Age and Attractiveness: Does Verbal Information Override Physical Cues?

Amanda P. Kirsch
Arizona State University

Douglas T. Kenrick
Arizona State University

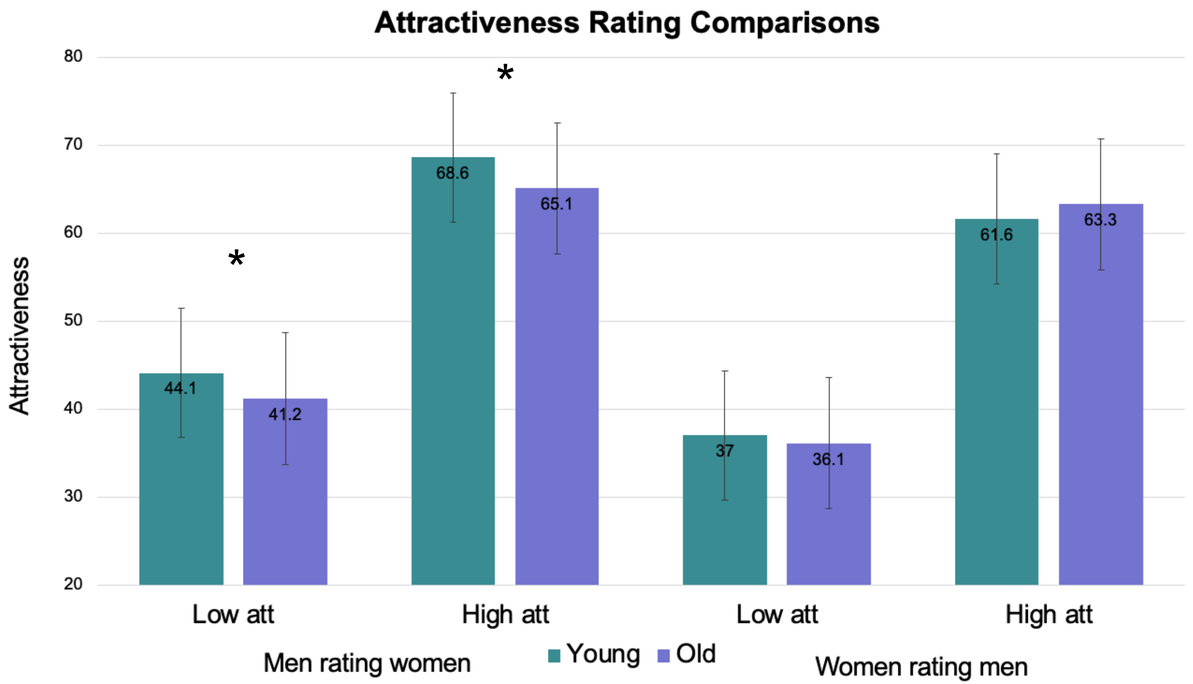
Hypotheses

Males tend to prefer females in their 20s, and females tend to prefer males who are older

Males and females may use age information itself to determine attractiveness beyond physical appearance associated with certain ages

Method

- N= 310 Prolific participants (58.4% Male and 41.6% Female, mean age is 27.1)
- Rate images of attractive and average men and women described with older or younger age
- Identical picture in both conditions varying only in age information

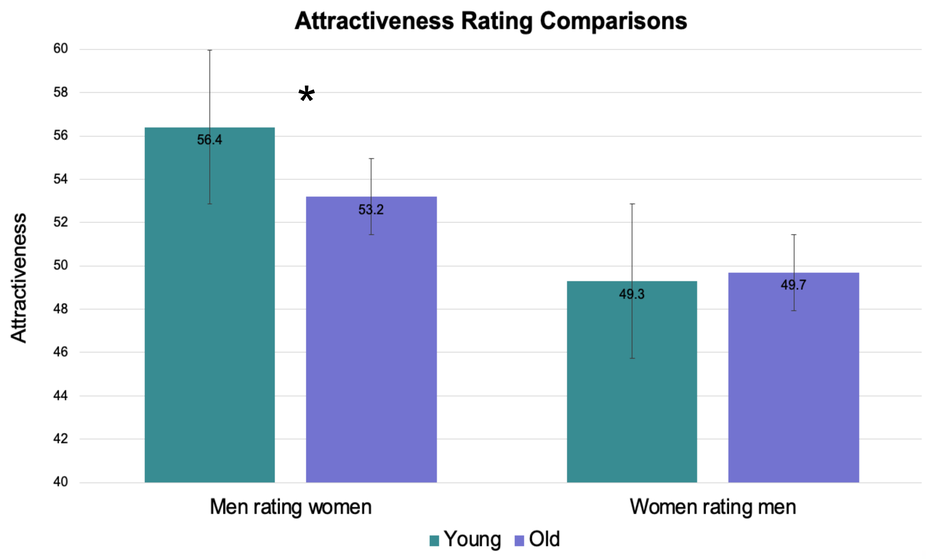


- **Men rated women described as younger to be more attractive, even though pictures were identical**
- **No difference when women rated men**
- **Same trend for attractive and average targets**
- **Significant age x sex interaction**

Stimuli

Age: 23

Age: 43



Discussion

- For heterosexual males, attraction is influenced by actual age information, even when targets are equally attractive
- Males might be using age information as a fertility cue

<u>Future Directions</u>

- Do women rate identical pictures of men as better looking when described as higher in social status?

•apk@asu.edu