

Personality

What makes us who we are?

Psych 305A: Lecture 23

Personality and Gender

Announcements

- Instructor evaluations now available on-line
 - <https://eval.olt.ubc.ca/arts>
 - Please be sure to do the course evaluations! They actually matter.
 - We are Psyc 305A section 002

UBC Psych Students!

Need an extra 2% for an **A+**?

The Human Subject Pool can help.

- Visit hsp.psych.ubc.ca
- Browse studies to participate in
- Deadline is November 30



Note: only those in classes registered for HSP can participate.

Why is gender differences such a dangerous topic?

- Acceptance of gender differences in ability could promote discrimination
- If young children believe in differences, could inhibit success/hard work
 - Self-fulfilling prophecy
- But, what about the progress of science?
 - Do we need to talk about the possibility of gender differences in order to learn the *scientific truth*?

Gender Difference in Math and Science

- Varies by culture
 - Most prominent in USA, where culture dictates that math is not “cool” for girls
- In the 1980s, American middle-school boys outperformed girls, at the highest ability level, by 13 to 1. Now, it’s 3 to 1.
- Gender difference only emerges after elementary school
 - When math gets harder, boys are encouraged to push through

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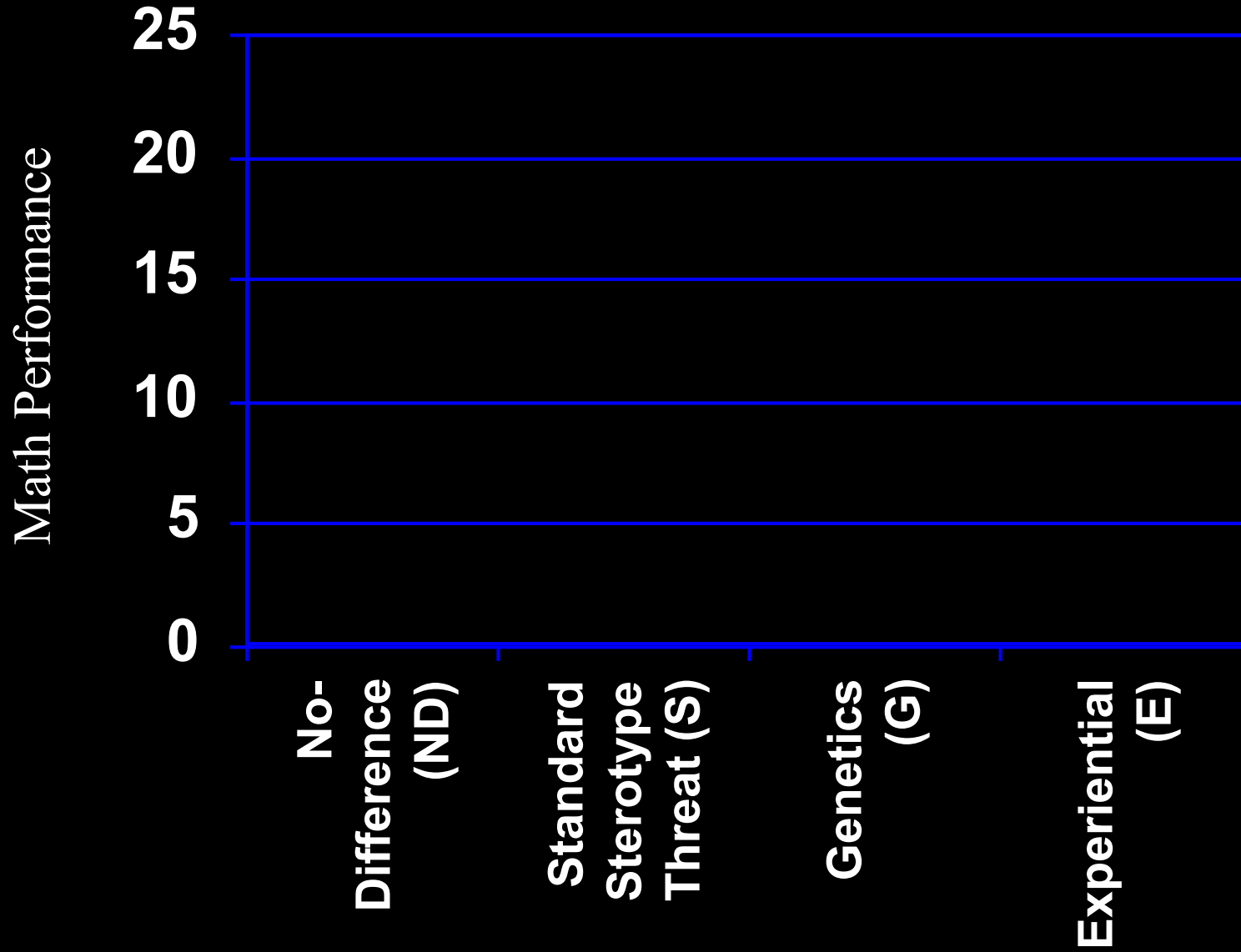
UBC research addressed this issue

- Dar-Nimrod & Heine, 2006 (*Science*)
- Question: Does telling women that they are genetically worse at math lower their math performance?
 - If so, can we counteract this effect by telling them:
 - A) no real gender difference
 - B) there is a difference, but it's due to environmental causes

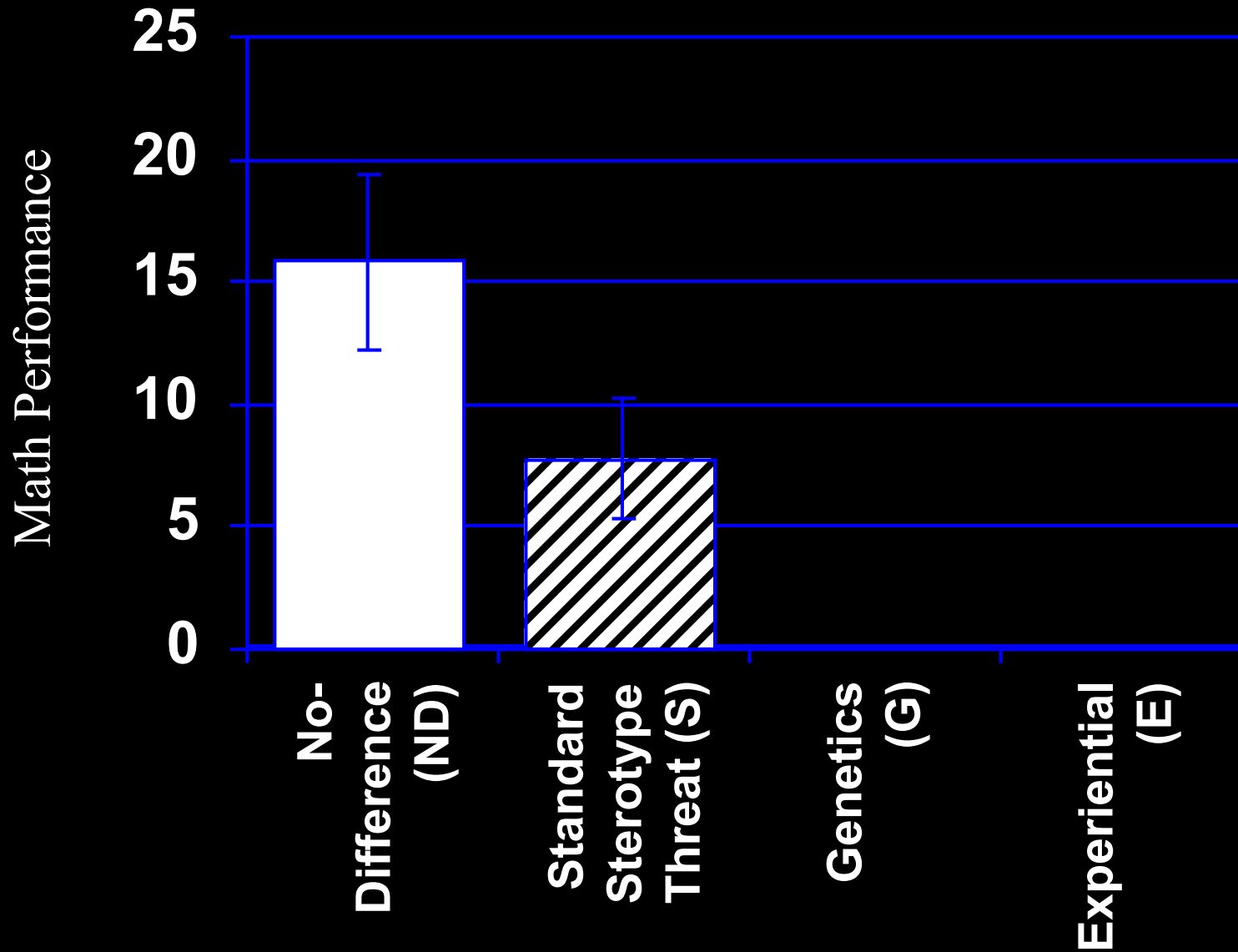
Gender Difference Study

1. Female pp read an essay
 - Condition 1: Essays argue for a gender difference in math, due to genetic factors (Summers condition)
 - Condition 2: Essays argue for gender difference in math, due to environmental factors (Spelke condition)
 - Condition 3: No essay, but prime gender (standard stereotype threat)
 - Condition 4: Essays argue for no gender difference
- 2. Pp do math test, performance assessed

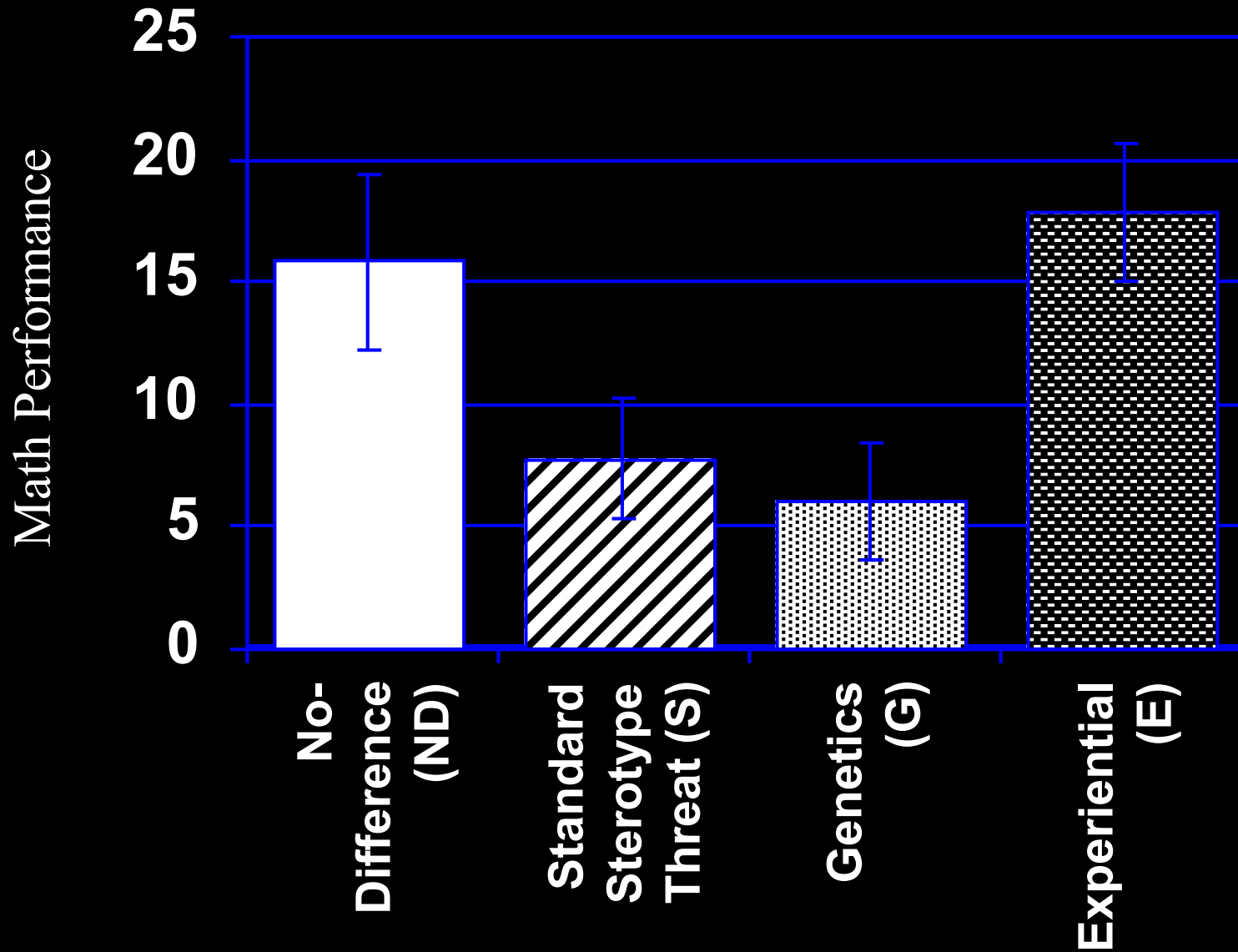
Gender Difference Study: Results



Gender Difference Study: Results



Gender Difference Study: Results



Gender Difference Study

- Telling women that gender difference is due to genes hurts their performance
 - Lack of control
- Why does telling them that it's due to life experiences solve the problem?
- What does this mean for research on gender differences?

Gender Differences in Personality

(positive effects mean men > women)

- Extraversion *d*
 - Gregariousness -.15
 - Assertiveness .50
 - Activity .09
- Agreeableness
 - Trust -.25
 - Tender-mindedness -.97
 - Aggressiveness .40- .86 (depending on measure)
- Conscientiousness
 - Order -.13
- Emotional Stability
 - Anxiety -.28
 - Impulsiveness .06
- Openness
 - Ideas .03

Gender Differences in Emotion

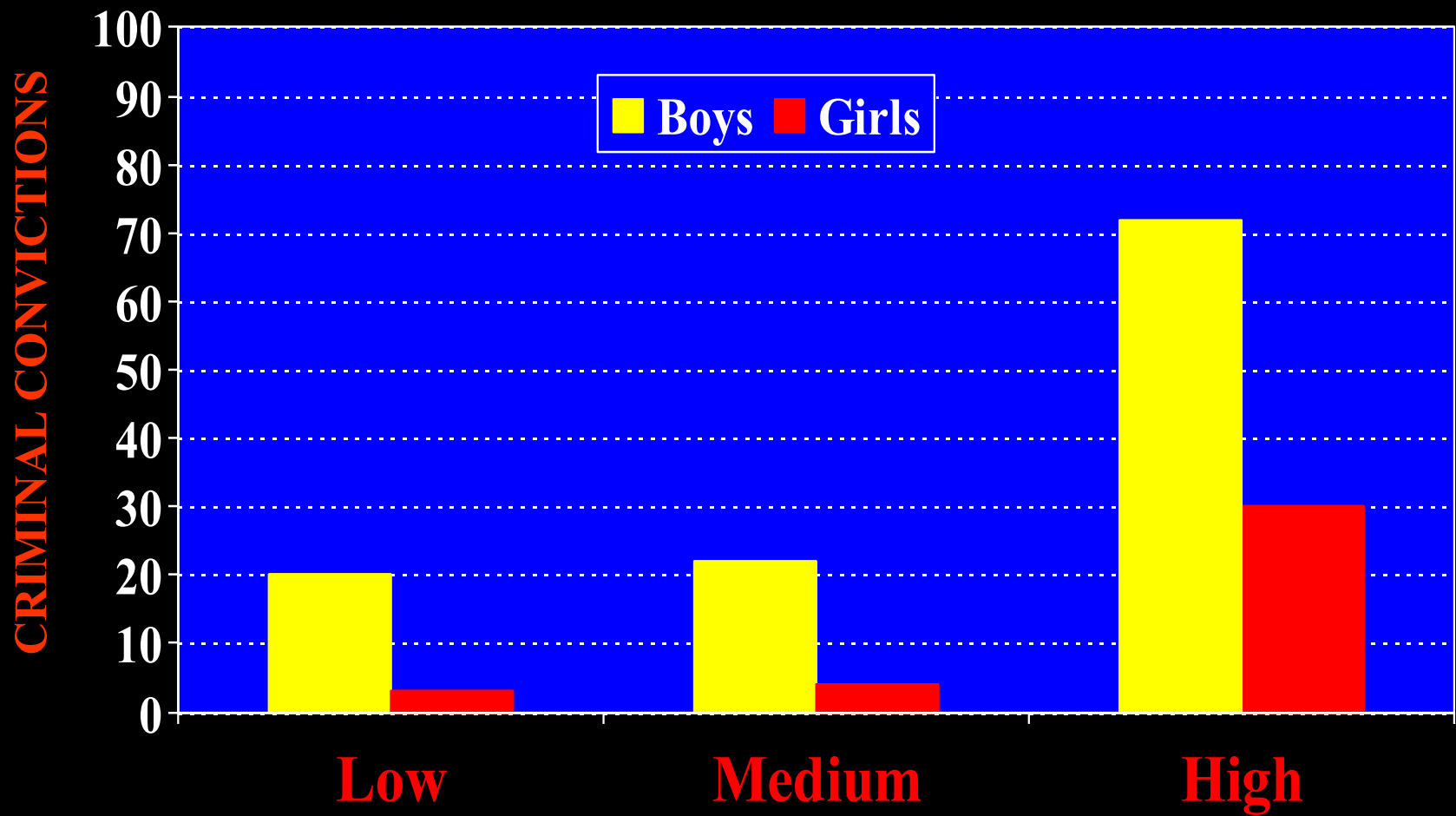
- Women experience more positive *and* negative emotions
 - Greater frequency
 - Greater intensity
- Women score higher on measures of empathy

Is there a gender difference in aggression?

- Until age 2, No!
 - In fact, some evidence that aggression is more common in play groups dominated by girls
- By age 4 or 5, boys show higher aggression
- By adolescence, boys are much more aggressive
 - And more conduct problems, higher delinquency
- Conduct disorders are 6-10 times more common in boys
- Men commit more crime across cultures

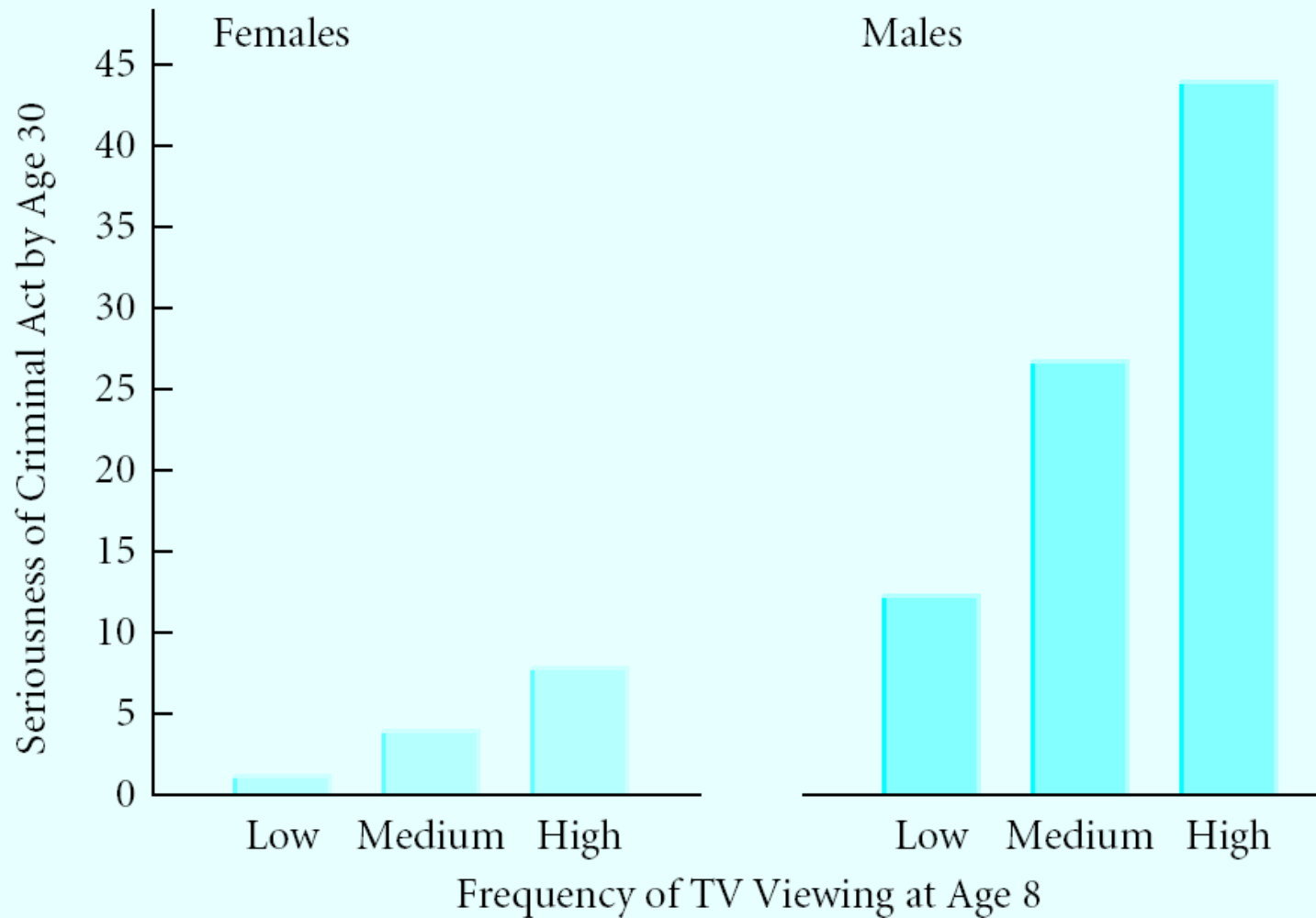
Homicide trends in the U.S.

- **Males were almost 10 times more likely than females to commit murder in 2002**
- Male offender/Male victim 65.1%
- Male offender/Female victim 22.6%
- Female offender/Male victim 9.9%
- Female offender/Female victim 2.4%



AGGRESSION LEVEL AT AGE 8

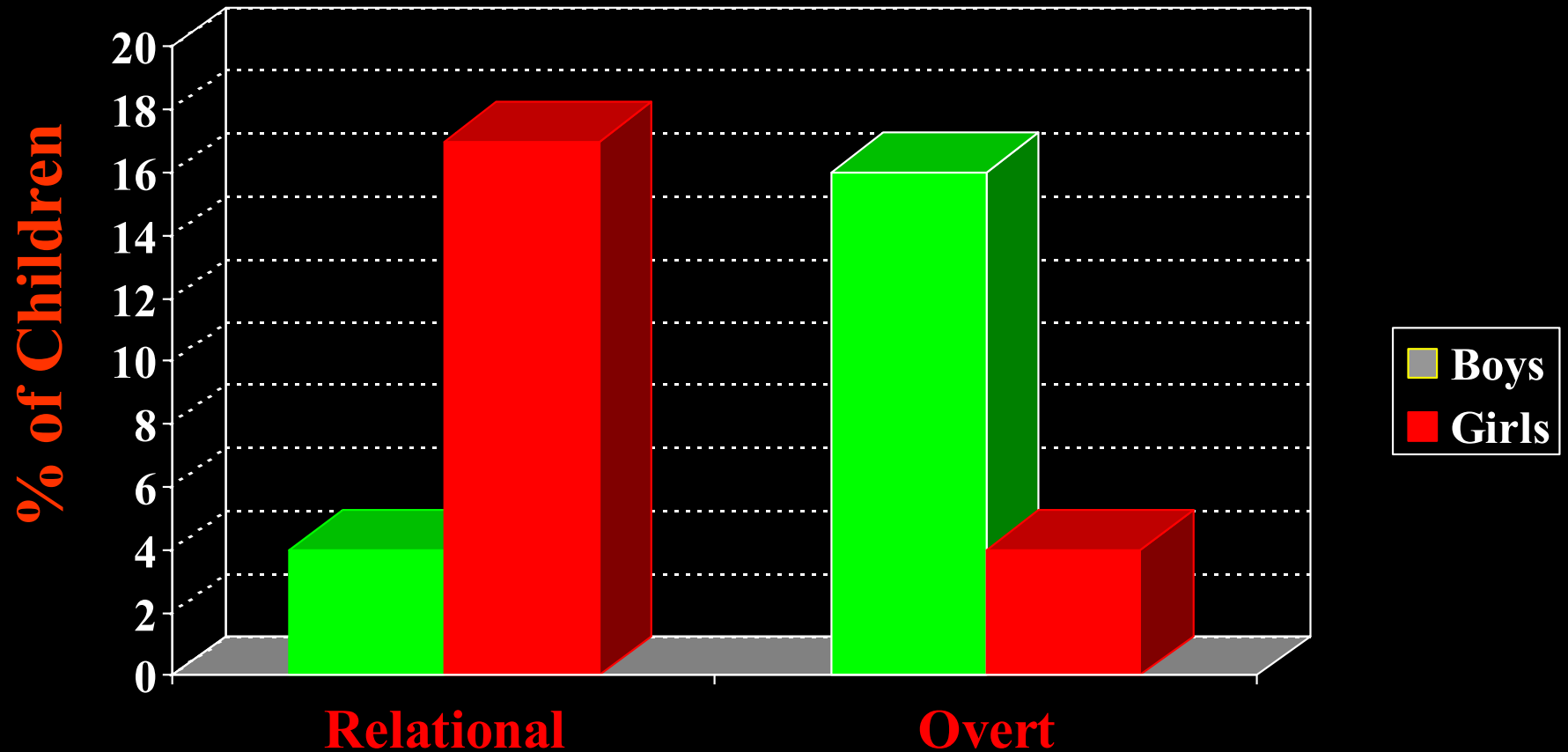
TV viewing and aggression



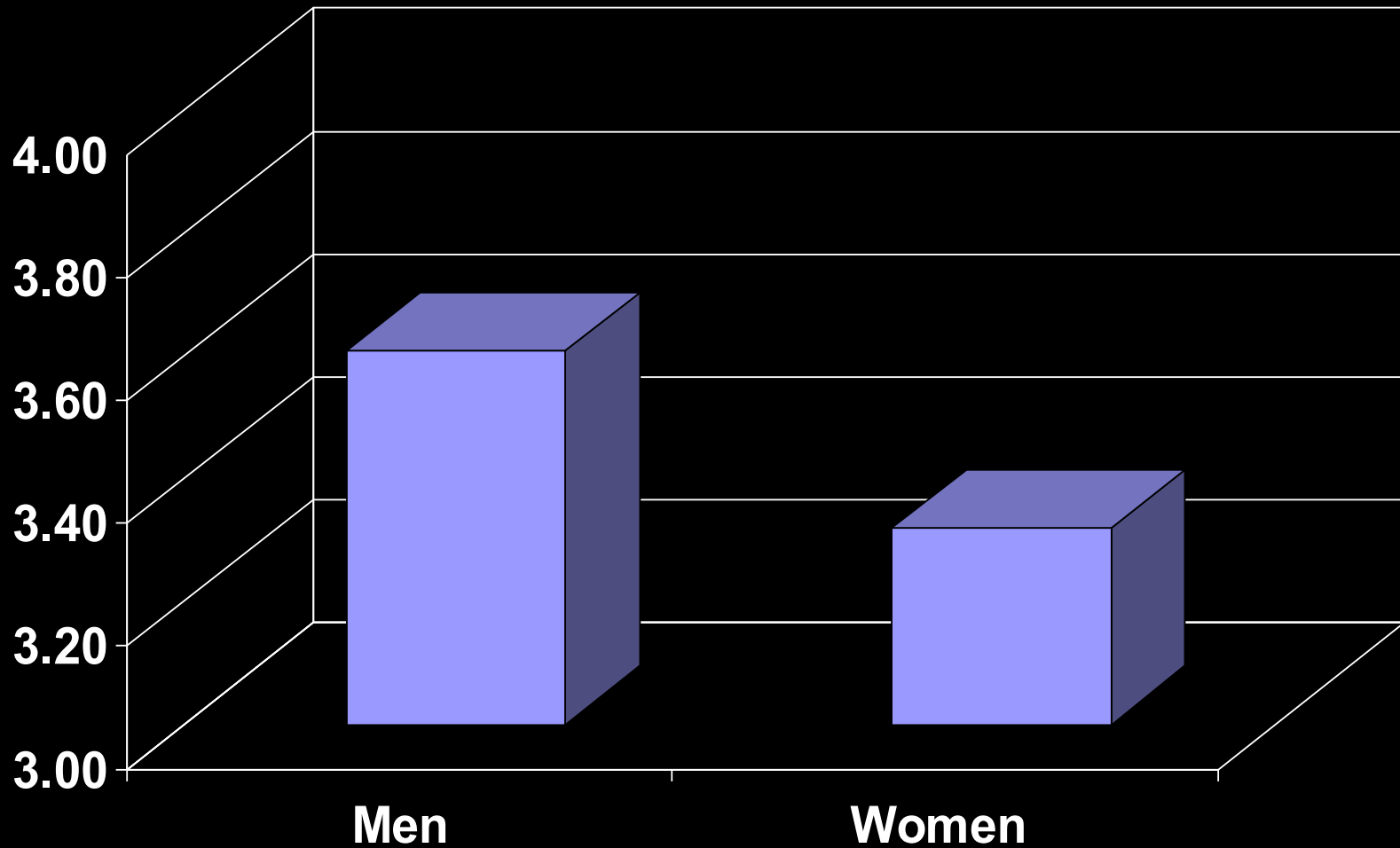
Explaining the Gender Difference in Aggression

- Girls show aggression differently than boys
- Overt aggression (male)
 - Physical assaults (hitting) and verbal assaults (yelling, insulting)
- Relational aggression (female)
 - Excluding others; withdrawing acceptance; spreading false rumors
- Study of 3rd-6th grade children
 - Examined overt and relational aggression
 - Peer nominations of aggressive kids

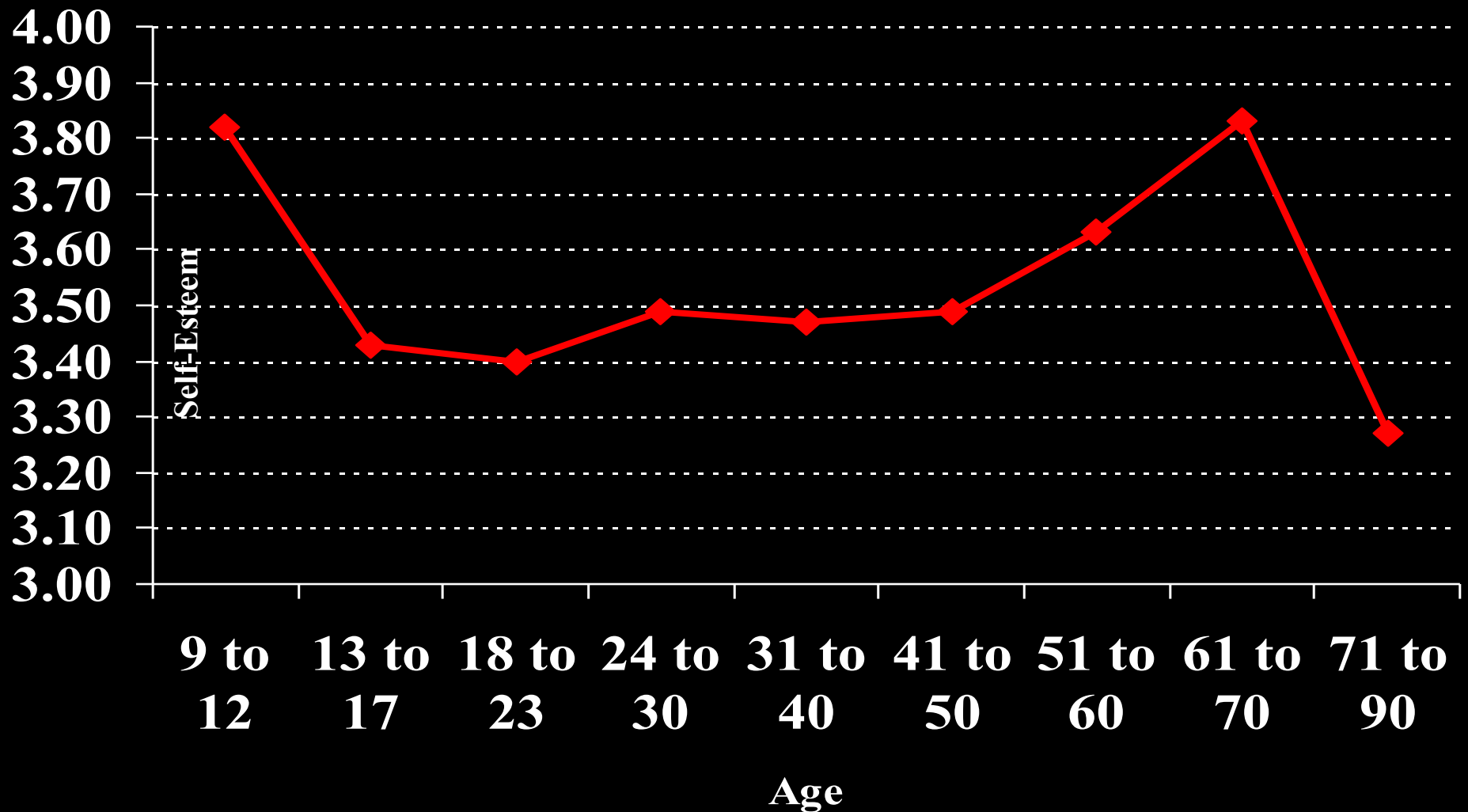
Overt vs. Relational Aggression



Other Gender Differences: Self-Esteem

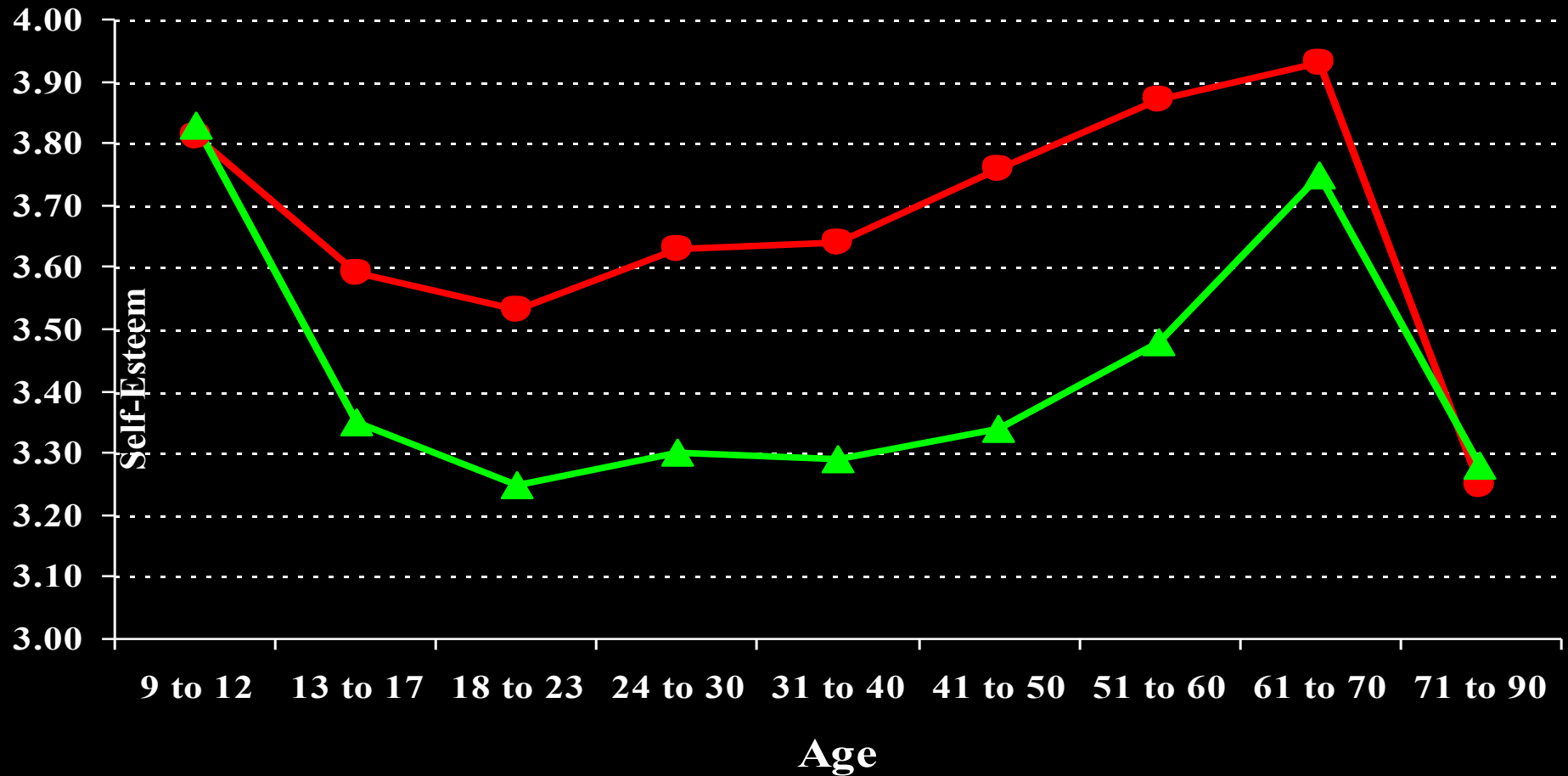


Is there a gender difference in self-esteem at every age?

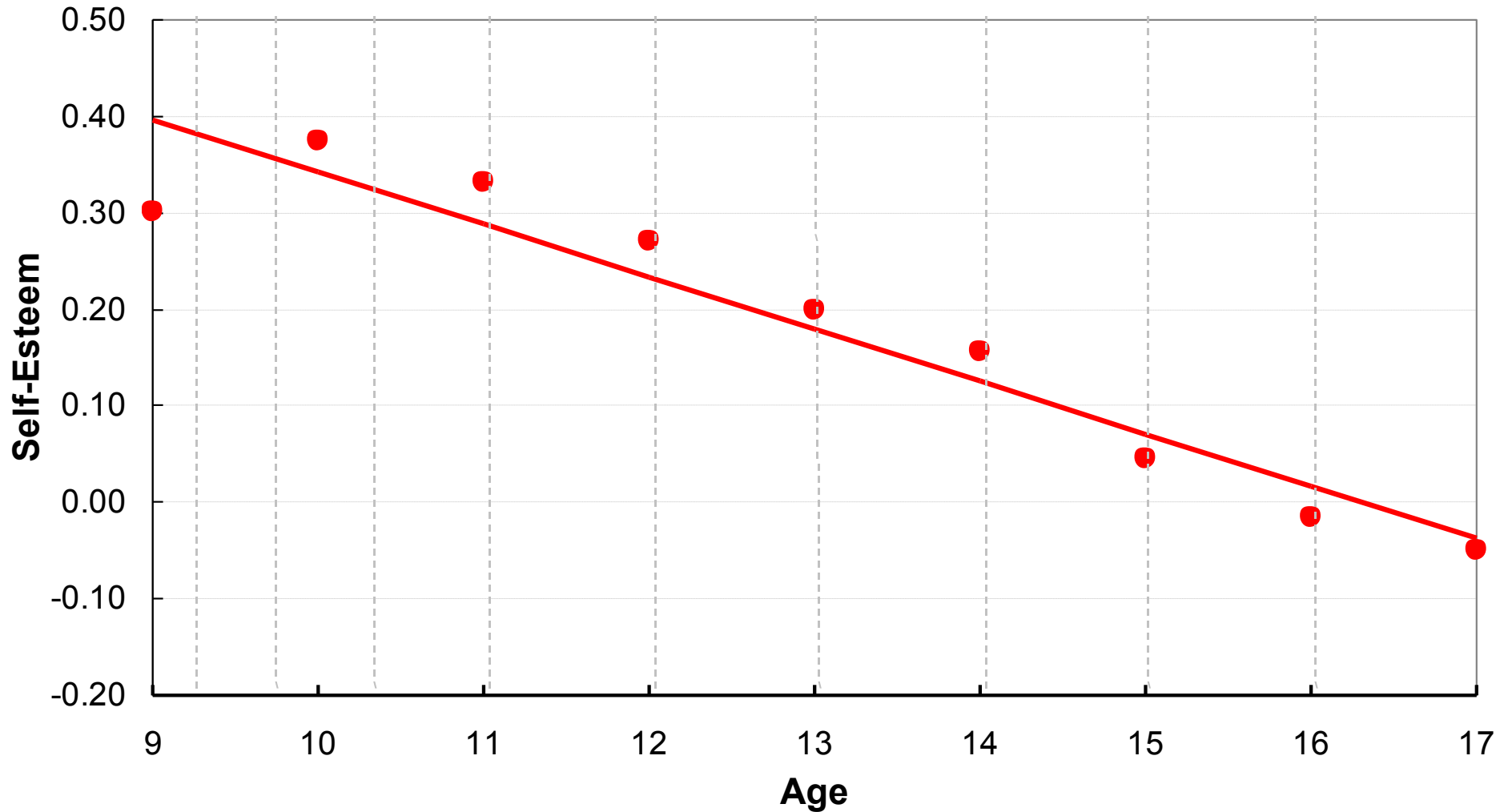


Self-Esteem By Gender and Age

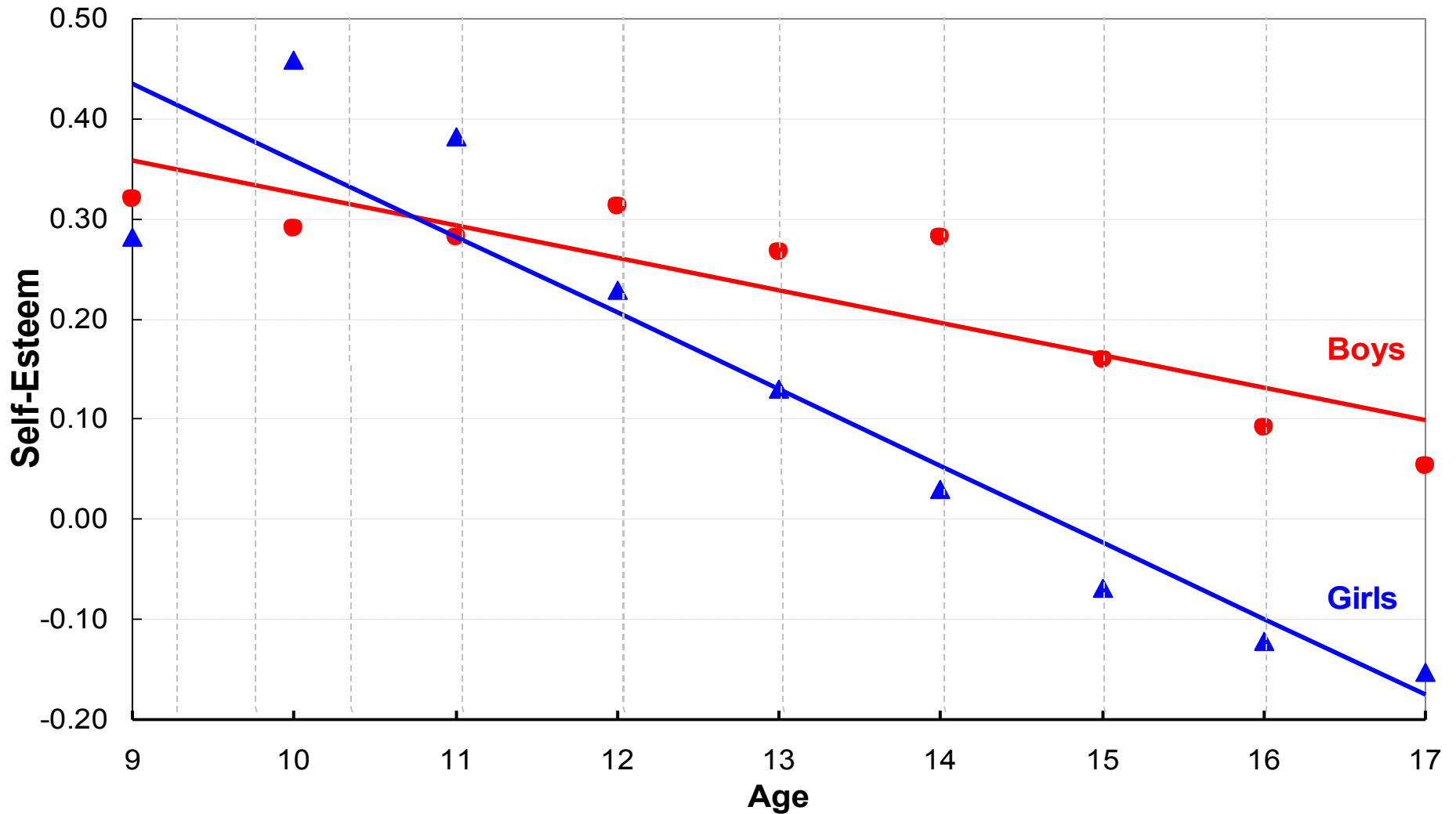
Men Women



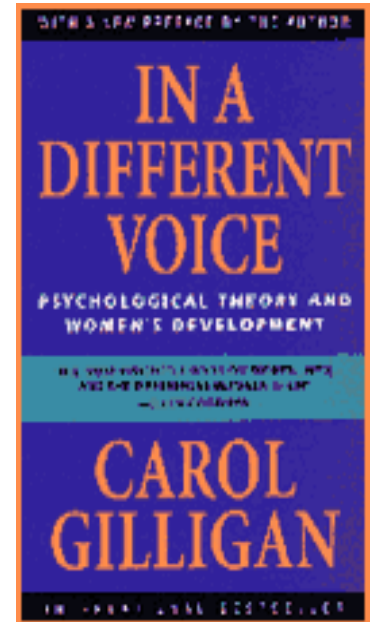
Adolescent Decline in Self-Esteem



Adolescent Decline: Gender Difference



Why Do Women Have Lower Self-Esteem?

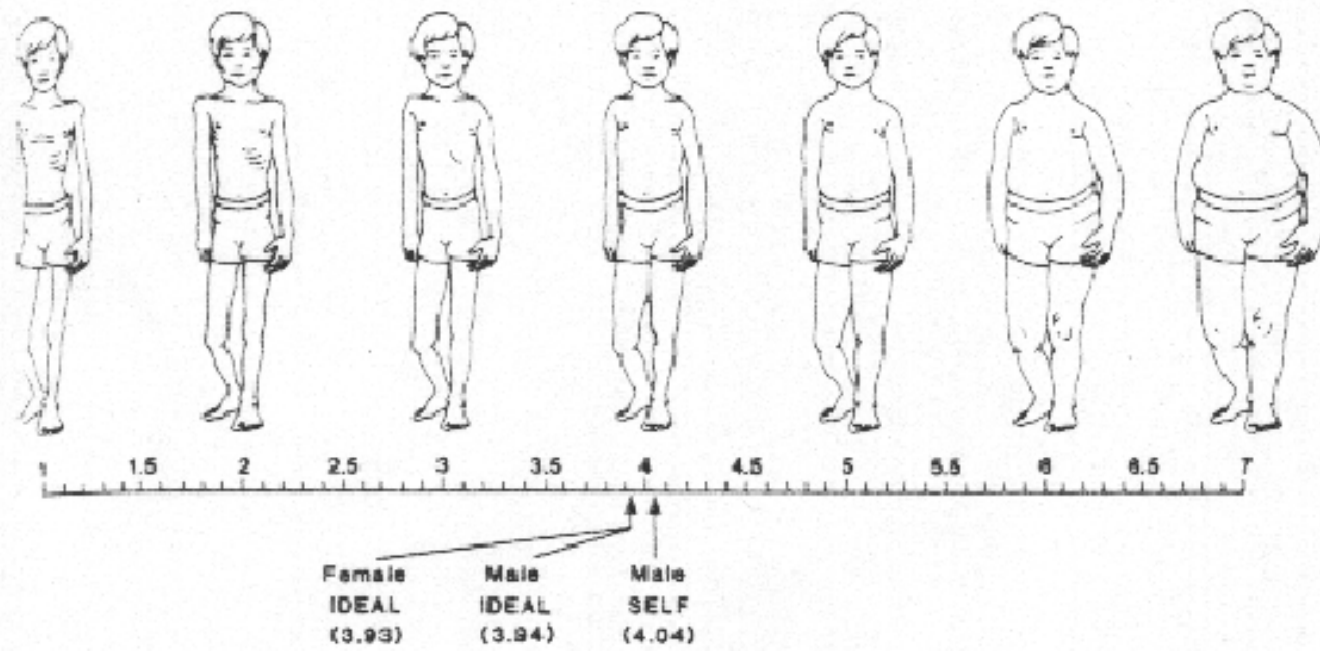
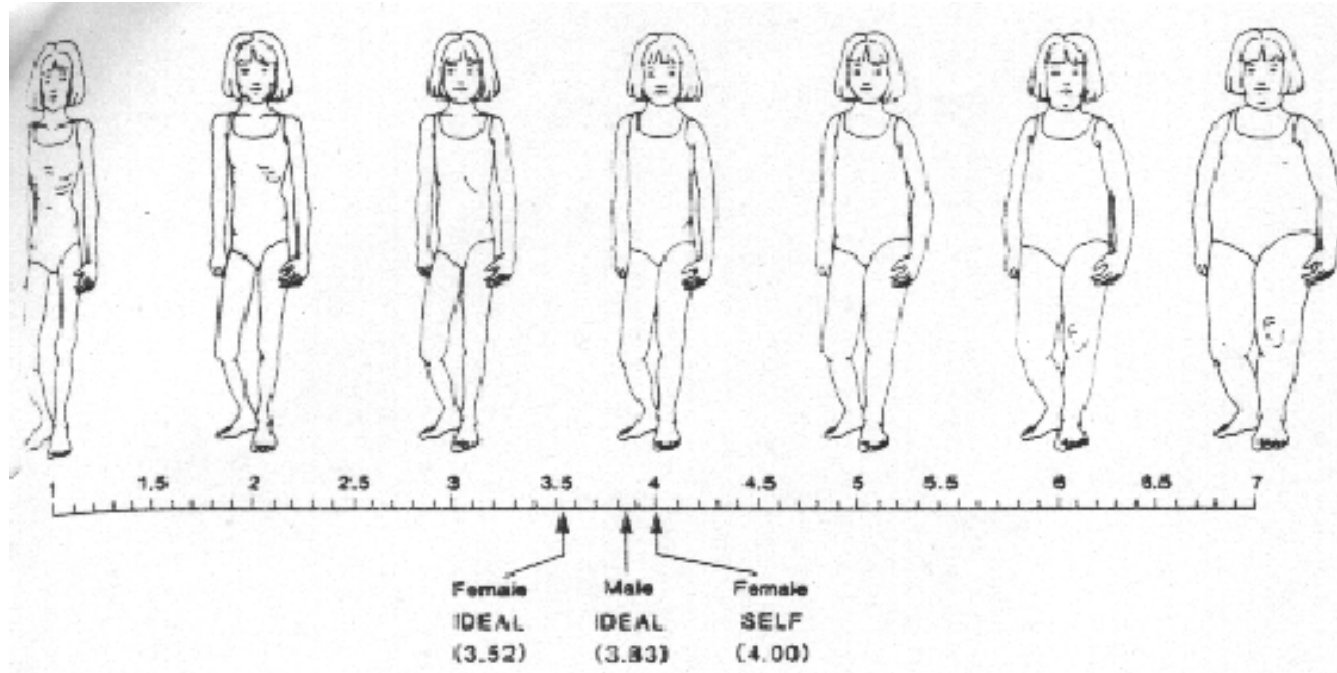


What happens at adolescence?

- **Girls' self-confidence fairly high until age 11 or 12**
 - Assertive about feelings
- **During adolescence**
 - Many girls accept stereotyped notions of how they should be (behavior and looks)
 - Repress true feelings
 - Adopt a “nice” and woman-like self-presentation

Why do adolescent girls decline in self-esteem more than boys?

- Idealized standards of beauty may contribute to girls' declining self-esteem
- Girls' bodies change with puberty, making it much harder to maintain the idealized body type presented by the media



Gender Difference in Body Image

- Review of 222 studies over the past 50 years (Feingold & Mazzella, 1998)
- Findings:
 - Men have a more positive body image than women
 - Gender difference is larger for more recent studies

Body image and girls' self-esteem decline

- Experimental evidence
 - Exposure to media showing thin body ideal linked to lower self-esteem
- Quasi-experimental evidence
 - Introduction of American TV in Fiji increased prevalence of eating disorders in adolescent girls, and led to more negative body image

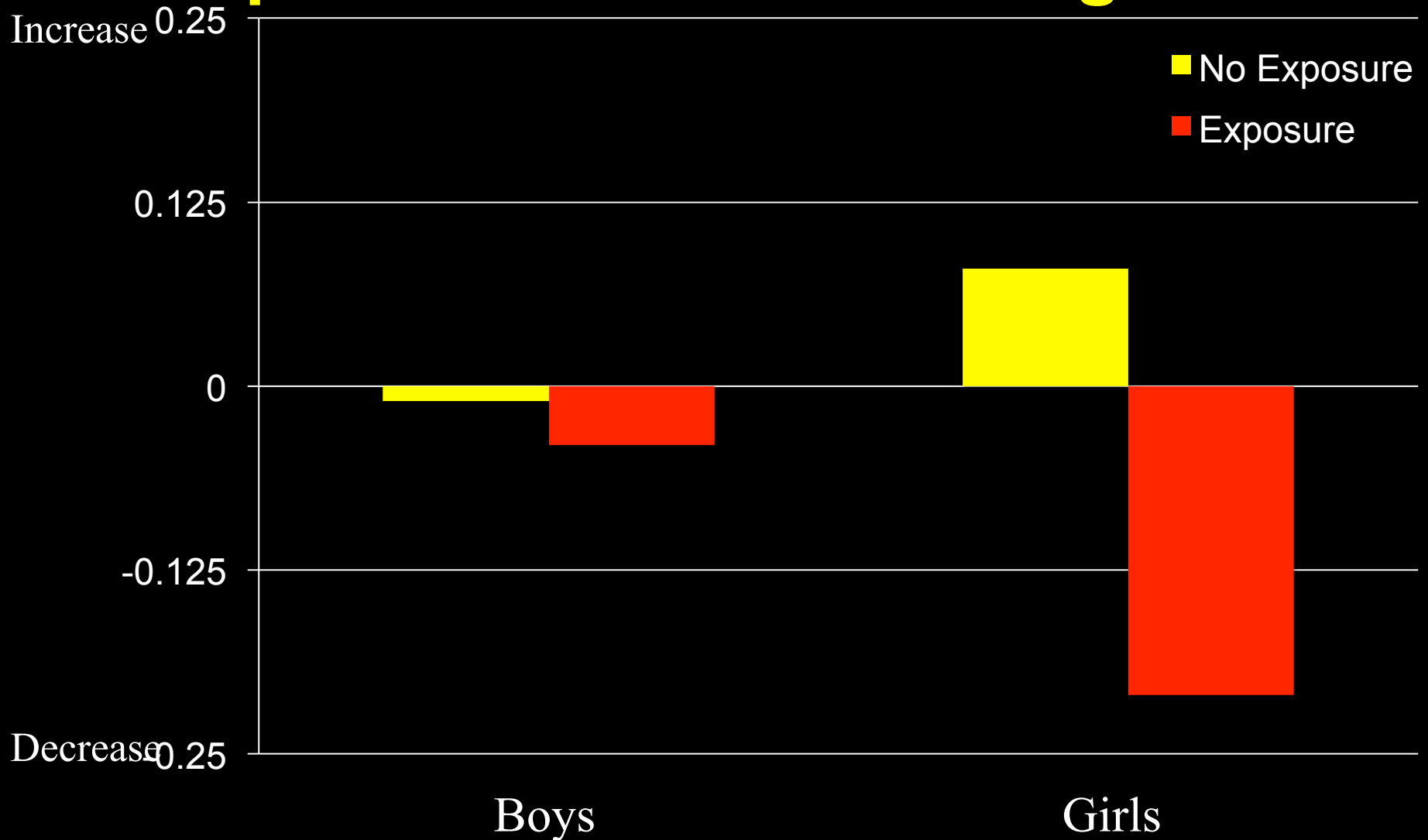
Body Image- Self-esteem Study

- Hypothesis: Girls in countries that begin receiving magazines depicting idealized body images will show larger decline in self-esteem during adolescence

Methods

- Internet sample
- 34 countries
- Measured self-esteem in children (ages 9-12) and adolescents (ages 13-17)
 - Self-esteem levels drop, overall, between these two age groups
- Coded each country for availability of popular women's magazines (*Cosmopolitan, Glamour, Vogue*)
 - 11 countries have access to these magazines

The Adolescent Decline: Exposure to Women's Magazines



Next Class

- Wrap up Gender
- Begin Culture
- Read Chapter 17