



Michael Farmer and Peter Hubbell: Boomers Are Not "OK" on Madison Avenue



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I took advantage of a recent gathering of MediaVillage contributors to tap the expertise of two highly-regarded columnists: [Michael Farmer](#) and [Peter Hubbell](#). In our increasingly virtual work world, it was a rare opportunity for an in-person conversation with distributed colleagues — but, more importantly, on a topic not often top of mind in thinking about diversity and inclusion: age bias and the longevity economy. It's an area that impacts how ad agencies may survive or thrive, as well as the very content we consume and the products we're encouraged to purchase.

In a 20-minute, unedited stream of brilliance from these experts, problems were posed, and opinions and insights lobbed on this subject that's so aligned with Jack Myers' message: Our industry must [advance diversity](#) — and, in doing so, must understand why is it essential for the media and advertising community to not condescendingly say, "OK, boomer," but instead say, "We need you, boomers!"

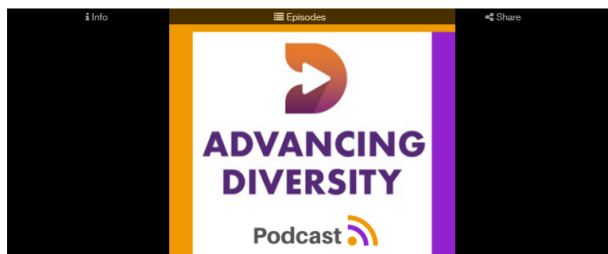
Farmer, while calm and charismatic, does not mince words on the state of the ad industry, as evidenced by the full title of his book, *Madison Avenue Manslaughter: An Inside View of Fee-Cutting Clients, Profit-Hungry Owners, and Declining Ad Agencies*, or in his regular column for MediaVillage, [Madison Avenue Makeover](#), which expands on the book's themes. He cautions in our conversation that "the agency CEOs ought to recognize the economic figures" — that the overwhelming percentage of disposable income in the United States is held by baby boomers — "and that they have not put together a staff that is capable of serving clients in all the dimensions that need to be served."

The equally eloquent Hubbell — author of other well-titled books, such as *The Old Rush* and the columnist behind [Age of Aging](#) — agrees and adds, "for all of the progress that has been made on inclusion, we are still excluding people of age." Hence, the birth of BoomAgers, the agency he built to target that very demographic because, he explains without ire, "we knew that the young clients would lack experience in the lives of baby boomers, through no fault of their own; they're simply young. But also, from experience and consumer understanding, we knew that they wouldn't be prioritizing [boomers]." So, he and his agency stepped up.

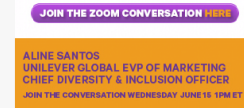
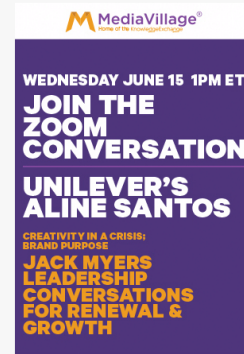
For the full conversation, listen to the podcast [here](#) or on [Apple Podcasts](#), [Stitcher](#), [iHeartRadio](#), or [YouTube](#) and hear:

- How has the "juniorization" of ad agency staffs affected the way they think about client problems;
- What are the growth opportunities and the ways brands should be positioning themselves;
- What is the main bias around age;
- Is brand loyalty all it's cracked up to be; and,
- How can multigenerational storytelling enhance marketing efforts?

You'll also learn why Hubbell won't wear Levi's anymore and if Farmer holds out hope for today's agencies.



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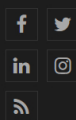
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