributions of older adults in American society.*

---

* We encourage you to use and share these findings. The research was made possible by the strength of cooperation across organizations. When you refer to the research, we ask that you recognize this by including the following statement: The research was developed by a collaborative of the following eight national aging organizations: AARP, the American Federation for Aging Research, the American Geriatrics Society, the American Society on Aging, Grantmakers in Aging, the Gerontological Society of America, the National Council on Aging and the National Hispanic Council on Aging. It was supported by grants from: AARP, The Atlantic Philanthropies, Rose Community Foundation, The Retirement Research Foundation, The John A. Hartford Foundation, The Archstone Foundation and The Fan Fox/Leslie R. Samuels Foundation. The FrameWorks Institute conducted the research.

Executive Summary

Narratives are powerful framing tools through which we organize, remember, and recall information. In keeping with the scholarly literature on narrative, FrameWorks defines a complete narrative as one that defines a problem or issue, states why this issue is a matter of concern, explains who or what causes the problem, provides a clear vision of an improved outcome, and delineates concrete actions that can be taken to remediate the problem. Importantly, "A coherent story is one in which the events are causally necessary for the occurrence of significant outcome states."[5] A central finding in this report is that *a substantial amount of the information being communicated about aging and older adults in America is not organized as narrative in either media or advocacy materials.* For example, while the majority of the media and advocacy materials mention healthcare issues, health is neither an integral part of these stories, nor causally linked to the plot. The tendency towards incomplete narratives was also apparent in advocacy organizations' discussions of governmental policy as a solution to problems associated with aging. In general, the predominance of incomplete narratives in both media and advocacy discourses means that the public is exposed to bits and pieces of narrative — fractured, and often inconsistent, information about aging and older adults — and that this array of information is unlikely to stick in mind and, thus, is unlikely to deepen public understandings of aging issues.

Despite the general lack of complete narratives in the media and advocacy discourses, the analysis identifies six narratives that are present across both media and advocacy materials:

- The *Throwaway Generation* narrative, which highlights elder abuse and discrimination.
- The *Vibrant Senior* and *Independent Senior* narratives, which present idealized representations of the aging process.
- The *Aging Workers* narrative, which focuses on older adults in and out of the labor market.
- The *Demographic Crisis* narrative, which warns of impending social crisis due to an aging population.
- A *Government Actions* narrative which is treated differently by source. The media feature a *Government As Solution* narrative, which describes how government action can address challenges associated with an aging population, while advocacy organizations disseminate a *Government As Problem* narrative focusing on the relationship between failed social policy and older adults' financial insecurity.

The overarching similarities and differences that characterize media and advocacy discourses include:

- Both advocate and media discourses are bifurcated, and discuss *either* idealistic representations of aging *or* negative accounts that focus overwhelmingly on the problems and challenges associated with aging. Problem-oriented stories rarely include solutions that can create more optimal outcomes for older adults.

- The media are more likely to feature idealized representations of aging, whereas advocates concentrate on problem-oriented stories that frequently allude to an impeding demographic crisis.

- Positive and idealized representations of aging in advocacy and media narratives do not reference social policies or other types of public action.

- The media frame the problems associated with an aging population as private concerns, while advocacy organizations point to the more public sources of those problems. Media materials were much more likely than advocacy materials to feature episodic stories, or stories that narrowly focus on the trials and tribulations of individuals, paying relatively little attention to the contexts, environments, and systems in which individuals are embedded.

Implications:

The biggest problem with the dominant patterns of public understanding identified in FrameWorks' research is the deep assumption that individuals are exclusively responsible for how they age.[6] In addition, while we know from previous research that the public maintains an ideal vision of aging, this "ideal" is uncontested in these stories, leaving people with a view of aging that, according to experts, is deeply unrealistic. When the media and advocacy organizations fail to link successful aging to policies that enable older adults to remain active and socially engaged, they actually reinforce the public's highly individualistic understandings of the aging process. The result is that people will understand the likelihood of successful aging to be about lifestyle choices rather than as affected by supports, larger social structures, or public policies. Moreover, they are more likely to view poor seniors, and those with chronic illnesses, as having made bad choices, and not in relation to social determinants.

This analysis suggests strategies that advocates can begin to employ to shift and expand the public discussion on aging issues and older adults. These preliminary recommendations include:

- Tell complete stories that include the constituent elements of effective narrative: a value, a causal explanation, a vision of a desirable outcome, and a solution statement that matches the scope of the problem and provides concrete steps to achieve better outcomes for older adults.

- Avoid narratives that focus exclusively on older adults' sound decision-making and, instead, tell stories about successful aging that clearly explain the role of necessary social supports.

- Avoid stories of impending demographic crises.

Methods

Three questions guide this research:

1. What are the narratives that advocacy organizations are telling about aging, and how are these narratives structured? What stories are the media telling about aging, and how are these narratives structured?

2. What are the similarities and differences between these sets of narratives?

3. What strategies can advocates use to expand and shift media stories in more productive directions?

Data

Media Sample

The media sample includes articles taken from national newspapers, national television broadcasts, and news-oriented blogs. The sources include: *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, *San Jose Mercury News*, *Detroit Free Press*, *The Denver Post*, *Minneapolis StarTribune*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *New York Post*, *The Arizona Republic*, *U-T San Diego*, *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, *The Columbus Dispatch*, *The Tampa Tribune*, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* and broadcasts from Fox News Network, CNN, and MSNBC. Blogs included the Drudge Report, TheBlaze, The Huffington Post, and The Daily Beast. Sources were selected based on their circulation, as well as geographic and ideological diversity (as measured by their endorsements in the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections).

Using LexisNexis, FrameWorks researchers searched and downloaded articles from these sources using a search strategy designed to capture a broad range of topics that concern aging or older adults.[7] The search was limited to pieces that appeared between August 2013 and August 2014. This search resulted in the identification of 1,106 stories. Media pieces that did not deal substantively with aging or older adults, and duplicate articles (the same article published in multiple news outlets), were removed from the sample. This process resulted in a final sample of 416 stories, each of which was coded and analyzed.

Advocacy Materials Sample

FrameWorks researchers also gathered materials from advocacy organizations using a multi-staged research process. In collaboration with an advisory group led by Laura Robbins,[8] FrameWorks researchers created a list of over 50 organizations working on issues related to aging and older adults. This list of organizations was entered into Issue Crawler, a Web-based application that "crawls" an identified set of organizational sites and compiles all the shared links among organizations (including those both in the original set and those identified during the crawl).[9] Issue Crawler then uses a method called link analysis to determine the "network" of organizations for a given issue area, and the degree of prominence or influence of each

organization within that network, using links to each organization as a proxy for influence. *In short, Issue Crawler allows researchers to measure how often organizations in a given field refer to each other through the Internet, which then serves as a proxy for an organization's level of influence.* Using this software, researchers identified the 20 most influential organizations, and gathered approximately eight public-facing communications materials from each of these organizations. Materials included press releases, mission statements, and reports. From this process, researchers created a sample of 176 documents.

Analysis

Each media and advocacy document was coded to identify the presence or absence of the following narrative components:

Topic	What is the issue or problem covered in the document?
Value	What is at stake, or why is this issue a central concern?
Cause	How does this problem work, and who or what is causing it?
Success	How does the document characterize a more optimal outcome?
Solution	Who or what is responsible for addressing the issue?

After coding the data, analysis proceeded in three phases:

1. *Identification and Description*. FrameWorks researchers used a statistical technique known as cluster analysis to identify narratives as they appeared in text.[10] This approach depends on highlighting and organizing patterns of co-occurrence within the codes obtained from the text. In this case, the analysis measured *the degree to which specific narrative elements co-occur across the samples*. We used a version of cluster analysis called multidimensional scaling (MDS). This algorithm places the narrative components (e.g., topics, values, causes) on a two-dimensional grid. Components placed closer together on this plot co-occur more frequently in the sample than components placed farther apart.[11] In short, *this approach allows us to identify the component parts of specific narratives and to determine how frequently they occur together as narratives in the public discourse*.

2. *Measuring Dominance.* In the second stage of the analysis, we examined the dominance of narratives identified. We defined a piece as having a dominant narrative if that narrative accounted for at least 40 percent of a piece's content. Pieces in which the content was too scattered to identify a single dominant narrative were not assigned to a narrative cluster.

3. *Comparison*. After identifying the central narratives in media and advocacy discourses, and measuring their relative dominance, we then compared the results between the media and advocacy samples.

Media and Advocacy Narratives

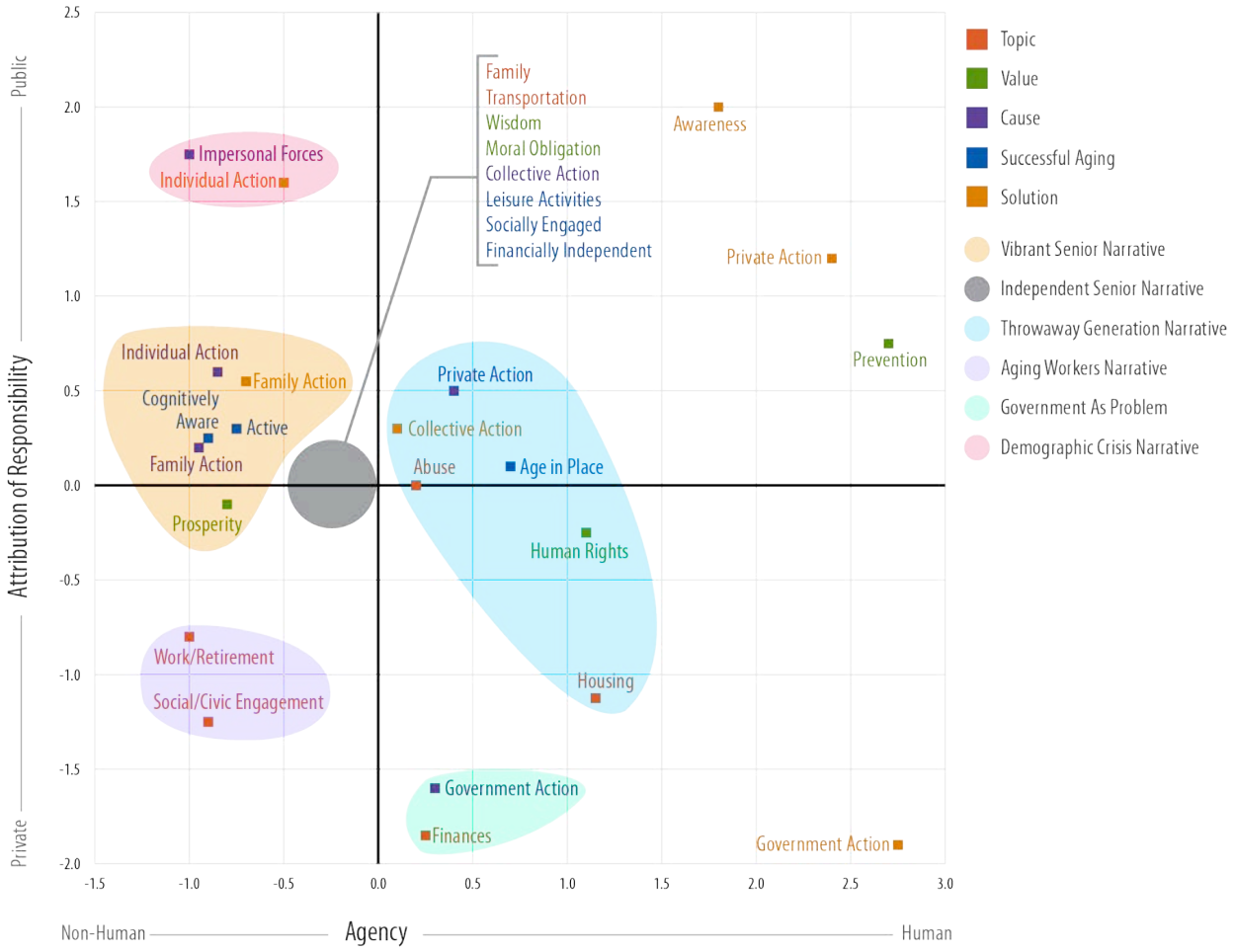
In general, our analysis found the same narratives present in both media and organizational materials. Of the seven narratives identified, five appear in both media and advocacy samples. Figures 1 and 2 present the narrative clusters in media and advocacy materials, respectively.

Figure 1:

Narrative Clusters: Media Materials

Figure 2:

Narrative Clusters: Advocacy Materials



Each graph above has two dimensions. The horizontal axis represents *agency*, or the capacity of an individual or institutional actor to act or effect change. Narratives that locate agency at either the institutional or individual level are represented on the right side of this axis. Narratives that attribute agency not to people or institutions, but to large-scale, impersonal forces (i.e., uncontrollable demographic change or even supernatural intervention) are represented on the left side of the graph. For example, in Figure 1, the value of *Prevention* is located on the figure's far right side; it highlights specific actions that people can take to effect change in the lives of older adults and prevent negative outcomes. The value of *Prosperity*, on the other hand, is located on the figure's far left side. It focuses on changes that result from impersonal or natural forces — for example, the idea that the country's economic well-being is a result of demographic change that will occur irrespective of any human action or intervention. In short, *plot points that are farther to the right side of Figures 1 and 2 correspond to stronger statements about remediating problems and changing outcomes.*

The vertical axis on each graph represents *responsibility* — that is, whether aging issues are presented as a matter of *public* or *private* concern. Elements closer to the top of the plot construct aging issues as a public responsibility, remediable by governmental and collective social action. Elements that appear closer to the

bottom of the plot are framed as private issues, or problems that are the responsibility of individuals, their family members or private industry.

The plots above also include narrative elements that appear in the relevant discourse, but that are *not* associated with a specific narrative cluster. For example, the topic of *Health Care* was covered broadly by both advocacy organizations and the media, but did not occur in consistent combination with other narrative elements such as values, causal explanations, or solutions. In other words, the topic of *Health Care* was not embedded in a broader narrative. Similarly, advocates frequently promoted governmental action to solve problems associated with aging. However, these mentions did not appear consistently with other narrative elements, and rarely constituted a dominant narrative focus.

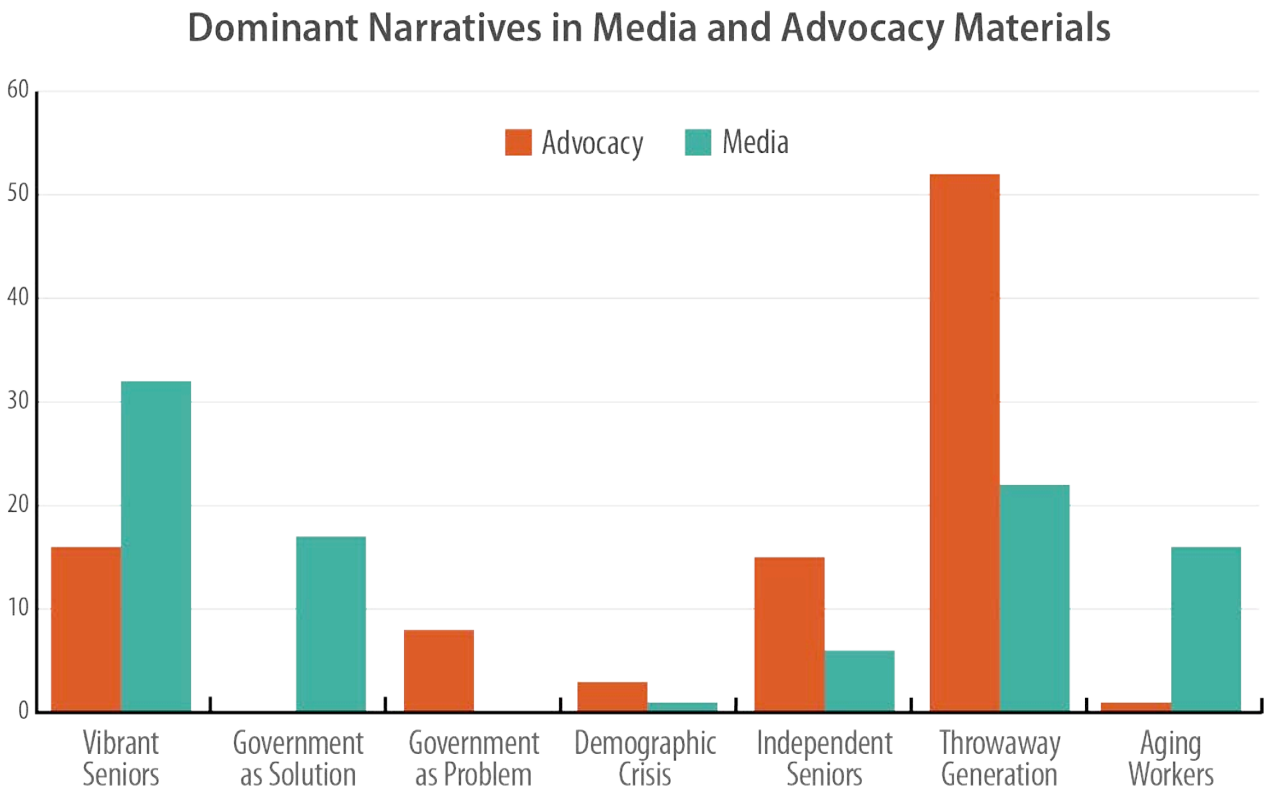
Table 1 presents a summary of each of the narratives identified in the plots.

NARRATIVE	CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS IN ADVOCACY MATERIALS	CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS IN MEDIA COVERAGE
Throwaway Generation	*Value:* Rights; Prevention *Topic:* Abuse; Housing *Success:* Aging in place *Cause:* Private institution *Solution:* Collective action; Public awareness*:* Private institution	*Value:* Moral; Prevention; Rights *Topic:* Abuse *Cause:* Private institution *Solution:* Private institution
Government As Solution	N/A	*Cause:* Government inaction *Topic:* Housing *Solution:* Government action
Aging Workers	*Topic:* Social and civic engagement; Work and retirement	*Topic:* Family; Money; Work and retirement
Vibrant Seniors	*Value:* Prosperity *Cause:* Family members and seniors' actions *Success:* Active; Cognitively healthy *Solution:* Actions taken by family members	*Cause:* Seniors' inaction; Societal inaction *Topic:* Social and civic engagement *Success:* Active seniors; Aging in place *Solution:* Seniors' action; Public awareness of seniors' issues
Independent Seniors	*Value:* Moral; Wisdom *Topic:* Family; Transportation *Cause:* Collective inaction *Success:* Uncomplicated death; Financially stable; Politically engaged; Socially active; Achievement	*Value:* Prosperity; Wisdom *Topic:* Transportation *Cause:* Family inaction *Success:* Cognitively healthy; Financially stable; Politically engaged; Socially active; Uncomplicated death *Solution:* Action on the part of family members; Collective action

NARRATIVE	CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS IN ADVOCACY MATERIALS	CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS IN MEDIA COVERAGE
Demographic Crisis	*Cause:* Demographic change *Solution:* Seniors' action	*Cause:* Demographic change
Government as Problem	*Topic:* Seniors' finances *Cause:* Government action or inaction	N/A

Figure 3 presents the relative dominance of the narratives identified above. This graph helps us understand the prevalence and power of stories in the media and advocacy discourse, and therefore the way in which these narratives are likely to shape the public's thinking about aging and older adults.

Figure 3:



It is important to note that, across all the narratives, media materials are characterized by episodic storytelling. That is, media stories focus narrowly on the trials and tribulations of individuals, and pay relatively little attention to the contexts, environments and systems in which individuals are embedded.

Indeed, over half (56 percent) of media stories in the sample were episodic in nature. In contrast, advocacy materials employ episodic storytelling much more rarely (7 percent of all pieces). In addition, and perhaps unsurprisingly, a third of media coverage mentions increasing public awareness as the most viable solution to addressing the challenges associated with aging and an aging population, while advocacy materials shy away from this panacea.

Below, we discuss in greater detail the specific narrative clusters in media and advocacy materials that emerged from analysis.

The *Throwaway Generation* Narrative

The *Throwaway Generation* narrative, present in both media and advocacy pieces, addresses negative treatment experienced by older adults, including elder abuse and discrimination. This was the most frequent dominant narrative used in advocacy materials, and the second-most frequent dominant narrative in the media sample (see Figure 3).

The *Throwaway Generation* narrative holds non-governmental institutions and private industry — such as nursing homes, assisted living facilities, or private employers — accountable for the maltreatment of older adults. Likewise, solutions proposed by both advocacy organizations and the media typically involve changes to these institutions, such as greater oversight of employees who work with older adults, or increased legal protections for workplace discrimination. The following excerpts illustrate this narrative in both advocacy and media materials.

> *Advocacy*
>
> *Elder and vulnerable/dependent adult abuse affects millions of people in the U.S. It occurs regularly in the community and in long-term care settings such as nursing homes and board and care homes/ assisted living facilities.*[12]
>
> *Media*
>
> *An ambitious new resource will be added to the campaign against elder abuse in Minnesota, taking square aim at a growing 21st century crime: financial exploitation of vulnerable adults. The Minnesota Elder Justice Center, slated to open at the William Mitchell College of Law in October, combines the Minnesota S.A.F.E. Elders Initiative developed by the Anoka County attorney's office with the Center for Elder Justice and Policy at William Mitchell. The new center — announced Thursday, on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day — will be staffed, have a toll-free hot line and offer resources through an Internet site, said Iris Freeman, associate director for the Center for Elder Justice and Policy.*[13]

While the main thrust of this narrative is similar across both media and advocacy materials, advocacy organizations tend to tell a broader story about the maltreatment of older adults than do media sources. Advocates point to several causal factors related to elder abuse, and are more likely than the media to assert that the issue of elder abuse requires *policy-level* action.

> *Advocacy*
> *In short, elder abuse does not fit a single profile. It is a complex cluster of distinct but related phenomena involving health, legal, social service, financial, public safety, aging, disability, protective services, and victim services, aging services, policy, research, education, and human rights issues. It therefore requires a coordinated multidisciplinary, multi-agency, and multi-system response.*[14]

Finally, this story, as told by advocacy organizations, frequently casts the maltreatment of older adults as a violation of human and civil rights. For example, the following piece likens the struggle for elder rights to the Civil Rights movement:

> *Advocacy*
> *For most older workers, the notion that we're living in a post-civil-rights era has little credence. While a greater share of older adults holds jobs than in past decades, these workers are convinced that age discrimination in the American workplace is alive and well. In a 2012 AARP survey of voters ages 50 and older, 64 percent said older workers face age discrimination at work, 34 percent reported that they or someone they know faced age discrimination in the last four years, and 78 percent agreed that Congress should enact stronger age discrimination protections.*[15]

> *Advocacy*
> *Consumer Voice has continuously urged policymakers to bar the egregious use of forced, pre-dispute arbitration clauses in long-term care facility contracts. Such agreements compel consumers and their family members to resolve any disputes that might arise regarding abuse, neglect or poor care within a facility through an arbitration process as opposed to a court of law, stripping these individuals of their constitutional right to a trial by jury.*[16]

The *Vibrant Senior* Narrative

The *Vibrant Senior* narrative centers around one definition of successful aging — the maintenance of physical activity. The *Vibrant Senior* narrative is the most prevalent narrative in the media materials (dominant in 32 percent of the sample).

The media and advocacy constructions of this narrative are similar in many respects: Both focus on how older adults must *decide* to remain active. Motivation, willpower, and individual action figure prominently in this narrative, which is the reason this cluster appears on the right side of the graph in Figures 1 and 2. Media presentations of this story, in particular, frequently focus on "epiphany moments" — older adults' realizations that their fates are in their own hands, and that they must *decide* to change their lives and become active if they are to enjoy their older years.

Advocacy

The 2014 United States of Aging Survey finds Americans 60 and older report they are more motivated than in the past two years to improve their health by exercising regularly and setting health goals — two simple steps which also relate to reported increases in optimism among seniors.[17]

Media

Not long ago, Clareyese Nelson acquired a lute at a garage sale. Now she wants to learn how to play it. Not everybody would aspire to master an ancient string instrument based on a chance rummaging find. But that's how Nelson rolls — ready to try whatever the world offers up. Ten years ago, when she was 65, Nelson drew up a list of 65 things she wanted to do before she died (she hadn't yet heard the term "bucket list," but that's basically what it was). She checked off a few items. Then she lost the list. "I thought maybe I could recreate it," said Nelson, of Minneapolis. "But then I thought, huh-uh." Now she barely remembers what was on the list. But that hasn't stopped her from keeping physically and socially active. Nelson, brightly attired and cheerfully extroverted, travels frequently — she celebrated her most recent birthday in Paris and London — takes singing lessons, leads rides for her bicycling club, volunteers, sees friends.[18]

While the general contours of the *Vibrant Senior* narrative are similar across media and advocacy materials, there are subtle differences in how this narrative is articulated. First, advocacy materials are more likely to emphasize the role of not only physical health and vitality, but mental and cognitive dimensions of health, as well. The following report, for example, advises older adults on steps they can take to improve their mental health:

Advocacy

Tom (not his real name) felt vacant when, at 65, his planned-for retirement and leisure was followed by a divorce and the loss of his traditional roles as father, husband and employee. A friend suggested an eight-week class called Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) might help him cope with stress, anxiety and depression. Mindfulness includes the formal practices of meditation and yoga, and informally integrates awareness and self-compassion in all aspects of one's daily life. The class not only taught Tom practical ways to cope, but also reconnected him with his youthful dreams of living a meaningful life.[19]

Advocacy materials also identify a more central role for family members in helping or impeding older adults' ability to achieve the *Vibrant Senior* ideal. For example, the following excerpt explains how older adults' caregiving responsibilities actually hinder their ability to remain active, and negatively affect their mental health:

Advocacy

Popular lore has it that to age successfully, retirees should stay busy (what David Ekerdt calls the "busy ethic," in an article from The Gerontologist [26:3, 1986]), remaining engaged in active leisure such as sports or hobbies, participating in productive activities like volunteering or even continuing to work. Typically not part of this agenda are caregiving responsibilities.[20]

Advocacy materials are also far more likely to link older adults' physical well-being and activity to broader societal goals. They often explain how active older adults contribute to our nation's prosperity and our collective economic well-being.

> *Advocacy*
> *OAA programs improve our country's fiscal future and promote efficiencies within the health care system by preventing unnecessary hospital stays, reducing re-admission rates, coordinating care, and managing care transitions.*[21]

In contrast, the media's articulation of the *Vibrant Senior* narrative rarely includes references to any collective impacts or goals.

The *Independent Senior* Narrative

The *Independent Senior* narrative focuses on independence and autonomy as another dimension of successful aging. The *Independent Senior* narrative is the more prominent of the positive representations of aging in advocacy materials (see Figure 3).

The *Independent Senior* narrative pedestals self-sufficiency as the marker of successful aging. It features discussions of transportation, positive social relationships, political engagement, financial independence, and the ability to make autonomous decisions about end-of-life care. Critically, ensuring that seniors are able to remain independent is represented in both media and advocacy materials as a moral obligation, as well as a way to respect the wisdom of our aging population.

> *Advocacy*
> *Jim Bassett of Roseville turns 72 next month — and still enjoys driving. Without driving, he says, "I'd be stranded at the house … you start looking at four walls and start wondering about what life (is)." As of Dec. 29, 515,185 of Michigan's almost 7.1 million licensed drivers were 75 or older.*[22]

> *Media*
> *Elder gay men and lesbians place high value on self-sufficiency and may be reluctant to accept help.*[23]

There are, again, subtle, but important, differences between the media and advocacy versions of this narrative. First, the media explicitly connect older adults' independence to mental acuity by arguing that older adults can only continue to live independently to the extent that their cognitive abilities remain strong.

Second, while the media draw connections between family dynamics and older adults' independence, advocacy organizations are more likely to focus on the social and economic conditions that make independent living more or less likely to occur. That is, older adults' independence is a private, family matter in the media, but a collective, public issue for advocacy organizations. This difference is exemplified by the contrast between the following excerpts.

Media

"People envision living out their lives as independently as they want to be, if their health allows, but a lot of the issues that come to us about someone needing assistance to pay their bills, wouldn't exist if they had more resources," she said.

Advocacy

Another reality is that seniors see Las Vegas as a retirement location. Even those who raised families here are not immune to being alone in their later years. "Kids tend to move away and not be around any more," Blair said. "It used to be there were three generations under one roof."[24]

Advocacy materials focus on the financial requirements for older adults to live independently — independence is not simply a matter of choice, but is determined by a host of factors, including access to resources. In contrast, the media focus on family dynamics as the primary factor that shapes the ability of older adults to live independently.

The *Demographic Crisis* Narrative

Media and advocacy organizations warn of the myriad challenges that come with an aging population. Advocacy materials employed this narrative at slightly higher rates than the media (see Figure 3). This narrative describes the "graying of the American population" as an impending social crisis that will have wide-reaching consequences. Furthermore, statistics related to demographic change are frequently employed to convey a sense of urgency about aging issues — the assumption being, presumably, that urgency will motivate readers to act. The following examples demonstrate how this crisis narrative is applied to a range of issues, from the size of road signs to economic downturns.

Media

Over the next 20 years the proportion of the U.S. population over age 60 will dramatically increase, as 77 million baby boomers reach traditional retirement age. By 2030 — in just 16 years — more than 70 million Americans will be 65 and older, twice the number in 2001. At that point, older Americans will comprise nearly 20 percent of the U.S. population, representing one in every five Americans.[25]

Advocacy

With pending population growth in the state, most of it senior citizens, Florida is going to need bigger signs. Amy Baker, the Legislature's chief economist, recently told state lawmakers Florida is poised to overtake New York and become the nation's third most populous state by 2016, behind California and Texas. Over the next 20 years, 4.8 million people are expected to move here, and nearly 57 percent of them will be senior citizens.[26]

The number of people age 65 and older in the United States is expected to almost double by 2050, a shift that is expected to drastically alter the nation's racial makeup and pressure its economy, two government reports released on Tuesday said.[27]

Unlike media materials, advocacy pieces point to steps individuals should take to weather the upcoming demographic storm. Media materials, on the other hand, tend to focus on the uncontrollable effects of the upcoming "silver tsunami." For example, the following excerpt exhorts policymakers to address the housing

issues that will result from an aging population, but ultimately holds older adults and their families responsible for addressing their own housing needs.

> *Media*
>
> *"Recognizing the implications of this profound demographic shift and taking immediate steps to address these issues is vital to our national standard of living," says Chris Herbert, acting managing director of the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies. "While it is ultimately up to individuals and their families to plan for future housing needs, it is also incumbent upon policy makers at all levels of government to see that affordable, appropriate housing, as well as supports for long-term aging in the community, are available for older adults across the income spectrum."*[28]

The *Aging Workers* Narrative

The media are more likely than advocacy organizations to employ narratives about older adults' employment and retirement issues (Figure 3). Consistent with the composition of other narratives, there are subtle differences in the stories media and advocacy organizations tell about older adults' labor market and retirement experiences.

In advocacy materials, the *Aging Workers* narrative focuses on older adults' social and civic engagement. These stories describe how older adults' social relationships and skills can assist them in what is often perceived as a hostile labor market, how participation in the labor market fosters new kinds of social engagement, and how successful retirement allows seniors the ability to engage civically through volunteer opportunities:

> *Advocacy*
>
> *Start by taking an inventory of the skills and experience you have acquired through jobs and activities in your life. Work, parenting, hobbies, part-time and seasonal work, volunteering — all require skills that can be readily applied to the employment you seek. Describe the main duties for each activity and list the skills you used to accomplish them, then think about how these skills could apply to a job that interests you.*[29]

The media version of this narrative highlights how familial structures and, importantly, the gendered division of labor in households, impact employment, retirement, and economic stability. For example, the following article asserts that women are more likely to experience poverty during retirement because they are more likely to leave paid employment in order to take on family caregiving responsibilities:

> *Media*
>
> *"Women who live, on average, five years longer than men, and who have in many cases left the workforce prematurely to care for an ailing spouse, special needs child, or their elderly parents, find that their financial resources are exhausted by the time they themselves age into the need for care," said Yamada, who represents parts of Solano, Napa and several other counties. "With fewer financial resources remaining, many single older women face a long, lonely and bleak retirement."*[30]

The *Government As Solution* Narrative

Both the media and advocacy organizations consistently reference government policy in addressing the challenges associated with aging, and the growing population of older adults. However, the media employ a coherent narrative to convey information about government action, while advocates' references to government policy are randomly distributed through their materials, and are not embedded in any broader narrative.

The media's narrative on government policy focuses on how the government should address seniors' housing issues, in particular. For example, journalists and other commentators in this sample argue that government action is needed to provide funding for community-based programs that allow older adults to age in place, and prevent the need for institutional care:

> *Media*
>
> *Margaret, 89, is blind in one eye, struggles with diabetes and mild dementia. We keep her on track, making sure she takes her meds. She enjoys exercise and intellectually stimulating activities, while her husband gets much needed rest. Margaret is not going to the emergency room anymore for out-of-control diabetes, and she is safe and happy. End result: We are saving the county money. We provide lifeline interventions that prevent institutionalization. The community can help. Call or email your county supervisor and tell him or her to step up and provide funding for community-based services for seniors.*

> *Media*
>
> *Can you imagine living in your car in your retirement? That's a reality Dollie, a 73-year-old woman from Fairfield, California, faced recently. In poor health and with very limited income, Dollie could no longer keep up with the rising costs of her food, gas, medications, and rent, and she faced some desperate choices. At an age when many working Americans are planning their retirement vacations, or spending more time with their grandchildren, Dollie was homeless. She worked all her life, but her limited income and health benefits provided through our safety net programs for seniors were simply inadequate.*[31]

The *Government As Problem* Narrative

While advocacy organizations do not employ a consistent narrative with respect to government solutions, they regularly point to governmental action as a causal factor in older adults' financial challenges. More specifically, these stories decry the impact of federal budget cuts on older adults' financial stability, as exemplified in the following passage.

> *Advocacy*
>
> *The House of Representatives is scheduled to vote this week on a budget resolution from House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (R-WI) that could significantly harm our nation's seniors, particularly millions struggling to make ends meet. The Ryan proposal cuts federal spending by $5.1 trillion over 10 years, with almost $3 trillion coming from healthcare and 69% from programs for low-income Americans.*[32]

Importantly, the *Government As Problem* narrative is not present in the media.

Comparison of Media and Advocacy Discourse

Media and advocacy organizations are telling similar narratives about aging and older adults in America, but there are important differences in the content and focal points of these narratives. In this section, we highlight the similarities and differences in media and advocacy narratives, and analyze their likely impacts on public thinking about aging.

Similarities

Media and advocacy discourses on aging overlap in the following areas.

Relatively few advocacy or media pieces focus on a single, dominant narrative. Of the 171 pieces in the advocacy sample, 84 (or 49 percent) lacked a dominant narrative. This means that only half the pieces provided a coherent narrative. Media coverage shares this feature, but to a lesser extent. Among the media pieces examined, 159 of 404 — about 40 percent — lacked a dominant narrative.

Both media coverage and advocacy organizations promote ideals of successful aging without reference to public action. This report confirms other analyses that demonstrate the absence of policy-level solutions in public discussions of successful aging, and idealized representations of the aging process.[33] The two narrative clusters that present idealized notions of aging — the *Vibrant Senior* and the *Independent Senior* — fail to mention how governmental action might be necessary for these ideals to become lived experience for many older adults. While government action is referenced in relation to both causing and solving *problems* associated with aging, it is rarely a factor in positive or idealized descriptions of aging.

Implications:

Prior FrameWorks research suggests that the overlaps in media and advocacy coverage will have particularly unproductive impacts on public perceptions of aging, and support for social policies designed to improve older adults' well-being. Previous FrameWorks research, as well as research conducted by other social and cognitive scientists,[34] shows that, when people are confronted with an incomplete story, they fall back on their dominant understandings of how the issue works in order to fill in missing elements. In short, if elements are missing, people fill them in with their top-of-mind associations. Given the cultural models that people have available to them on this topic, this filling-in process is not likely to result in story elements that align with the information that advocates and experts wish to convey.[35] Explicitly providing these missing pieces in order to tell more complete stories is a major recommendation to emerge from this research, and is discussed in depth below.

The biggest problem among the dominant patterns of public understanding identified in FrameWorks' research is the common assumption that individuals are exclusively responsible for how they age.[36] This idealized vision of aging is rarely achievable in the real world, according to experts.[37] When the media and advocacy organizations fail to link successful aging to policies that actually enable older adults to remain active and socially engaged, they reinforce the public's highly individualistic understandings of the aging process. The result is that people will understand successful aging to be achieved exclusively through lifestyle choices rather than as affected by supports, larger social structures, or public policies. Further, when the ideal

is not achieved, many Americans will assume that the reason for the failure lies in poor individual decision-making by seniors.

FrameWorks' interviews with aging experts demonstrated that a central communications goal among those in the field is to focus on the opportunities associated with increased longevity, and the positive civic, social, and economic contributions of older adults. Experts assert that realizing this potential requires making adjustments to our public institutions, policies, and infrastructure. However, in their public-facing materials, advocacy organizations do not consistently explain the relationship between community, institutional and policy-level supports, and successful aging. This is more than a missed opportunity, as this omission gives space for the public's current understandings to breathe and gain momentum.

Differences

Comparing media and advocacy discourses also reveals a set of notable differences in representation of aging issues. In many cases, these differences represent places where advocates' messages are not being picked up by media, thus suggesting the need for reframing strategies that can result in wider dissemination. Notable differences include the following:

The media discuss older adults' financial issues and economic status as private, family problems, while advocacy organizations focus more squarely on governmental responsibility. Advocacy organizations are more likely to hold government responsible for protecting older adults' economic security. Furthermore, advocates explain how financial stability is a prerequisite for older adults' social and civic engagement. In contrast, the media frame financial problems in later stages of life as issues that are best addressed within the family, and consistently promote the idea that financial issues are an individual-level responsibility.

Media coverage is more episodic, and discusses individual awareness as one of the most effective solutions to aging issues. Advocacy organizations tell stories about aging as a *public issue*. The media, however, construct problems associated with aging as "*private troubles*." Across all the narratives employed by the media, the tendency is towards episodic and individualized storytelling.

The media present positive and idealized notions of aging, while advocacy organizations are more likely to tell problem-oriented stories. The *Vibrant Senior* is the most dominant media narrative, while advocacy organizations frequently highlight the maltreatment of older adults by employing the *Throwaway Generation* narrative. This suggests that the media are more likely to disseminate idealized representations of aging, while advocacy organizations are more focused on problems associated with aging, and on how these problems are caused by an inadequate social safety net.

Implications:

The media narrative powerfully aligns with the public's sense that aging is an individual and private responsibility. FrameWorks' research consistently shows that this type of individual, episodic storytelling leads audiences to ignore calls for public solutions, and fails to remind them of their collective responsibility to address social problems.[38] We argue that a complete narrative on aging includes both a definition of a problem as well as a statement or vision of a more optimal outcome. Advocacy organizations understandably want to call attention to the challenges that older adults experience. However, problem stories that do not regularly include *alternate visions* and *concrete steps to achieve those visions* risk cuing the public's idea that

aging is an inherently (and therefore immutably) negative process characterized by deterioration, senility, and dependence.[39]

Conclusion and Preliminary Recommendations

The media and advocacy organizations are two important sources of public information about aging and older adults in America. They have the power to shape or contest existing patterns of thinking. This report has identified advocacy messages that may have inadvertent, but negative, impacts on public understanding, as well as more productive messages that are not gaining traction in the popular media. Bending the arc of media representations of aging is a formidable, but necessary, task. The following recommendations are included to help communicators tell well-framed stories that have the potential to stick and, therefore, to change the larger public discourse around this important topic. These strategies can also assist communicators to better navigate the current media environment around aging. We conclude with a discussion of framing strategies advocates should avoid because of their likely unproductive impacts on public thinking.

What to advance

Connect representations of successful aging to the implementation of effective social policies. Achieving our widely held ideals regarding what it means to age well depends on a specific constellation of public policies and social infrastructure. For example, older adults can "age in place" when there are affordable housing options, public infrastructure that facilitates transportation needs, healthcare policies that offer more opportunities for home-based care, and other types of supports. Communicators must always make direct linkages between problems, policies, and improved outcomes, especially when they are trying to promote positive visions about aging. Without this level of explanation, the public will equate aging outcomes with lifestyle choices, or will think about positive outcomes as "ideal," but impossible to achieve in the "real" world. The following is an example of this explanatory approach:

> *We know that older adults' health and well-being improve when they have varied opportunities to stay socially engaged. But right now, far too many seniors are isolated because they lack places to go and the means to get to those places. We need to do everything we can to ensure that all communities have opportunities for seniors to interact socially — such as community centers with programming for older adults, farmers markets, and volunteer opportunities in our schools and libraries. And we need to make sure we give older adults reliable and safe ways to access these opportunities to be a contributing part of their community.*

Tell complete stories about the process of aging, and challenges faced by older adults. Communicators should aim to tell complete stories in their organizational materials, as well as in interactions with media professionals. Journalists are professional storytellers — they are looking for complete stories. Those working on aging issues can improve their messages' odds of entering into the public discourse by framing messages as stories and giving those writing media stories what they are looking for. Furthermore, complete stories will disrupt the public's tendency to "fill in the blanks" with default — and often unproductive — understandings, and help dislodge these default understandings in favor of more productive ways of thinking. A good strategy is to complete the following checklist when crafting public-facing materials:

Does this communication:

- ☑ *Clearly describe the problem or issue that impacts older adults?*
- ☑ *Explicitly state why addressing the issue is important for all Americans, and what is at stake if we fail to act?*
- ☑ *Explain how the problem works, including who or what is causing the problem?*
- ☑ *Describe the goal, outcome, or what the situation would ideally look like?*
- ☑ *Provide concrete and public solutions to address the issue, and explain how they result in improved outcomes for older adults?*

Use values to remind the public of our collective responsibility to older adults, and the collective benefits that accrue to all Americans when we provide them with social supports. The media and advocacy organizations are using values to remind members of the public of their obligations to older generations — their moral duties to care for older adults, to prevent them from experiencing harm, and to protect their rights. Along with imparting a sense of our collective responsibility, advocates should consistently emphasize how all Americans benefit when we ensure that older adults can contribute to our country. Advocates occasionally invoke older adults' contributions to our collective prosperity, but they might also think about invoking values like *Human Potential* and *Interdependence*, which are iterated below.

> *Only when we realize the talents and contributions of all Americans, no matter their age, can we move our country forward.*
>
> *Because aging is a process we all experience, Americans of all ages do better when we make sure everyone has what they need to age successfully.*

Provide clear, concrete, and public solutions when describing challenges related to aging. Audiences should always be presented with clear solutions to problems presented in communications. Communicators should also explain *how* a policy and solution will improve outcomes for older adults, thereby improving outcomes for society writ large. Finally, solutions included in communications should match the scope of the problem presented. For example, if a problem is caused by failures in the system of social supports, the solution should identify how to put those systems in place, rather than focusing at the level of individual decision-making.

What to avoid

Avoid lists that simply enumerate issues that disproportionately impact older adults. It is true that an aging population presents a wide range of challenges. However, advocates should avoid laundry lists of these problems in favor of clear explanations of a problem, accompanied by concrete descriptions of the steps necessary to arrive at a solution, and the outcome that will result from following these steps.

Avoid stories of the "Triumphant Senior" whose well-being is the product of prudent choices. The media are filled with stories about older adults who saved for retirement, paid attention to their health, and, as a result, have exciting and vibrant lives in their "golden years." Advocates should always emphasize that individual behaviors happen in a larger social context. For example, stories about people who have

successfully saved for retirement should include explanations of the social policies and supports that facilitated this outcome.

Avoid framing demographic change as an impending crisis. It is important that advocacy organizations strike the right balance between communicating the challenges associated with an aging population (the urgency of the situation), and a sense that this challenge is assailable (the efficacy of the solution). Stories that imply, or explicitly state, that we face an impending crisis are likely to overwhelm readers with the magnitude of the problem and ultimately lead to disengagement with the issue at hand — resulting in lowered support for necessary policy measures.

Expanding media narratives is a critical task for experts and advocates working to improve older adults' well-being, and to help our society better realize the civic, social, and economic contributions of this important demographic group. To the extent that advocates can disseminate a new, productive and sticky story about the aging process and the role of older adults in American society, they can create a new kind of "drip, drip" effect on public understanding — one that shapes our understanding to consider how our public institutions, policies and infrastructure can improve outcomes not only for older adults, but for our society as a whole.

Appendix A: Organizational Data

Organizations/Website Resources Included in Analysis

Non-Governmental

- AARP
- Alzheimer's Association
- American Society on Aging
- ElderCare Locator
- Leadership Council of Aging Organizations
- National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
- National Association of States United for Aging and Disability
- National Center on Elder Abuse
- National Council on Aging
- National Indian Council on Aging
- National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center
- National Senior Citizen Law Center
- Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders
- The Consumer Voice

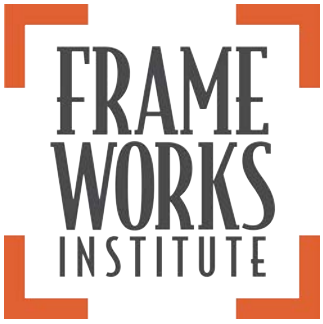
Governmental

- Administration on Aging
- LongTermCare.gov
- Medicare.gov
- National Institute on Aging
- National Institutes of Health Senior Health
- Social Security Administration

Table 2: Narrative Components of Aging

NARRATIVE COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES OF CODES
Story Type	Are the media using episodic or thematic stories?	Story(ies) about individuals Stories about social systems
Topic or Plotline	What is the problem or issue?	Healthcare issues Work/retirement/financial issues Elder abuse and maltreatment Housing concerns Transportation issues
Causal Story	Why did the problem occur?	Seniors' individual action/inaction Family members' action/inaction Governmental action/inaction Private institution action/inaction
Value	Why should Americans be concerned about the problem?	Moral obligation to older generations Preventing problems with aging Older adults' rights
Solution	Who or what should address the issue?	Seniors' individual action Family members' action Governmental action Private institution action
Successful Aging	What does it mean to age well?	Remain physically active Stay socially and civically engaged Age in place Experience good mental and cognitive health

About the FrameWorks Institute



The FrameWorks Institute is an independent nonprofit organization founded in 1999 to advance science-based communications research and practice. The Institute conducts original, multi-method research to identify the communications strategies that will advance public understanding of social problems, and improve public support for remedial policies. The Institute's work also includes teaching the nonprofit sector how to apply these science-based communications strategies in their work for social change. The Institute publishes its research and recommendations, as well as toolkits and other products for the nonprofit sector, at www.frameworksinstitute.org.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of FrameWorks Institute.

Please follow standard APA rules for citation, with FrameWorks Institute as publisher:

Simon, A., O'Neil, M., & Haydon, A. (2015). *Aging, agency and attribution of responsibility: Shifting public discourse about older adults*. Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.

© FrameWorks Institute 2015

Endnotes

[1] Raman, P., Harwood, J., Weis, D., Anderson, J.L., & Miller, G. (2008). Portrayals of older adults in U.S. and Indian magazine advertisements: A cross-cultural comparison. *Howard Journal of Communications 19*(3), 221-240.

[2] Featherstone, M., & Wernick, A. (2003). *Images of aging: Cultural representations of later life*. London, England: Routledge. Holstein, M.B., & Minkler, M. (2003). Self, society, and the "new gerontology." *The Gerontologist 43*(6), 787-96. Katz, S. (2000). Busy bodies: Activity, aging, and the management of everyday life. *Journal of Aging Studies 14*(2), 135-52. Rozanova, J. (2010). Discourse of successful aging in the Globe & Mail: Insights from critical gerontology. *Journal of Aging Studies 24*(4), 213-22. Rozanova, J., Northcott, H.C., & McDaniel, S.A. (2006). Seniors and portrayals of intra-generational and inter-generational inequality in the Globe and Mail. *Canadian Journal on Aging/La Revue Canadienne du Vieillissement 25*(4), 373-86.

[3] Katz, S. (2000). Busy bodies: Activity, aging, and the management of everyday life. *Journal of Aging Studies 14*(2), 135-52. Rozanova, J. (2010). Discourse of successful aging in the Globe & Mail: Insights from critical gerontology. *Journal of Aging Studies 24*(4), 213-22. Rozanova, J., Northcott, H.C., & McDaniel, S.A. (2006). Seniors and portrayals of intra-generational and inter-generational inequality in the Globe and Mail. *Canadian Journal on Aging/La Revue Canadienne du Vieillissement 25*(4), 373-86.

[4] Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M., Signorelli, N., & Shanahan, J. (2002). Growing up with television: The cultivation perspective. In J. Bryant, D. Zillman, & M.B. Oliver (Eds.),. *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (pp. 17-41). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

[5] Bruner, J.S. (1990). *Acts of meaning. The Jerusalem-Harvard lectures*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Schank, R.C. (1995). *Tell me a story: Narrative and intelligence. Rethinking theory*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

[6] Lindland, E., Fond, M., Haydon, A., & Kendall-Taylor, N. (2015). *Gauging aging: Mapping the gaps between expert and public understandings of aging in America.* Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.

[7] The exact search string included: At least three mentions of the following terms: seniors, older adults, older people, older persons, senior citizens, elder, aging, growing old, growing older and older Americans.

[8] Laura A. Robbins Consulting, LLC: http://larc.net/

[9] For more information, see https://www.issuecrawler.net.

[10] Everitt, B., Landau, S., Leese, M., & Stahl, D. (2011). *Cluster analysis* (5th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

[11] Borg, I., & Groenen, P.J.F. (2005). *Modern multidimensional scaling: Theory and applications* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.

[12] National Center on Elder Abuse. (2012). *Fact sheet: Abuse of residents of long term care facilities*. Retrieved from http://www.centeronelderabuse.org/docs/Abuse_of_Residents_of_Long_Term_Care_Facilities.pdf.

[13] Levy, P. (2014, June 13). Center will fight elder abuse. *Star Tribune*, p. 1B.

[14] Connelly, M.T., Brandi, B., & Breckman, R. (2014). *The elder justice roadmap: A stakeholder initiative to respond to an emerging health, justice, financial and social crisis.* Retrieved from http://ncea.acl.gov/Library/Gov_Report/docs/EJRP_Roadmap.pdf.

[15] Kohrmon, D.B. (2014, January 1). As more workers age, bias and insecurity persist. *Aging Today: The Bimonthly Newspaper of the American Society on Aging*. Retrieved from http://www.asaging.org/blog/more-workers-age-bias-and-insecurity-persist.

[16] The National Consumer Voice. (2014). *Executive order barring forced arbitration in government contracts highlights need to prohibit similar clauses in long-term-care facility agreements*. (Press release). Retrieved from http://theconsumervoice.org/uploads/files/actions-and-news-updates/CVArbitrationExecutiveOrderPressRelease.pdf.

[17] National Council on Aging. (2014). *Survey shows older Americans' health engagement, outlook on life improve*. (Press release). Retrieved from http://www.ncoa.org/press-room/press-release/older-americans-report-better-health-engagement-outlook.html.

[18] Read, K. (2014, July 30). The good life: Midlife. *Star Tribune*, p. 6.

[19] McBee, L. (2014, June 25). Be here now — and age mindfully. *Aging Today: The Bimonthly Newspaper of the American Society on Aging.* Retrieved from http://www.asaging.org/blog/be-here-now-and-age-mindfully.

[20] Szinovacz, M. (2014, September 4). Does caregiving affect retirement? It depends upon the caregiver—and the care. *Aging Today: The Bimonthly Newspaper of the American Society on Aging.* Retrieved from http://www.asaging.org/blog/does-caregiving-affect-retirement-it-depends-upon-caregiver-and-care

[21] Szinovacz, M.E. (2014, September 4). Does caregiving affect retirement? It depends upon the caregiver — and the care. *Aging Today: The Bimonthly Newspaper of the American Society on Aging.* Retrieved from http://www.asaging.org/blog/does-caregiving-affect-retirement-it-depends-upon-caregiver-and-care.

[22] Lawrence, E.D. (2014, January 20). When should elderly people stop driving? 88-year-old's death raises concern. *Detroit Free Press.* Retrieved from http://www.freep.com/article/20140120/NEWS06/301200015/.

[23] National Center on Elder Abuse. (2013). *Mistreatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) elders.* Retrieved from http://www.centeronelderabuse.org/docs/ResearchBrief_LGBT_Elders_508web.pdf

[24] Hogan, J. (2014, May 10). 70-year-old honored for efforts to help other seniors. *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. Retrieved from http://www.reviewjournal.com/trending/good-news/70-year-old-honored-efforts-help-other-seniors.

[25] Lewis-Mason-Thurston: Area Agency on Aging. (2014.) *Advocacy issues*. Retrieved from http://www.lmtaaa.org/advocacy.html.

[26] Rosica, J.L. (2013, October 1). More seniors, bigger road signs. *The Tampa Tribune*.

[27] Heavey, S. (2014, May 6). *Number of U.S. elderly to double by 2050: Reports*. Reuters. Retrieved from http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/06/us-usa-aging-census-idUSKBN0DM1BS20140506.

[28] AARP. (2014). *U.S. unprepared to meet the housing needs of its aging population.* (Press release.) Retrieved from http://www.aarp.org/about-aarp/press-center/info-09-2014/us-unprepared-to-meet-housing-needs-of-aging.html.

[29] Eldercare.gov. (2014). *Employment options: Tips for older job seekers*. Retrieved from http://www.eldercare.gov/eldercare.net/public/Resources/Brochures/docs/Older_Jobseekers_Brochure.pdf

[30] Raskin-Zrihen, R. (2014, March 25). More women than men outliving their resources, surviving in poverty. *San Jose Mercury News*. Retrieved from http://www.mercurynews.com/pensions/ci_25416115/more-women-than-men-outliving-their-resources-surviving.

[31] Haase, J. (2014, June 19). Letter to the editor. *Oakland Tribune*. Retrieved from http://www.mercurynews.com/ci_25990777/june-19-letters-editor.
[31] National Senior Citizens Law Center. (2014). *Where we stand*. Retrieved from http://www.nsclc.org/.

[32] National Council on Aging. (2014). *10 ways the Ryan budget could harm older Americans.* (Press release.) Retrieved from http://www.ncoa.org/press-room/press-release/10-ways-the-ryan-budget.html.

[33] Rozanova, J. (2010). Discourse of successful aging in the Globe & Mail: Insights from critical gerontology. *Journal of Aging Studies 24*(4), 213-22. Rozanova, J., Northcott, H.C., & McDaniel, S.A. Seniors and portrayals of intra-generational and inter-generational inequality in the Globe and Mail. *Canadian Journal on Aging/La Revue Canadienne du Vieillissement 25*(4), 373-86.

[34] Bruner, J.S. (1990). *Acts of meaning. The Jerusalem-Harvard lectures.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Schank, R.C. (1995). *Tell me a story: Narrative and intelligence. Rethinking theory*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

[35] Lindland, E., Fond, M., Haydon, A., & Kendall-Taylor, N. (2015). *Gauging aging: Mapping the gaps between expert and public understandings of aging in America.* Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.

[36] Lindland, E., Fond, M., Haydon, A., & Kendall-Taylor, N. (2015). *Gauging aging: Mapping the gaps between expert and public understandings of aging in America.* Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.

[37] Lindland, E., Fond, M., Haydon, A., & Kendall-Taylor, N. (2015). *Gauging aging: Mapping the gaps between expert and public understandings of aging in America.* Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.

[38] Iyengar, S. (1991). *Is anyone responsible?: How television frames political issues.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

[39] Lindland, E., Fond, M., Haydon, A., & Kendall-Taylor, N. (2015). *Gauging aging: Mapping the gaps between expert and public understandings of aging in America.* Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.