



# Subjective and observer ratings of parent-adolescent interactions with first- and later-born children

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# Parent-Adolescent Relationships

- Through a series of conflicts, adolescents negotiate with parents for greater autonomy
  - Smetana & Asquith, 1994
- Later-born adolescents expect and obtain autonomy earlier than first-born adolescents
  - Campione-Barr & Smetana, under review



# Multiple Views of the Family

- Family members have unique & shared views of the family
  - Powers, Welsh, & Wright, 1994; Welsh, Galliher, & Powers, 1998
- Both subjective and outside observer ratings provide important information
  - Campione-Barr & Smetana, 2004
- Observers', mothers', and adolescents' ratings of family interactions differ
  - Mothers' & Adolescents' ratings similar
  - Mothers' & Observers' rated Adolescents as less supportive & involved
    - Campione-Barr & Smetana, 2004



# Autonomy & Multiple Adolescents

- When compared to same-aged first-borns, Later-born adolescents report ...
  - earlier autonomy expectations
  - greater conflict w/ parents
  - (in middle adolescence) greater family decision-making.
    - Campione-Barr & Smetana (under review)
- No previous studies on differences in actual interactions.



# The Present Study

- Are there differences in interaction quality with first- and later-born adolescents?
- Hypotheses
  - Adolescent Support & Involvement:  
Later-borns < First-borns
  - Parent Support & Involvement:  
Later-borns < First-borns
  - Daughters, 7<sup>th</sup> graders > Sons, 10<sup>th</sup> graders



# Participants

	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade		10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	
	First-Born	Later-Born	First-Born	Later-Born
<i>n</i>	25	32	32	29
Gender (females)	12	15	18	13
Age	<i>M</i> = 12.77 ( <i>SD</i> = .47) years		<i>M</i> = 15.68 ( <i>SD</i> = .47) years	
Ethnicity	88% European American, 9% African American, 3% Other			
Family Structure	69% 2 Biological Parents, 31% Step or Single Parents			
Income (median)	\$55,000 - \$69,999			



# Method

- Procedures
  - Part of larger study on family relationships
  - 2-hour family visit to lab: questionnaires, interviews, sorting tasks, and family interaction tasks.
- Measures
  - **Subjective Ratings:** Parent & adolescent ratings of support & involvement during dyadic interactions
    - Campione-Barr & Smetana, 2004
  - **Observational Coding of Family Interactions:** Global Coding System
    - Smetana, Abernethy, & Harris, 2000; Smetana, Yau, Restrepo, & Braeges, 1991)



Parent		Teen		Observer	
Of Parent	Of Teen	Of Parent	Of Teen	Of Parent	Of Teen
Expressed true feelings	Expressed true feelings	Expressed true feelings	Expressed true feelings	Comfort	Comfort
Listened to other	Other listened	Listened to other	Other listened	Listened to other	Listened to other
Supportive	Supportive	Supportive	Supportive	Supportive	Supportive
Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive	Warmth	Warmth
Explained position	Explained position	Explained position	Explained position	Explained position	Explained position
Involved/ Interested	Involved/ Interested	Involved/ Interested	Involved/ Interested	Involved/ Interested	Involved/ Interested
Other free to express opinion	Felt free to express opinion	Other free to express opinion	Felt free to express opinion	Tolerates differences	Tolerates differences
				Confidence stating opinions	Confidence stating opinions
				Requests input	Requests input
				Receptive to other	Receptive to other
( $\alpha = .88$ )	( $\alpha = .85$ )	( $\alpha = .77$ )	( $\alpha = .77$ )	( $\alpha = .78$ )	( $\alpha = .71$ )



## Analyses

2 (*Ordinal status*: first- v. later-born)

X 2 (*Grade*: 7th v. 10th)

X 2 (*Adolescent Sex*: male v. female)

X 3 (*Reporter*: parent v. child v. observer)

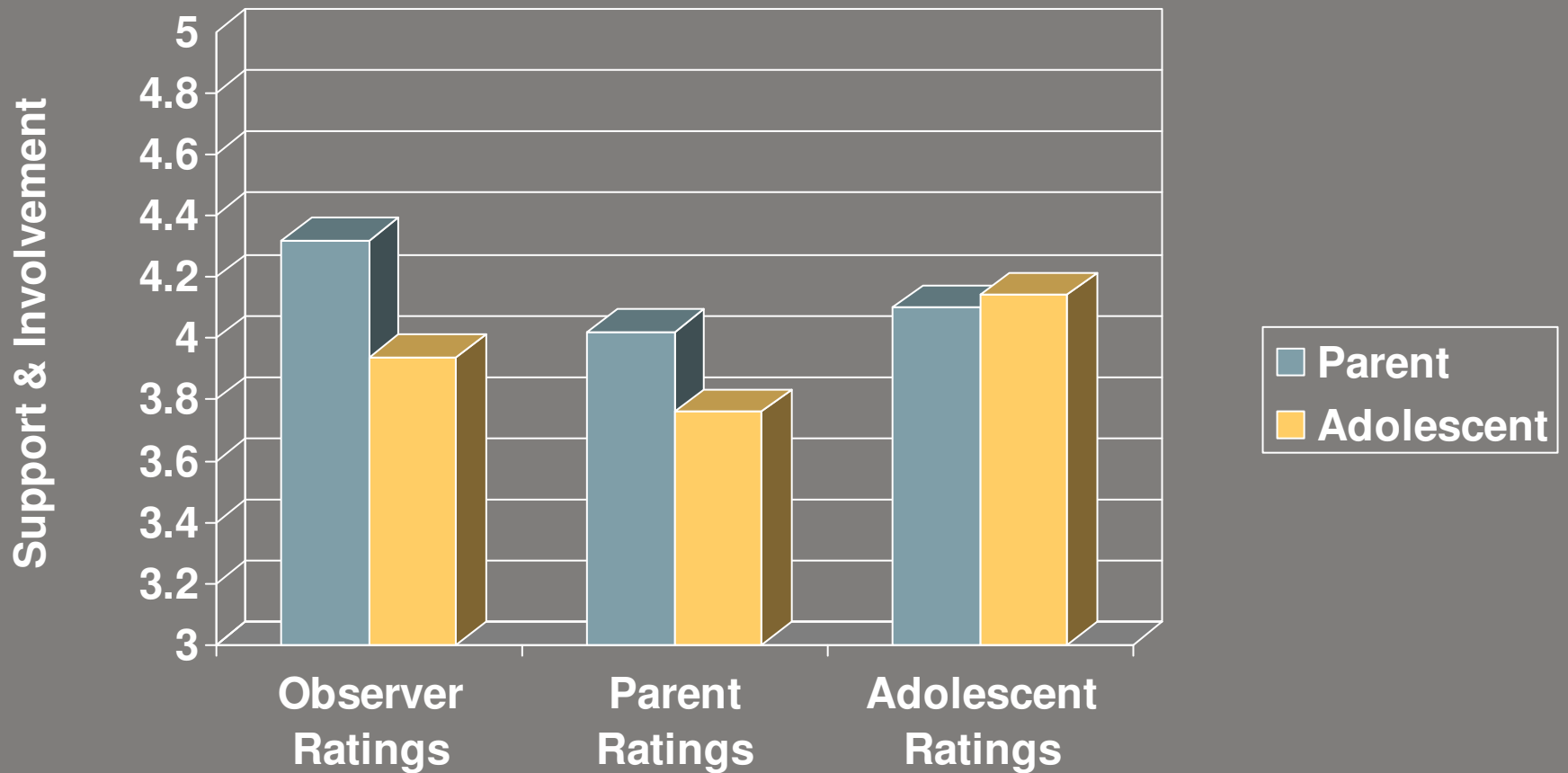
X 2 (*Family Member*: parent v. child)

Mixed model ANOVA



# Support & Involvement

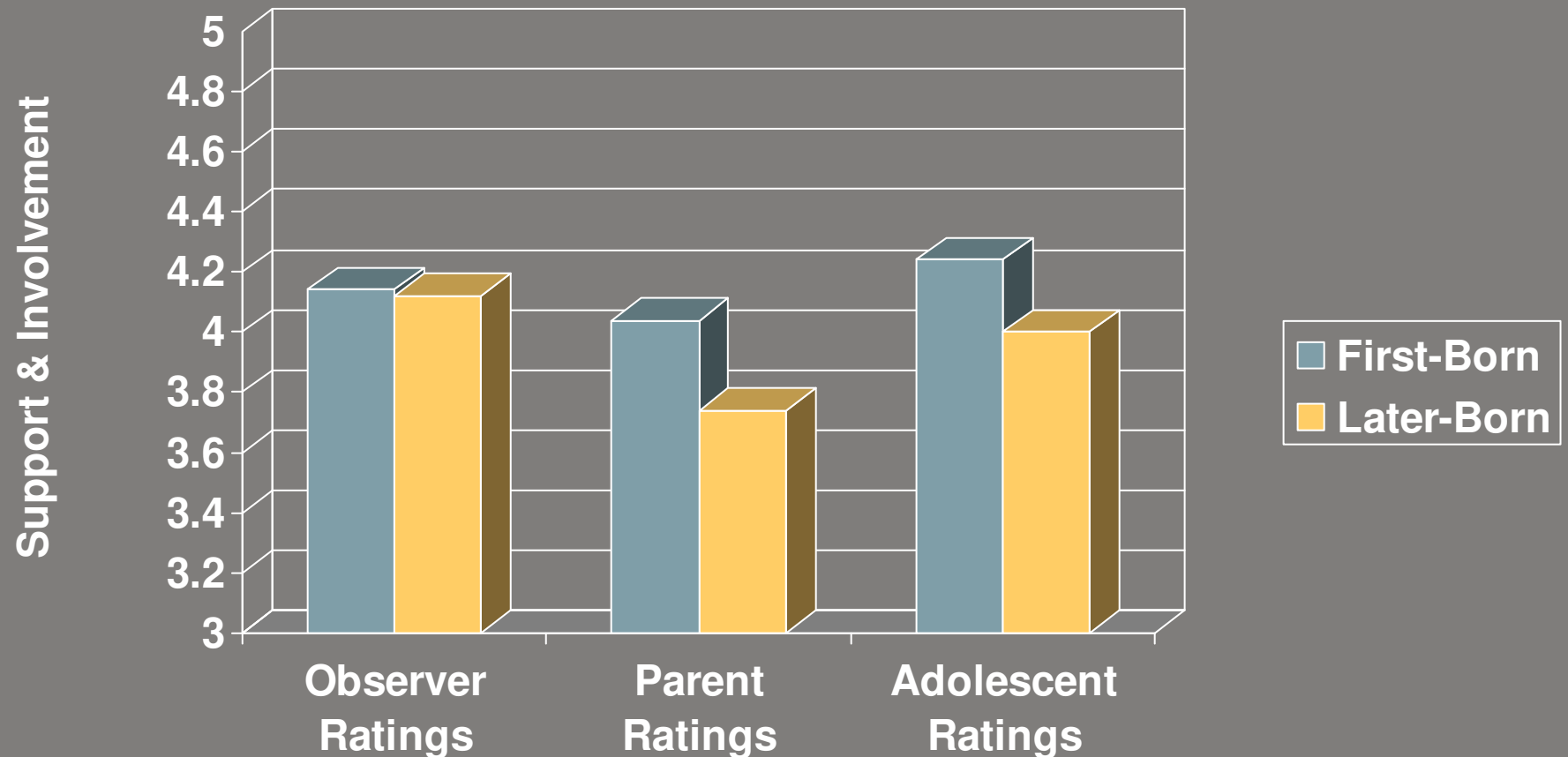
## Reporter X Family Member





# Support & Involvement

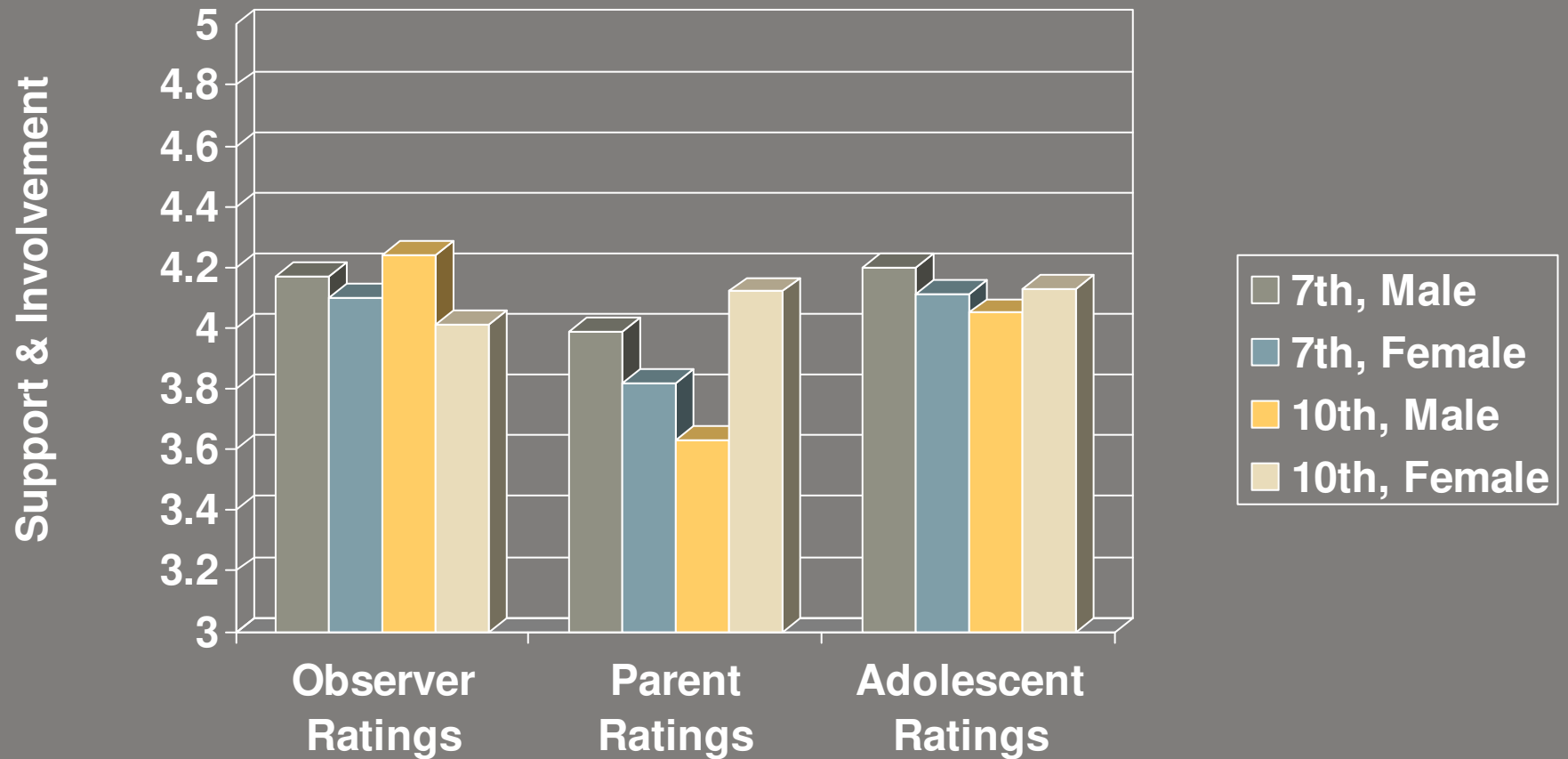
## Reporter X Ordinal Status





# Support & Involvement

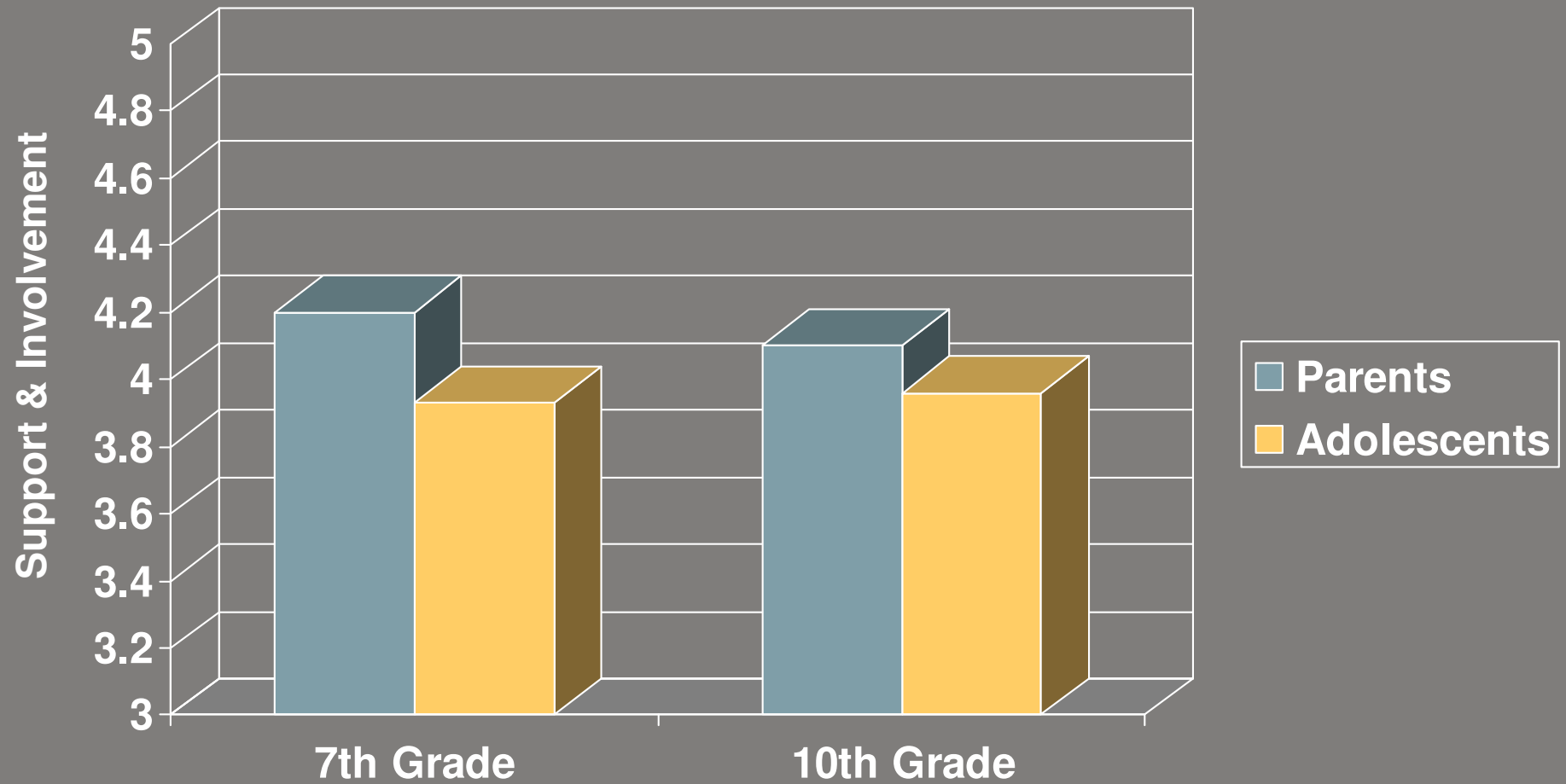
Reporter X Grade X Sex





# Support & Involvement

## Family Member X Grade





# Conclusions

- Later-born adolescents are less supportive & involved during interactions than first-born adolescents
  - Similar for parents' support & involvement
  - Difference dependent on Reporter
- Effects of Sex and Age are unclear...
  - Only evident by parent reports



# Limitations & Future Directions

- Cross-sectional & Between Groups
  - Future studies longitudinal & within families
- Ethnic & SES Homogeneous Sample
  - Future studies more diverse sample to increase generalizability.



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