

Aging Expectations and Physical Activity Behaviours

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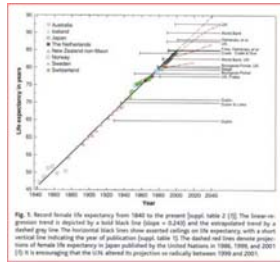
Of all the humans who have ever lived to age 65, half are currently alive.

Rowe and Kahn, 1998

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Life Expectancy



Oeppen and Vaupel, 2002

- Normal versus 'Successful' Aging
 - How do we get more people on the 'successful' side of the equation?
 - Sport and PA

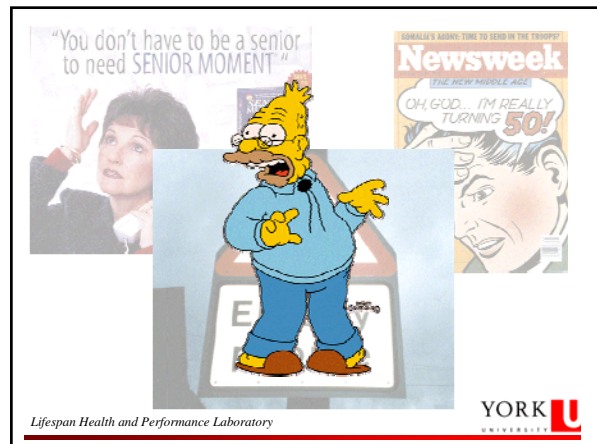
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What we know:

- Social stereotypes of aging are predominantly negative and often result in 'ageism'.
- Ageism and/or aging stereotypes have significant effects on performance and health

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What we don't know:

- RQ: How do negative expectations about one's aging affect involvement in physical activity and sports?

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Description of the Project

Participants:

249 community dwelling older adults (mean age = 70 years)

Survey:

- Expectations regarding Aging (ERA-12; Sarkisian et al., 2005)
- Physical Activity Scale for the Elderly (PASE; Washburn et al., 1993)
- Demographic factors

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Results:

Overall ERA

- Overall PA ($r = .19$)
- Light PA ($r = .14$)
- Strenuous Sports ($r = .15$)

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Sport Results

Physical Health ERA

- Light Sport ($r = .14$)
- Moderate Sport ($r = .15$)
- Strenuous Sport ($r = .15$)

All significant at $p < .05$

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General Conclusions

- Expectations towards one's aging affects involvement in PA and Sports
 - Consistent but small effects

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Implications for Sport and PA

- Need to improve public health messaging re: opportunities for Sport and PA
 - We have an image problem.
- ‘Toward a more positive view of aging’

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Future Directions:

- Aging expectations and involvement in other forms of preventive health behaviour
- Interventions to ‘disarm’ ageism and ageist stereotypes

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Support:

- Brad Meisner
- Aly Bailey

