



“There are some that would say we just, as a society, cannot afford the greatest gift we’ve ever achieved in humankind, which is longer life. If we look at aging the way we have for the past 200 years, we will turn it into a crisis, rather than a celebration. ... Longevity changes everything.”

– Dr. Joseph Coughlin, MIT AgeLab

What will it mean for all of us to grow up, live, and age in a society where half the citizens are over the age of 50? ***Coming of Age in Aging America***, a new 60-minute documentary from filmmaker Christine Herbes-Sommers and Vital Pictures, tells the story of this spectacular social transformation—its dimensions, challenges, and opportunities. Presented by Twin Cities PBS and distributed nationwide by American Public Television, ***Coming of Age in Aging America*** will air on WORLD Channel on June 30 and July 1, 2017 (listings at www.worldchannel.org), and on local public TV stations in the spring and summer (check local listings). It will also be available online for free at the Next Avenue website (www.nextavenue.org) in July 2017.

It’s widely accepted: most Americans are living decades longer than any generation in human history. This a staggering new and permanent transformation. And it’s not just Americans, we are an aging globe. But how will we live? Rather than looking at aging as an individual predicament, ***Coming of Age in Aging America*** (www.theagingamericaproject.com) makes connections to social policies and institutions, tackling topics such as how we work and where we live and how those arrangements could—or should—be updated to meet the current reality. It uses specific situations and characters as examples illustrating the kinds of stories playing out in cities, communities, and families all across the country. The film examines the current social security system; looks at the data being collected on the aging brain and body at MIT AgeLab; explores a town re-designing itself for multi-generational use; and observes a large medical system remolding its work environment to both retain older workers and welcome younger ones.

Through interviews with experts—including John W. Rowe, professor at Columbia University’s Aging Center; Lisa F. Berkman, professor of public policy and director of the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies; Laura L. Carstensen, professor and director of the Stanford University Center on Longevity; Joseph Coughlin, director of the MIT AgeLab; and urban planner Scott Ball—***Coming of Age in Aging America*** examines the exploding population shift, its impact on society, and the need to see the reach and magnitude of the changes an aging America will bring.



The film premiered at the American Society on Aging this spring to a full house and an overwhelming reception. Screenings are scheduled this summer in Atlanta and at the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics conference in San Francisco, among others. Additional video and print resources, including a Toolkit to assist organizers in creating successful screenings, are available at the project website.

Coming of Age in Aging America is aimed at creating conversation and action to productively shape America as an aging society. Content was developed in collaboration with the **MacArthur Network on Aging and Society** in collaboration with Northern Lights and The Frameworks Institute. Funding has been provided by the John A. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Sloan Foundation, AARP, and the Silver Century Foundation.

About the Filmmaker / Vital Pictures

Vital Pictures (www.vitalpix.com) is a Boston-based production company whose films and media projects explore provocative and timely sociopolitical and economic themes by “connecting-the-dots” between often invisible social systems and their historical construction, using meticulous research, storytelling, and innovative production design. They produced *Gaining Ground*, *Herskovits at the Heart of Blackness*, and *American Denial*, and collaborated with California Newsreel on *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?*; *Race: The Power of An Illusion*; and *The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of America*.

Christine Herbes-Sommers, president of Vital Pictures, has produced more than 100 hours of documentary, dramatic, and educational programming for public television broadcast over the last 40 years. She was honored with her first duPont-Columbia Award for *Joan Robinson: One Woman's Story*. She and California Newsreel also won a duPont-Columbia Award for the series *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?*. With California Newsreel she also produced *Race – The Power of an Illusion*. Herbes-Sommers was Executive Producer of *Herskovits at the Heart of Blackness*, winner of the John E. O'Connor Award from the American Historical Association, and **Producer** for the Emmy-nominated *American Denial*, both broadcast by Independent Lens on PBS.

About TPT – Twin Cities PBS

The mission of TPT is to “enrich lives and strengthen our community through the power of media.” As one of the nation’s leading public media organizations, TPT uses television, interactive media, and community engagement to advance education, culture and citizenship. Over its 50 plus year history, TPT has been recognized for its innovation and creativity with numerous awards, including Peabody awards and national and regional Emmys. Notable productions include the January 2017 film *Alzheimer’s: Every Minute Counts*, the four-part series *Constitution USA with Peter Sagal*; the Sundance Film Festival-nominated *Slavery by Another Name*; the Emmy Award-winning *The Forgetting: A Portrait of Alzheimer’s*; the Peabody Award-winning *Liberty! The American Revolution*; and two Emmy award-winning series distributed by APT: *Rudy Maxa’s World* and *MN Original*.

About American Public Television

American Public Television (APT) has been a leading syndicator of high-quality, top-rated programming to the nation’s public television stations since 1961. For more than 10 years, APT has annually

distributed one-third or more of the top 100 highest-rated public television titles in the U.S. Among its 300 new program titles per year, APT programs include prominent documentaries, news and current affairs programs, dramas, how-to programs, children's series and classic movies. *AfroPop*, *America's Test Kitchen From Cook's Illustrated*, *Rick Steves' Europe*, *Front and Center*, *Doc Martin*, *Nightly Business Report*, *Midsomer Murders*, *Vera*, *NHK Newslines*, *Lidia's Kitchen*, *Globe Trekker*, *Simply Ming*, and *P. Allen Smith's Garden Home* join numerous documentaries and performance programs popular with public television viewers. APT licenses programs internationally through its APT Worldwide service. Now in its 11th year, Create® TV — featuring the best of public television's lifestyle programming — is distributed by APT. APT also distributes WORLD™, public television's premier news, science and documentary channel. To find out more about APT's programs and services, visit APTonline.org.

CONTACT:

Christine Herbes-Sommers

Vital Pictures Inc.

617-777-4359

christine.herbes-sommers@vitalpix.com