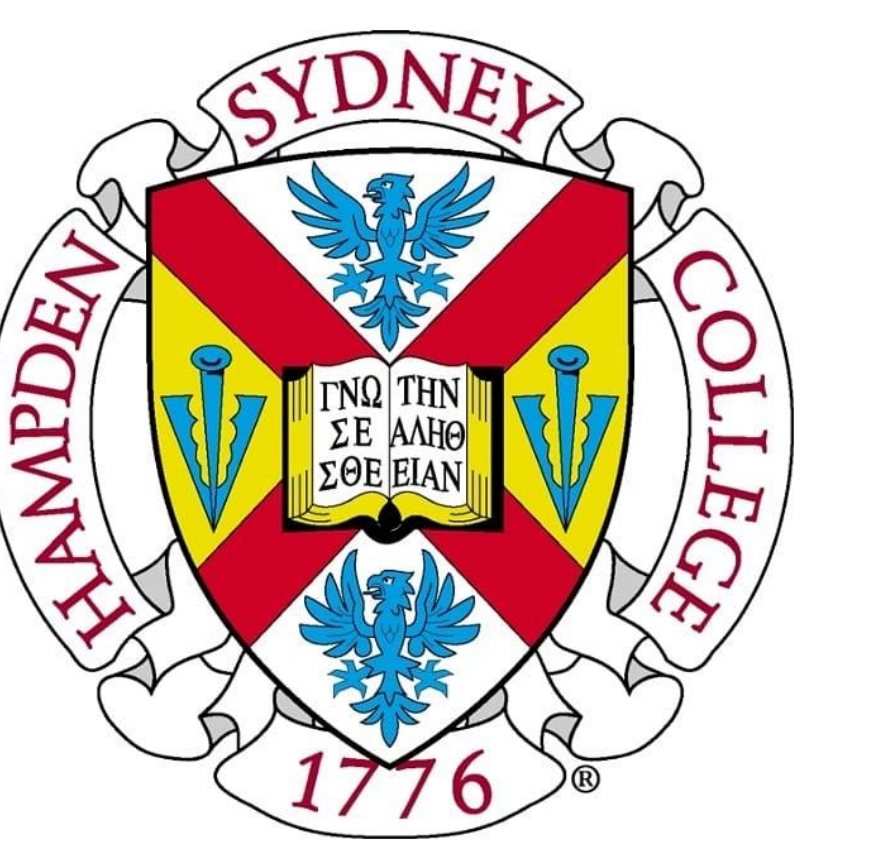


# When We See Gay Men, We Approve If They Are Young, and When We Read About How They Express Themselves, They Better Stick to Rainbow Flags



Coleman B. Meadows, Jennifer E. Vitale, and Ivo I. Gyurovski

## Introduction

- Although individuals explicitly tend to report more positive attitudes toward sexual minorities, prejudice remains prevalent in society (Dickter et al., 2015).
- Research shows that lesbian and gay people exposed to prejudice are more likely to experience decreased school engagement, decreased psychological well-being, and possibly higher levels of substance use (Hazel et al., 2018).
- Previous studies indicate that attitudes toward other sexual minorities, such as transgender people tend to be unfavorable as well (Norton & Herek, 2013; Nagoshi et al., 2008).
- However, Elischberger et al. (2016) found that individuals tend to express little disapproval toward transgender youths, speculating that children and adolescents are not judged as severely as adults might be because they are not considered as responsible for their behavior as adults.

## Study 1

- The purpose of the Study 1 was to examine how age (16-year-olds vs. 45-year-olds) influences perceptions of gay people.
- Considering individuals tend to express more approval for transgender youth compared to transgender adults, it is possible that the same is true for gay people.

## Method Study 1

- Data were collected from N= 110 participants, ages 25-65 (XX females)
- Participants judged a series of profiles depicting openly gay men.
- In phase 1, the profiles contained only written descriptions, which included age (16-year-olds vs. 45-year-olds) and a stereotypically gay behavior (Attending a pride event vs. Expressing Physical Intimacy vs. Wearing non-gender conforming clothing).
- Participants' task was to indicate their level of agreement with the behavior described, using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).
- In phase 2, the profiles contained only visual stimuli, which included age and a stereotypically gay behavior (Attending a pride event vs. Expressing Physical Intimacy vs. Wearing non-gender conforming clothing).
- The visual stimuli provided were pilot tested for clarity and complexity as well as to ensure that the age of the person in the image appeared appropriate (16-year-olds vs. 45-year-olds).
- Participants indicated the extent to which the image was pleasant to them, using a 5-point pleasantness scale, ranging from 1 (very pleasant) to 5 (very unpleasant).
- The age variable (16-year-olds vs. 45-year-olds) was between-subjects, and the behavior type depicted (Pride vs. Physical Intimacy vs. Non-gender conforming clothing) was administered within-subjects

## Sample Visual Stimuli

### Clothing Images



### Physical Intimacy Images



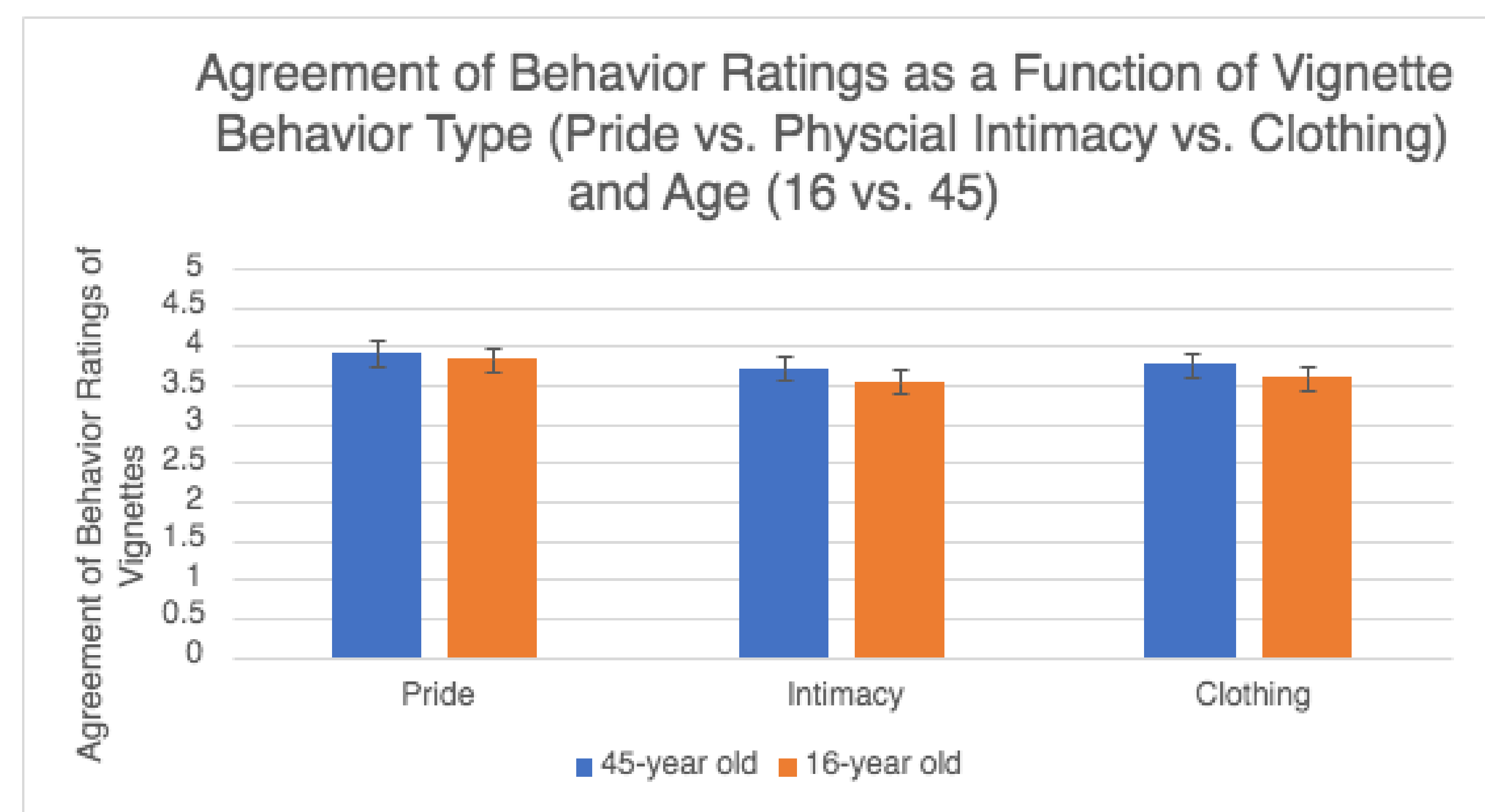
### Pride Images



## Results & Discussion Study 1

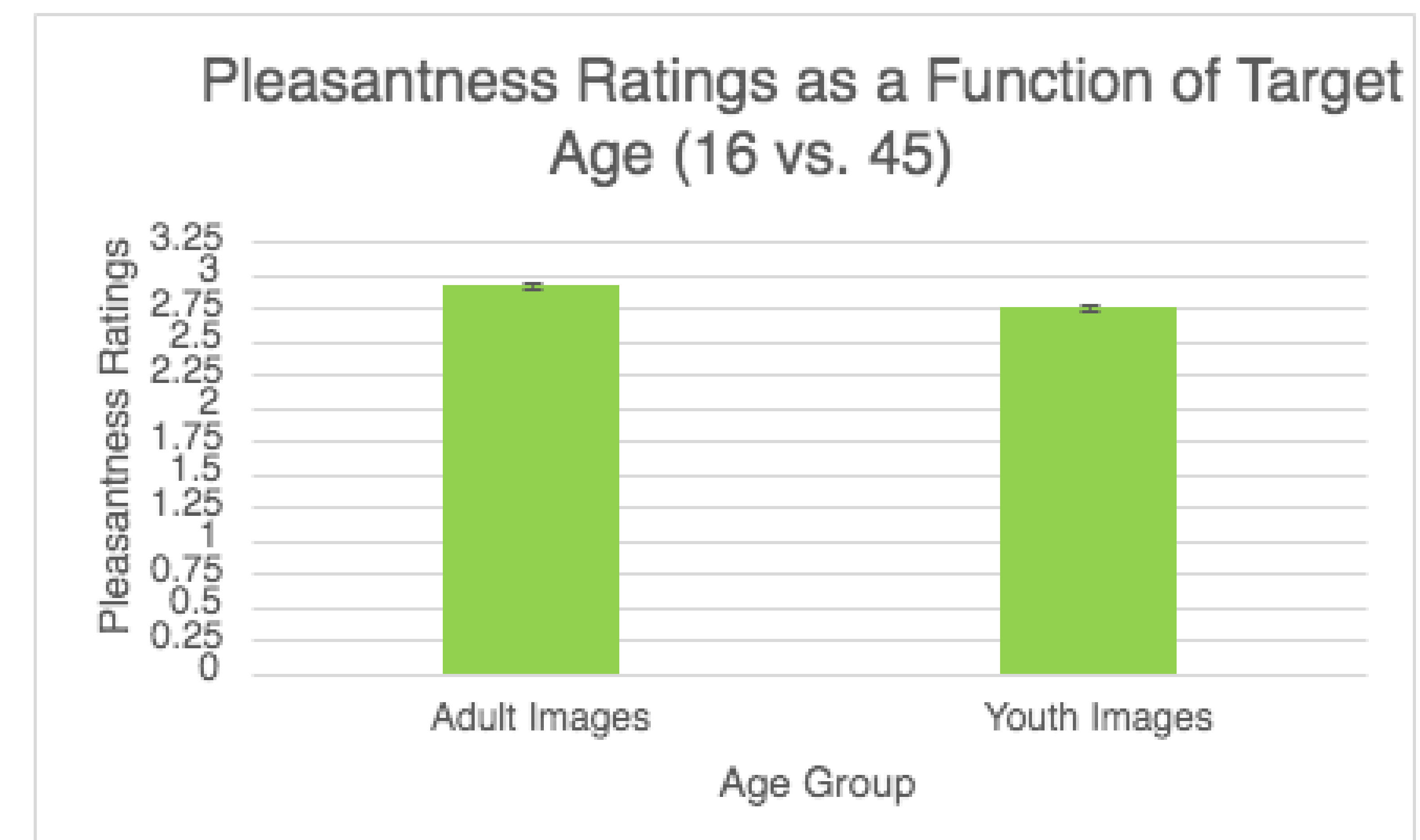
### Phase 1 Results

- There was a significant main effect for vignette behavior type,  $F(1,107) = 36.28, p < 0.05$ .
- Participants agreed more with the pride condition ( $M = 3.87; SE = 1.17$ ) than they did with the intimacy ( $M = 3.64; SE = 1.30$ ) or clothing condition ( $M = 3.67; SE = 1.11$ ).
- Perhaps gay people are judged less critically when their behavior is not conspicuous.



### Phase 2 Results

- There was a significant main effect for target age (16 vs. 45) on the pleasantness ratings,  $F(1,107) = 36.28, p < 0.05$ .
- Participants rated the youth condition ( $M = 2.76; SE = 1.08$ ) significantly more pleasant than the adult condition ( $M = 2.93; SE = 1.10$ ).
- The significant main effect for the pleasantness ratings is consistent with the current hypothesis and the previous research of Elischberger et al. (2016).
- The current data suggest that individuals' judgements vary as a function of what type of information is available to them (Visual vs. Verbal).



## Study 2

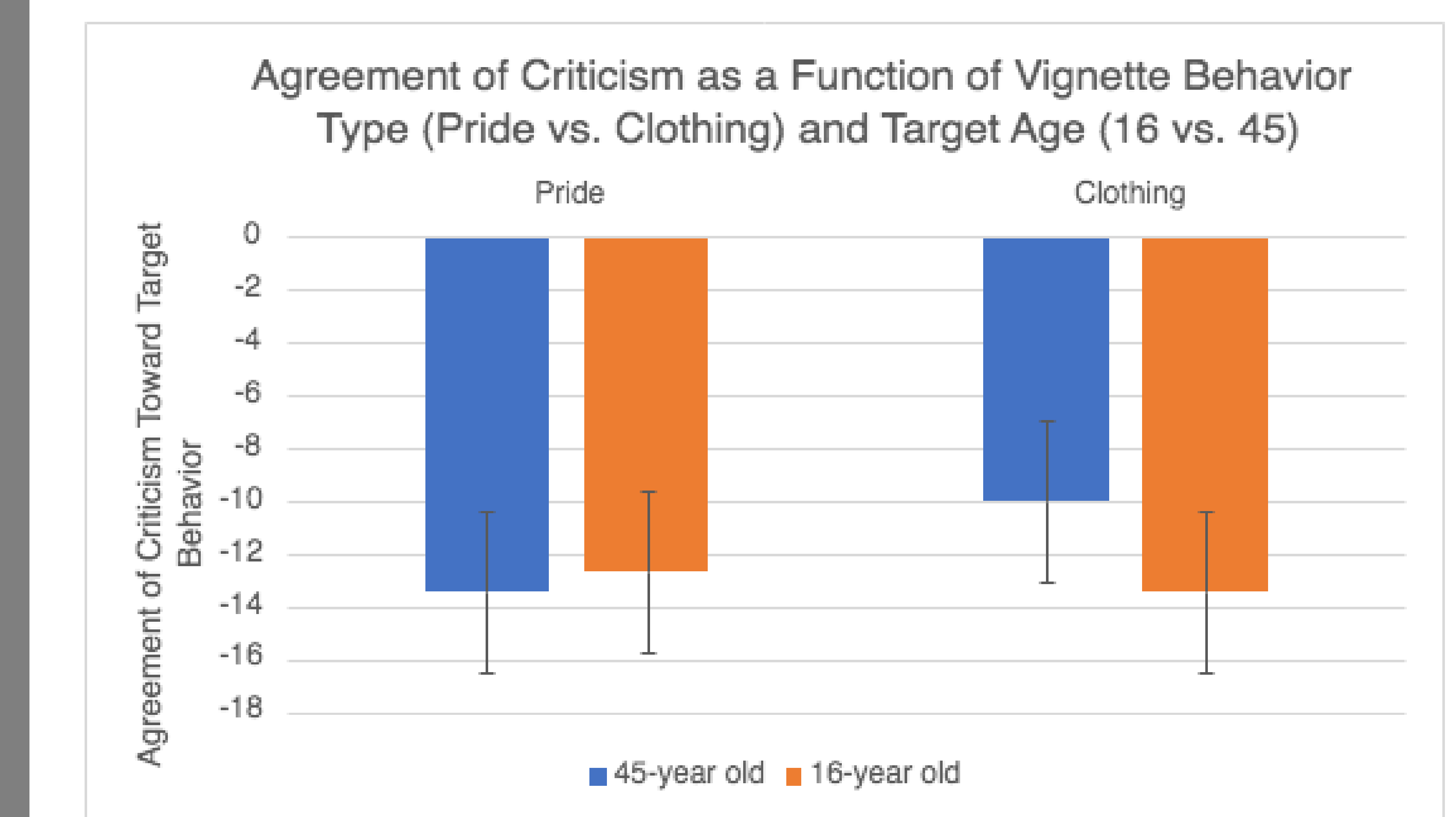
- Similar to LG people, racial and ethnic minorities tend to experience socio-environmental hostilities that negatively affect their psychological well-being (Dubois et al., 2002).
- How do race and sexual orientation interact to shape perceivers' judgements?
- It has been found that the stereotypes toward gay black men tend to cause them to be perceived as less stereotypical of their own racial groups (Petsko et al., 2019).
- Intersectionality between varying social categories reveals distinctive experiences between different minority groups (Fattoracci et al., 2020; Fox & Choukas-Bradley, 2020).

## Method Study 2

- Data were collected from N= 59 participants, ages 25-65 (XX females)
- Participants judged a series of profiles depicting openly gay men.
- The profiles contained only written descriptions, which included age (16-year-olds vs. 45-year-olds), race (Black vs. White), and a stereotypically gay behavior (Attending a pride event vs. Expressing Physical Intimacy vs. Wearing non-gender conforming clothing).
- Race was delineated by using stereotypical names according to a particular race, such as Ethan or DeAndre (Gaddis, 2017).
- Each vignette described someone criticizing the targets' behavior.
- Participants' task was to indicate their level of agreement with the criticism provided, using a 60-point slider, ranging from -30 (strongly disagree) to 30 (strongly agree).

## Results & Discussion Study 2

- There was a significant interaction between age and behavior type,  $F(1,59) = 4.40, p < 0.05$ .
- In the pride condition, participants were more likely to disagree with someone criticizing a 45-year-old ( $M = -13.47; SE = 3.12$ ) than a 16-year-old ( $M = -12.71; SE = 3.18$ ).
- In contrast, in the clothing condition, we observed the opposite pattern of results, where participants were more likely to disagree with someone criticizing a 16-year-old ( $M = -13.47; SE = 3.08$ ) than a 45-year-old ( $M = -10.03; SE = 3.18$ ).
- Since adults tend to be expected to dress in more professional clothing than teenagers, individuals may judge teenage gay boys less critically when dressing in ways that express their sexuality compared to adult gay men.
- Overall, the current data suggest that behavioral context may mediate perceivers' judgements of gay adolescent and adult males.



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