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The Relevance of Age and Gender for Public Attitudes to Brown Bears (*Ursus arctos*), Black Bears (*Ursus americanus*), and Cougars (*Puma concolor*) in Kamloops, British Columbia



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Abstract In British Columbia, brown bears (*Ursus arctos*), black bears (*Ursus americanus*), and cougars (*Puma concolor*) must relate to growing human populations. This study examines age- and gender-related attitudes to these animals in the urbanizing, agriculturally significant, intermontane city of Kamloops. Most respondents, especially women, feared cougars and bears, saw bears as more troublesome than cougars, and were concerned for child and adult safety. More middle-aged and older participants perceived brown bears as dangerous to companion animals, and black bears as troublesome, than did younger participants, and more middle-aged participants perceived brown bears as troublesome than did younger and older participants. Opinions favored trapping and removal of animals rather than shooting or toleration, but more younger participants opted for shooting, whereas more middle-aged and older participants opted for toleration and removal. Majorities agreed that the animals serve useful functions, women more than men for cougars, middle-aged more than old or young for bears, but saw only cougars as increasing their quality of life. These findings contribute to knowledge about human-wildlife relations, an important first step toward more efficient local and more general conservation policy.

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