

When Longing Goes Wrong: Nostalgia Can Cause a Preference for Harmful Aspects of the Past

Abhay Alaukik, Matt Baldwin, Joris Lammers

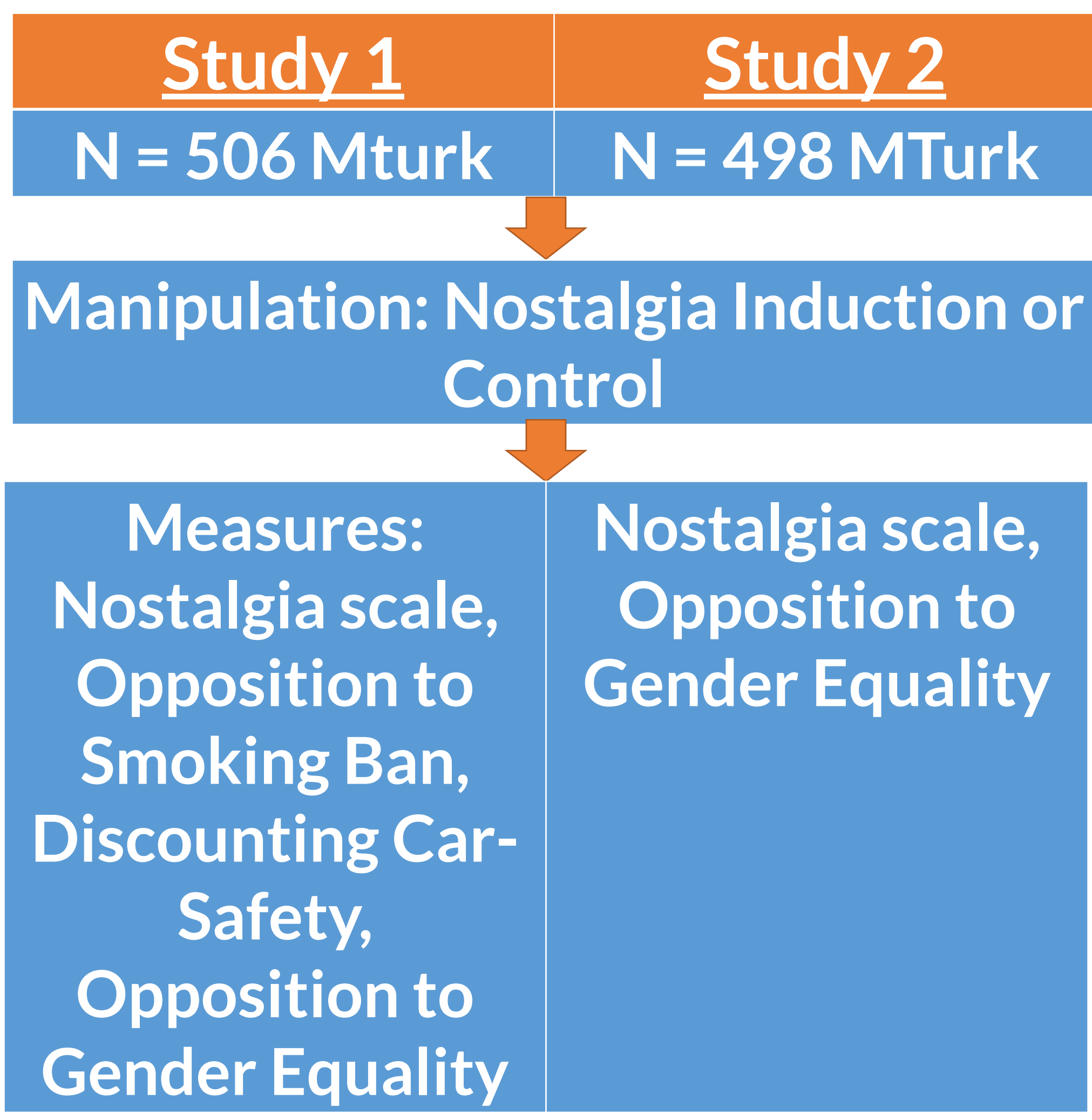
INTRODUCTION

- Previous work on nostalgia focuses on its positive outcomes: sense of continuity, security, comfort, belongingness, prosocial-behavior and charitability.
- But possible negative effects have been left unexplored.
- Since nostalgia increases people’s preference for the past, it might also increase opposition to socially progressive outcomes.

HYPOTHESIS

Nostalgia can cause opposition to progressive public health policy (opposing indoors smoking-ban and discounting car safety) and social norms (opposing gender equality).

METHOD



RESULTS

Nostalgia can cause opposition to progressive social norms and public health policy.

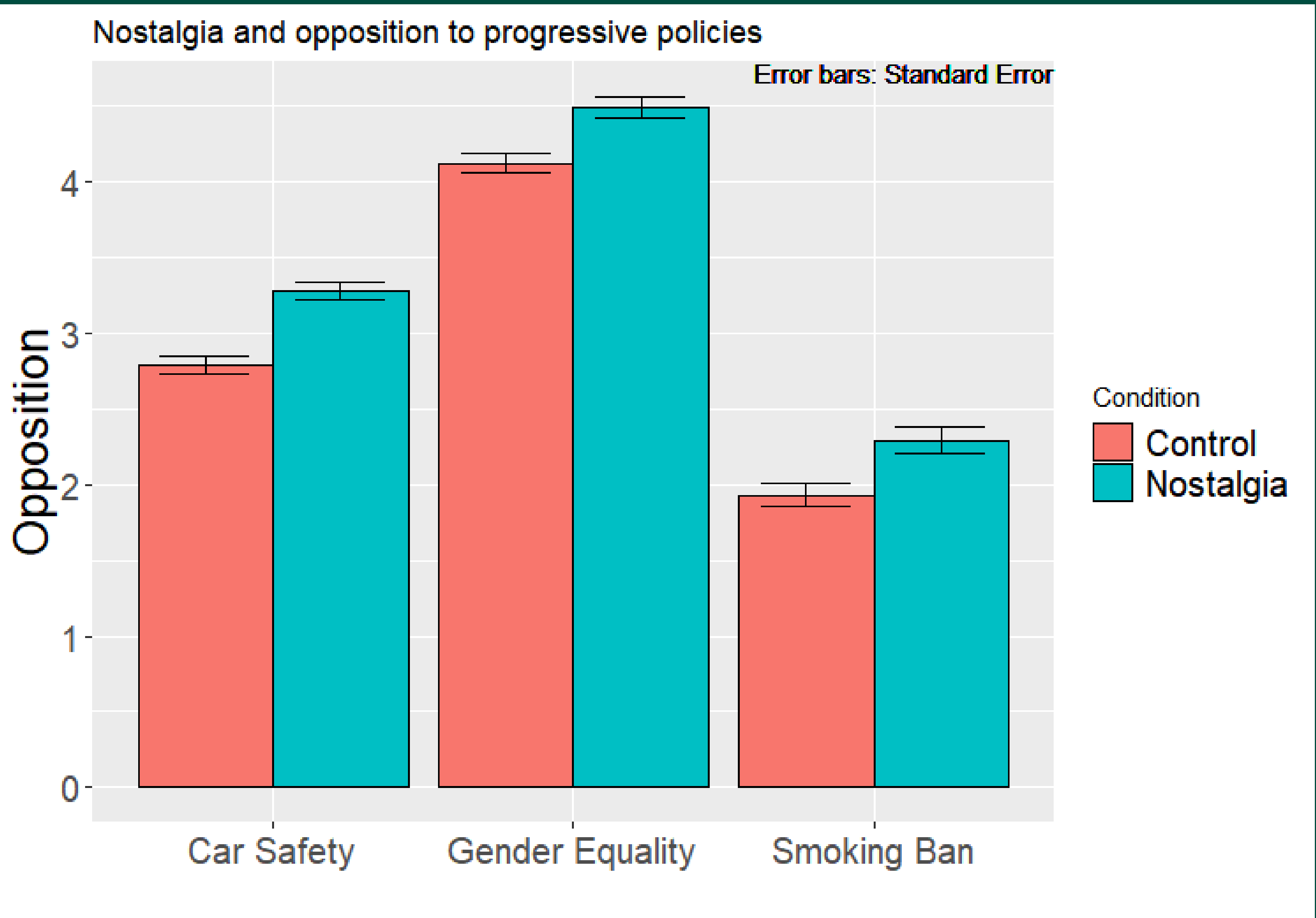


Table 1
Effect of nostalgia induction on support for regressive social norms and public-policy

	Study 1	F	p	η ² _p	d	95% CI
Smoking		4.79	.029	.014	0.24	0.04-0.69
Car Safety		18.95	<.0001	.036	0.39	0.27-0.71
Opposition to Gender Equality		7.47	.006	.015	0.24	0.11-0.64
	Study 2					
Opposition to Gender Equality		5.37	.021	.01	0.20	0.05-0.55

MEASURES

- Opposition to Smoking Ban: “The anti-smoking laws have gone too far”
- Discounting Car-safety: “For my next car purchase, I take one that prioritizes fun over safety”
- Opposition to Gender Equality: “Feminism has produced negative effects on families”

PARTICIPANT DESCRIPTIVES

Study 1: 506 MTurk participants (44.5% M, 55.5% F; Age_μ = 37.8)
Study 2: 498 MTurk participants (51.2% M, 48.8% F; Age_μ = 36.7)

MANIPULATION

Study 1: What made you feel positive and nostalgic about the past compared to today VS. about today compared to the past?
Study 2: Write about what made you feel positive about the past VS. today.

DISCUSSION

- Nostalgia-induction caused more support for undoing indoor smoking ban, for discounting car safety, and for opposing gender equality, compared to support shown in the control condition.
- Nostalgia can cause preference for regressive policies/social norms.



SELF MIND SOCIETY

