

# Looking for a Rural Culture of Driving

*A presentation by*

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CERS Summer Institute, 2009

Williamsburg Virginia

## An International Research Project

- A project of the New England Transportation Institute, White River Jct., Vermont
- In cooperation with
  - INRETS, France
  - VTI, Sweden
  - CERS, Minnesota
- Survey undertaken by
  - Resource Systems Group, White River Jct, VT

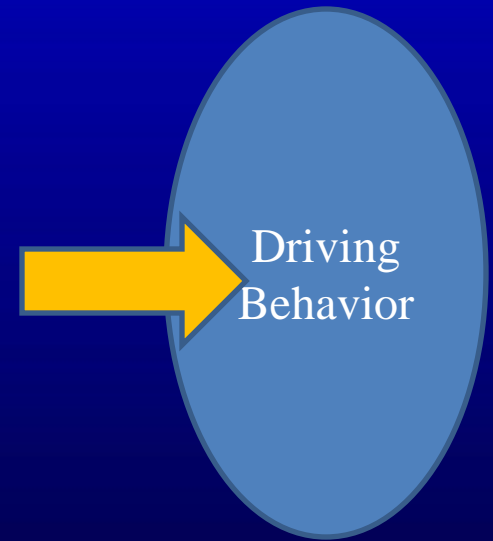
## What We are Looking For

- Seeking to understand the differences in attitudes and culture which might affect driving behavior
  - Dangerous driving behavior in specific
- Seeking to understand the higher mortality rates associated with rural driving

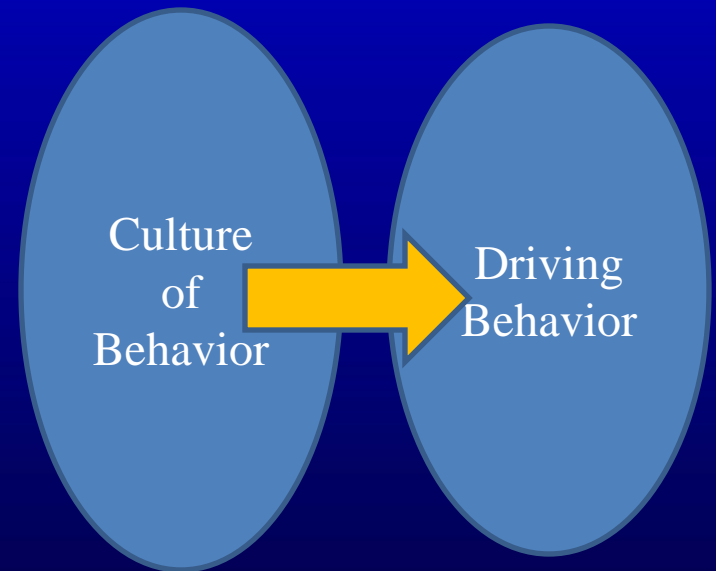
## What We Used

- Most questions of driver behavior were taken directly from the Driver Behaviour Questionnaire (“The DBQ”)
- Attitude questions were developed from recommended theories in Social Psychology
- Most survey elements reflect the published literature

# The Logic of a “Culture of Driving Behavior”



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***To be applied across demographic and location categories***

## What We Did

- 1000 surveys, one half hour each
- Full coverage of
  - Rural
    - Within village
    - Isolated from village
  - Suburban
  - Urban

## Holding Regional Variables Constant

- All 1,000 participants are from Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont,
  - (and adjacent areas in the Northeast)



## Holding Regional Variables Constant

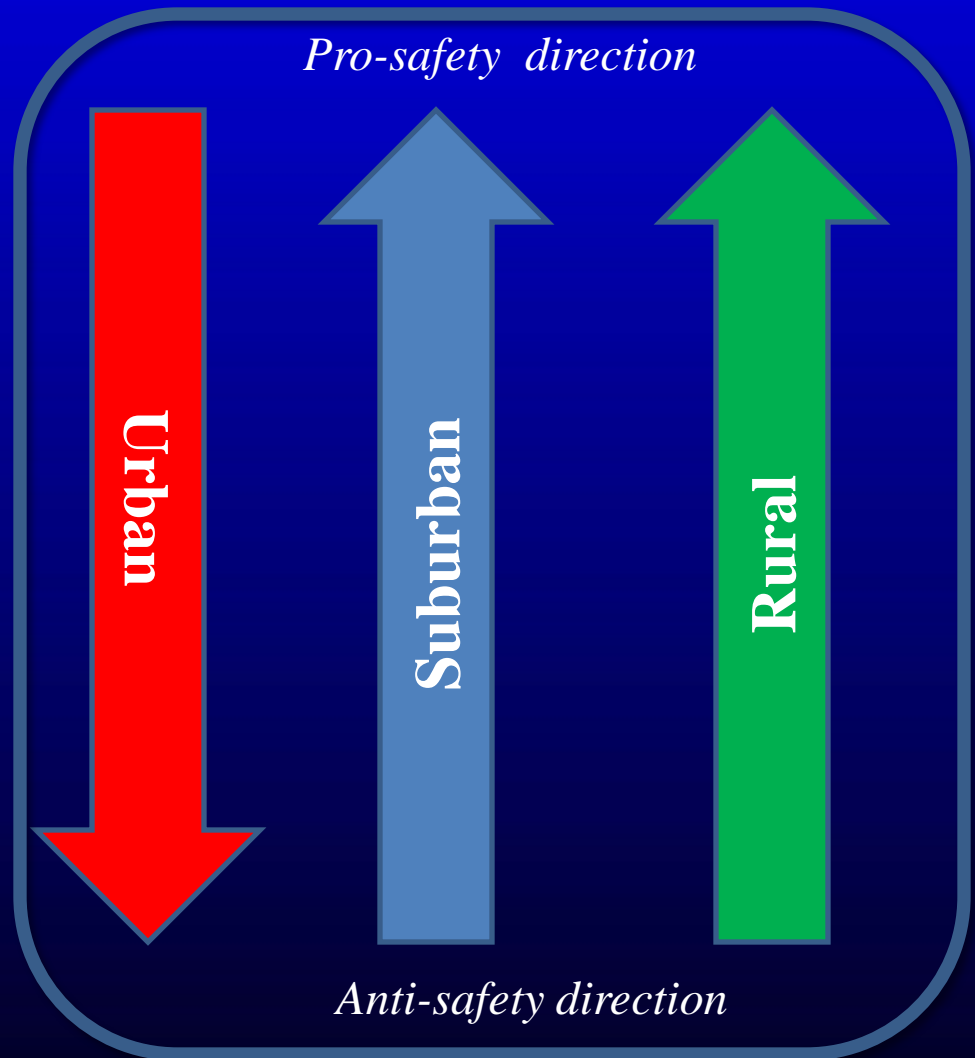
- This statistical process allows the urban/rural dimension to be examined separately from regional variation



N. B. The Northeast as a whole has a lower rate of seatbelt use than the rest of the country

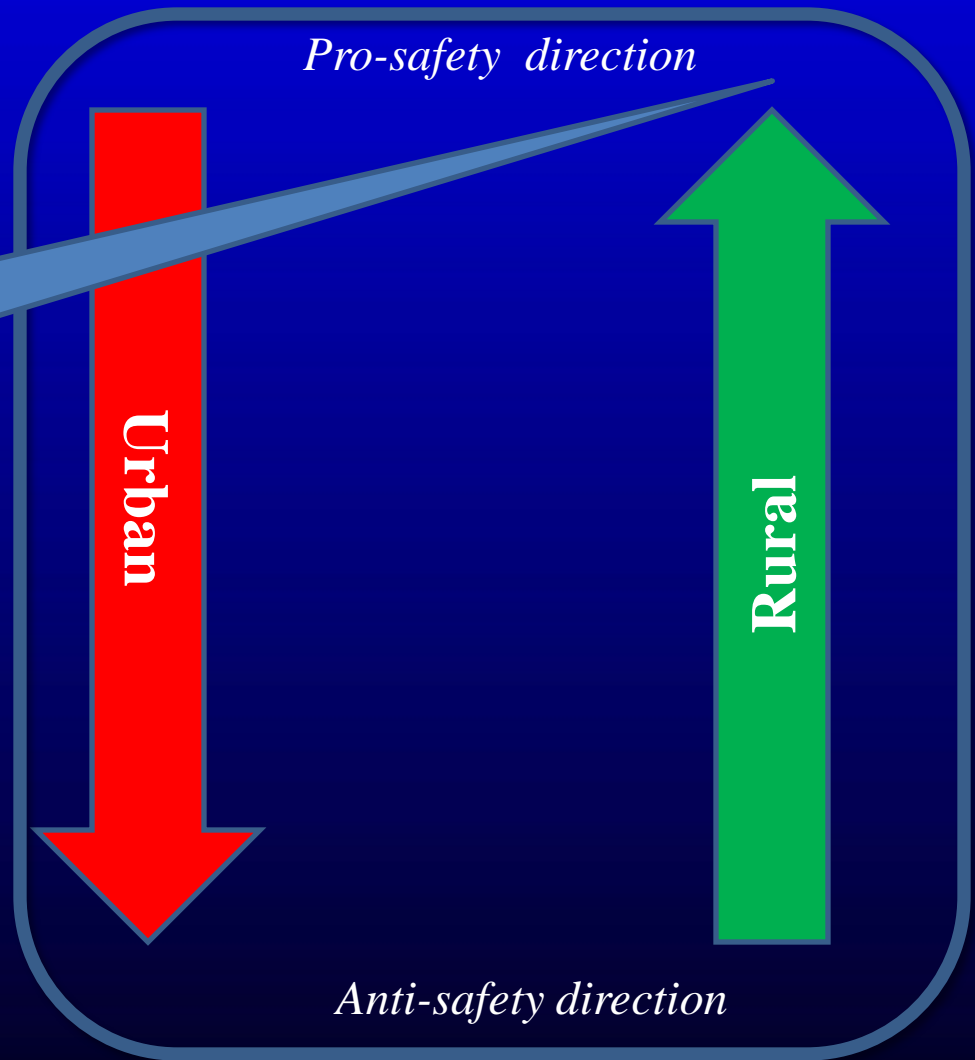
# Three Categories of Location

*Our survey questions  
will appear here*



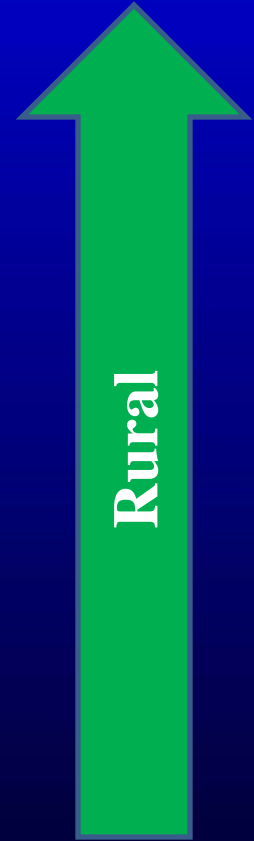
# The Meaning of the Arrows

Upward Arrow  
means a PRO  
SAFETY  
REPOSNE



# The Meaning of the Arrows

*Pro-safety direction*

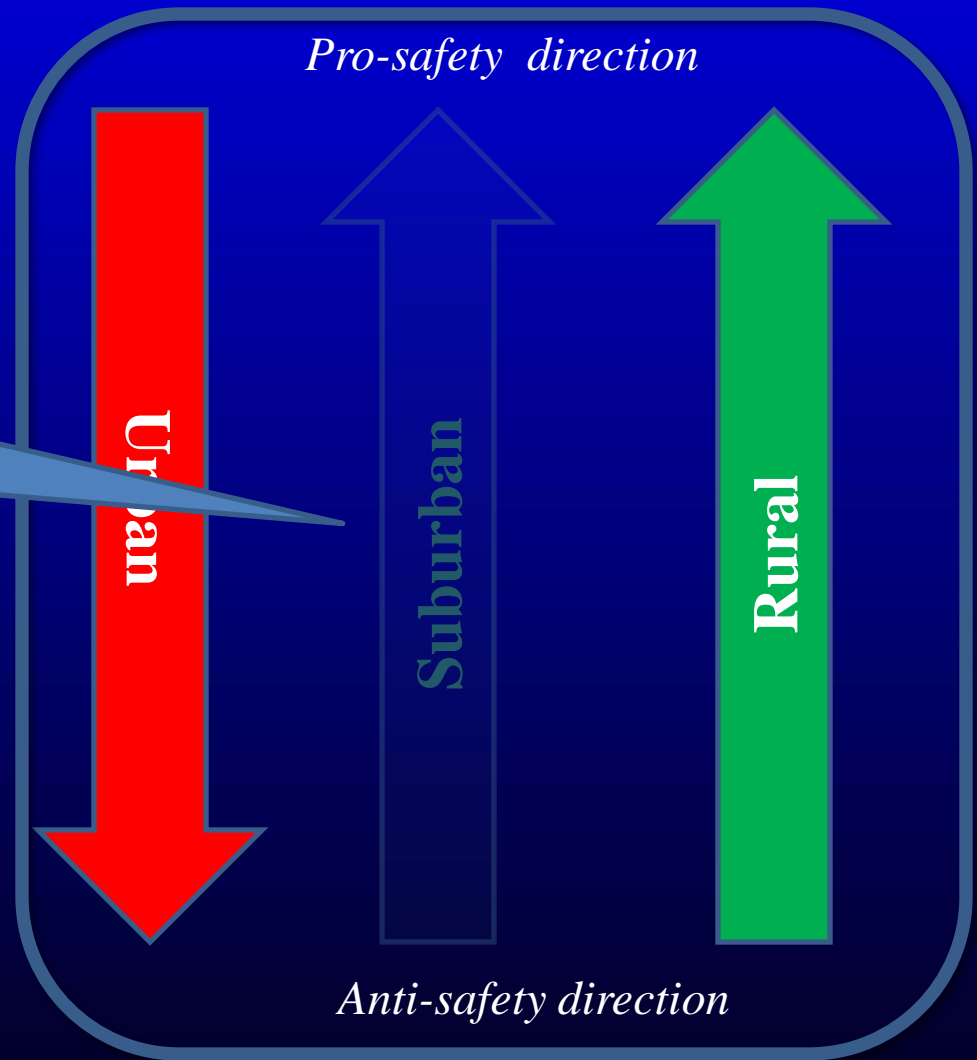


*Anti-safety direction*

Downward Arrow  
means an Anti-  
SAFETY  
REPONSE

# The Meaning of the Arrows

NO Arrow means  
Response was not  
significant

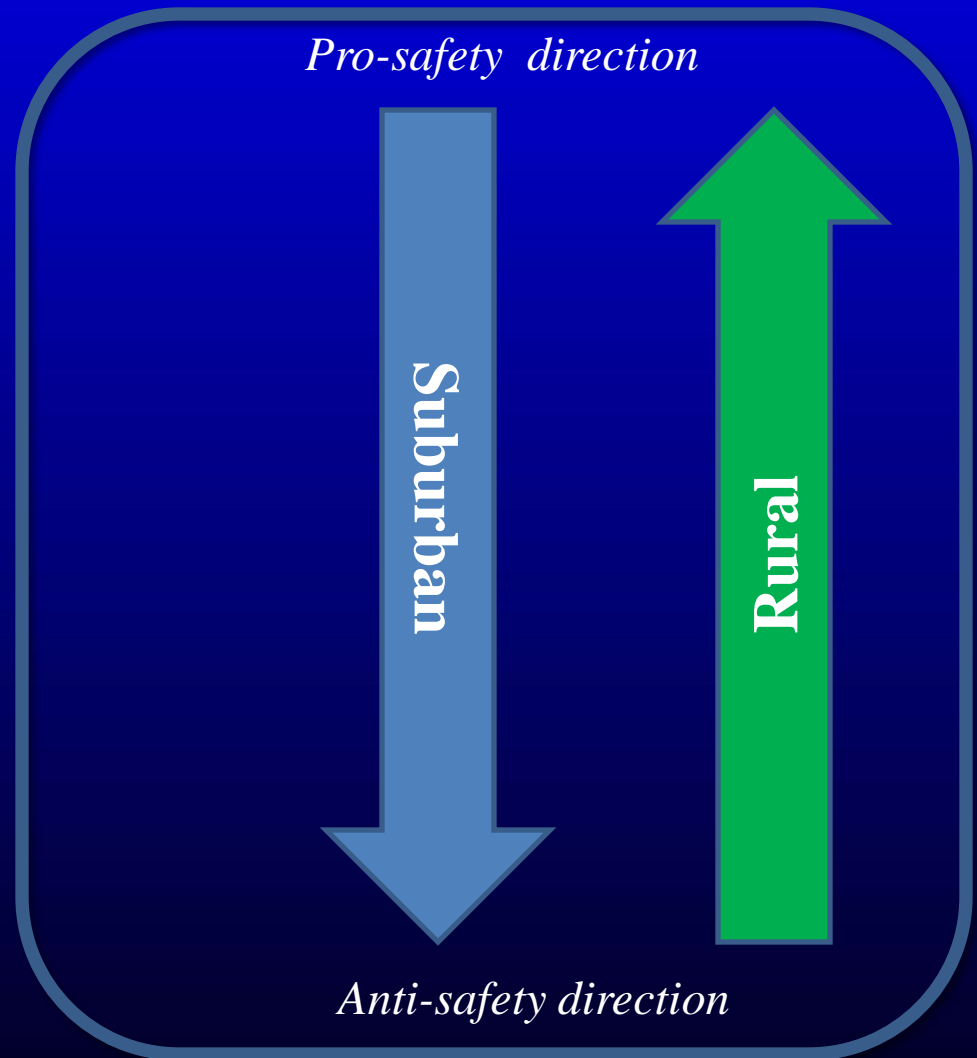


## Let's Start

- *We are looking for evidence of a rural driving culture that would explain accident patterns*

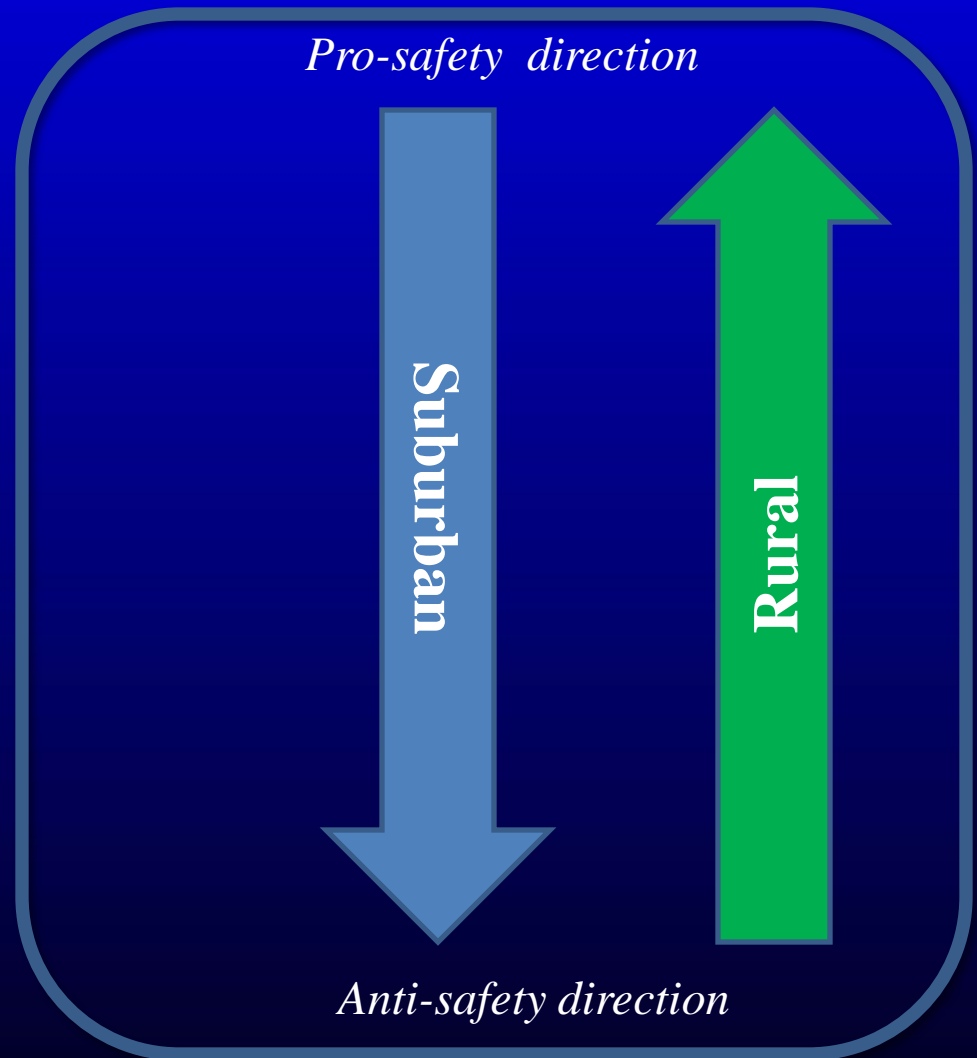
# Logic of Speeding

“Driving over 45 mph through the towns would help to get me home in time for dinner”



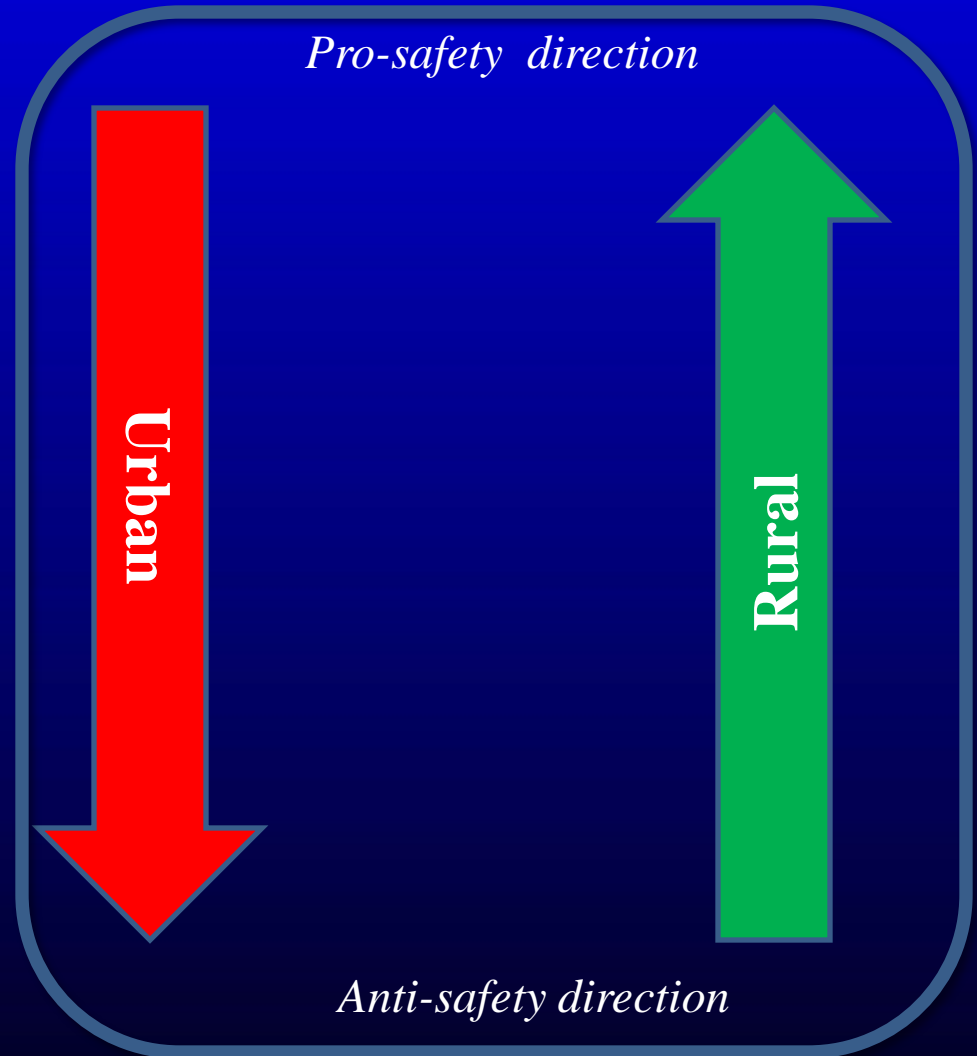
# Logic of Speeding

“Driving at the higher speed in the passing lane would get me home a lot faster.”



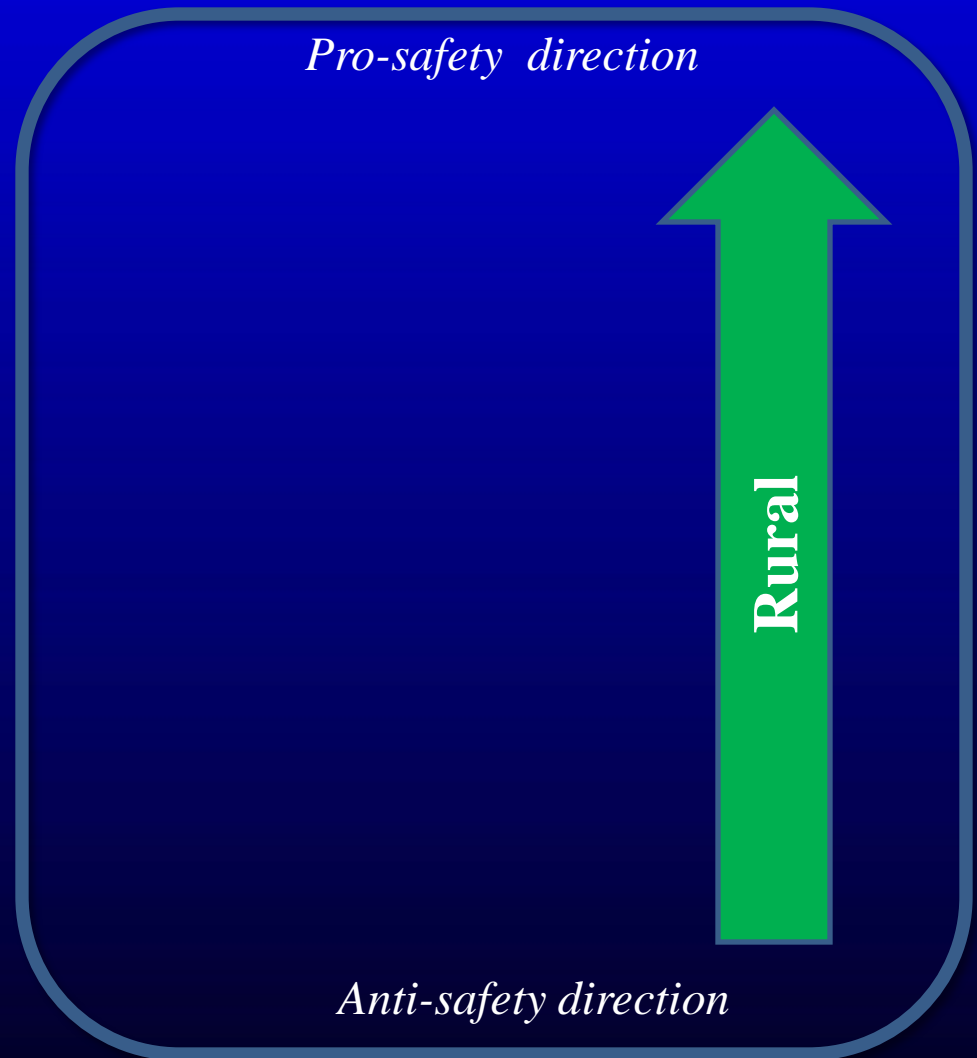
# Subjective Norm

“The people I like to be around would never obey these town speed limits.”



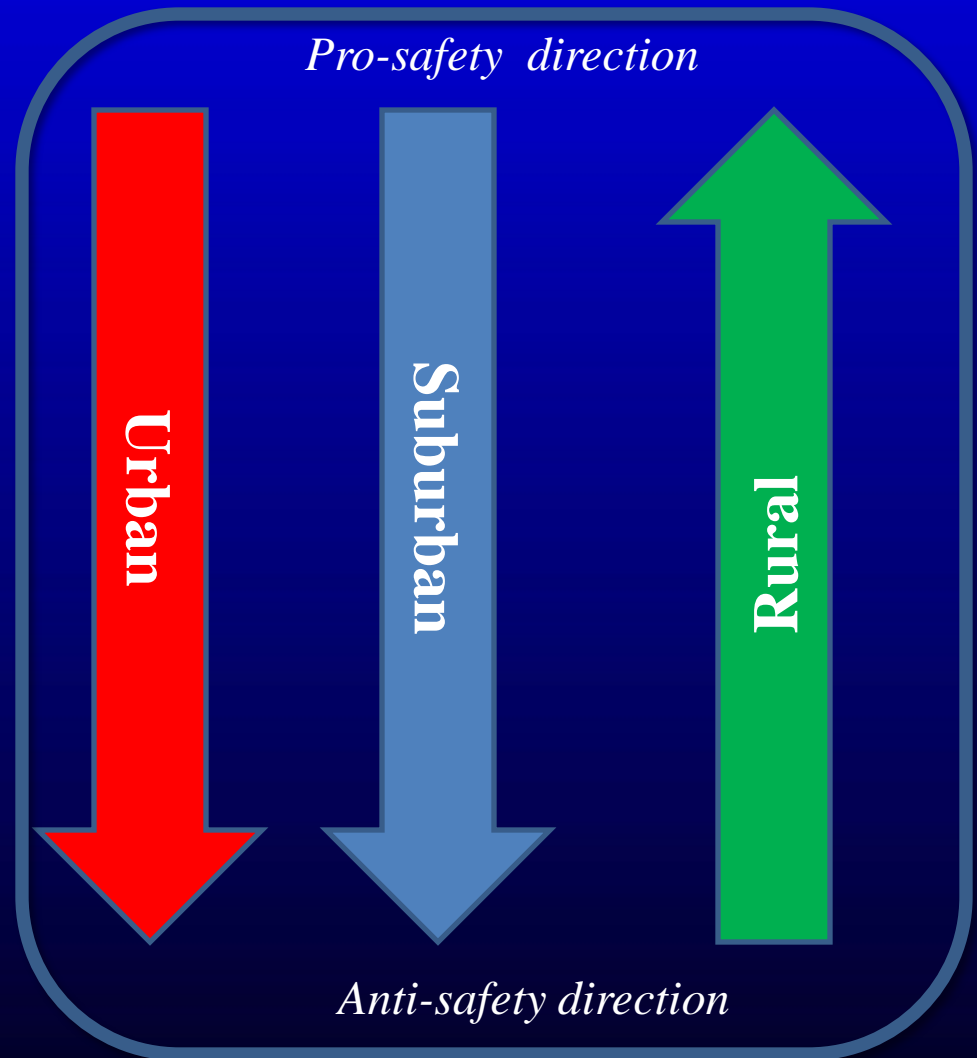
## Social Norm for Speeding

“I would feel ashamed to be pulled over by the police for tailgating the slow car.”



# Social Norm for Speeding

“If I told my friends at dinner that I broke the speed limit to get home, they would .... disapprove....”



## Social Norm for Speeding

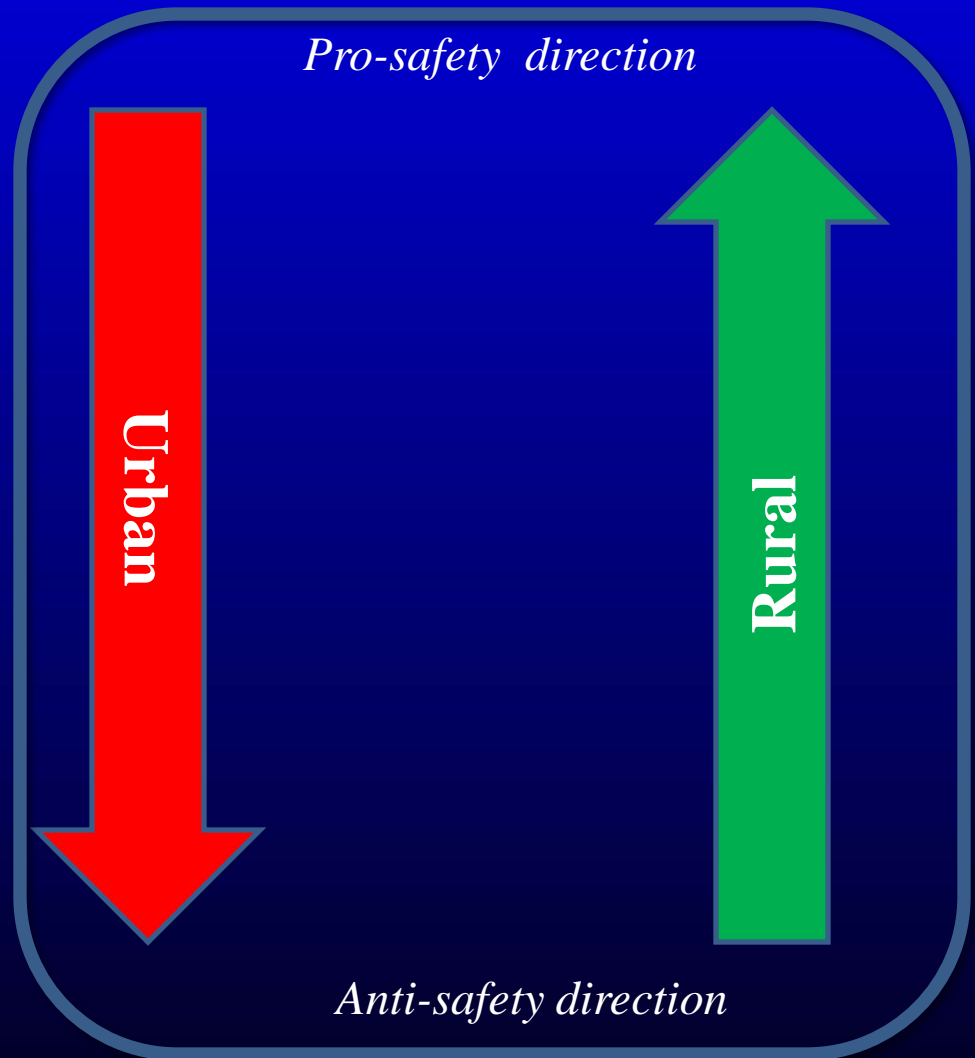
“My parents would find the idea of me speeding... unacceptable”

*Pro-safety direction*

*Anti-safety direction*

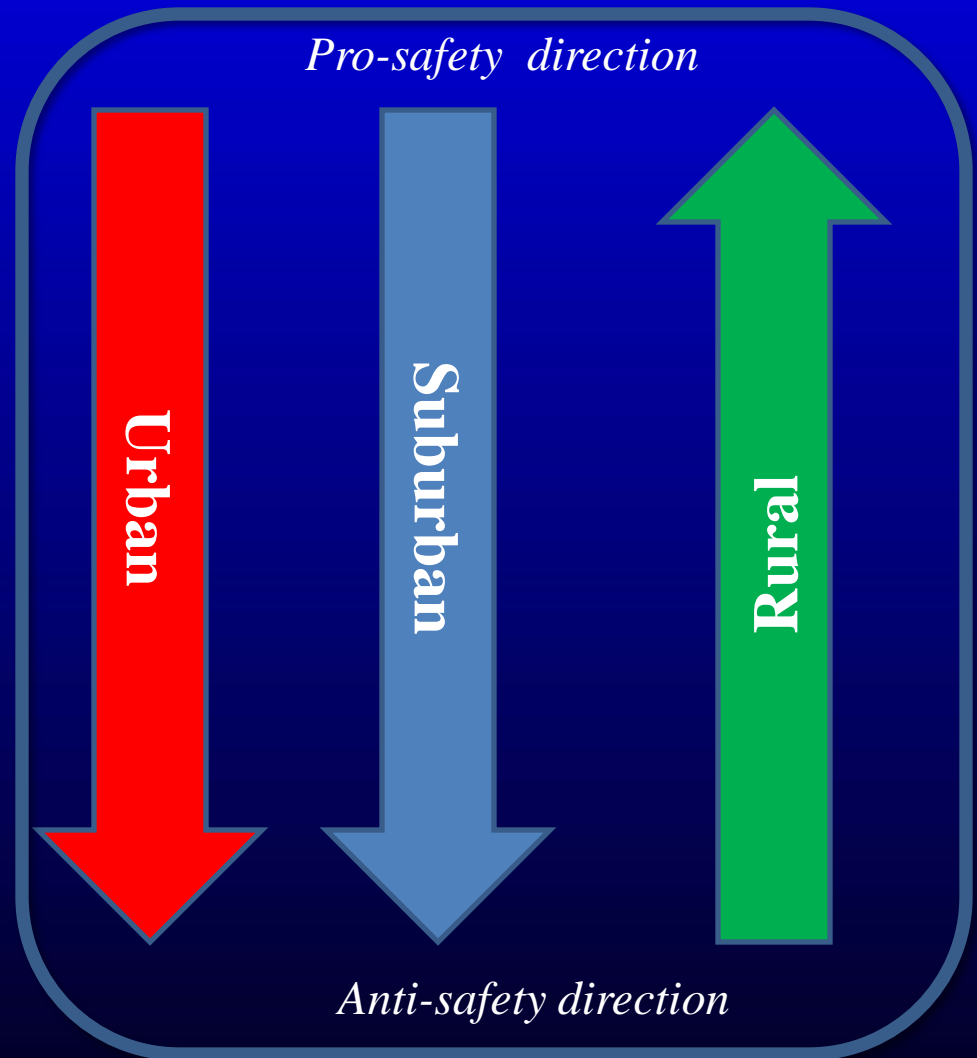
# Illusions of Self Power

“These rules make no sense for me, as I am a very precise driver who brakes quickly.”



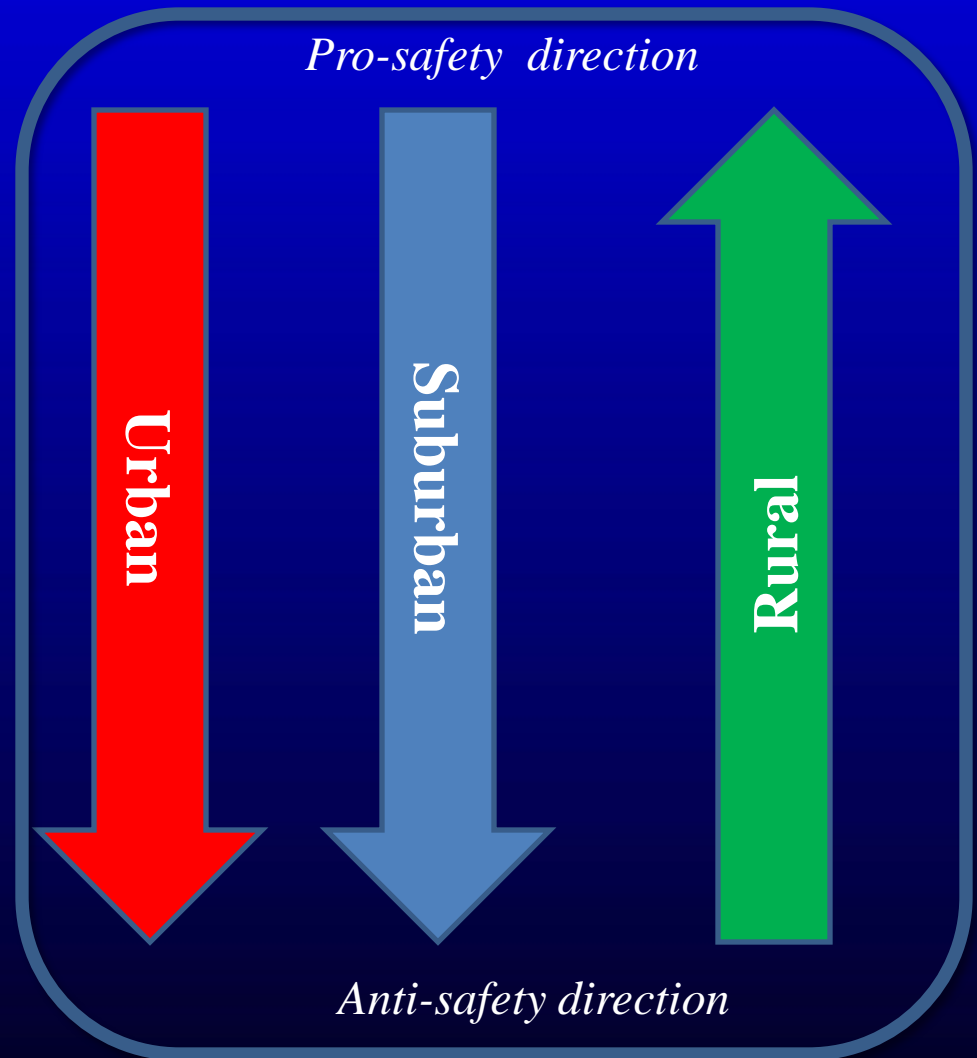
# Intention to Speed

“I intend to go through similar towns at the higher speed in the next two months.”



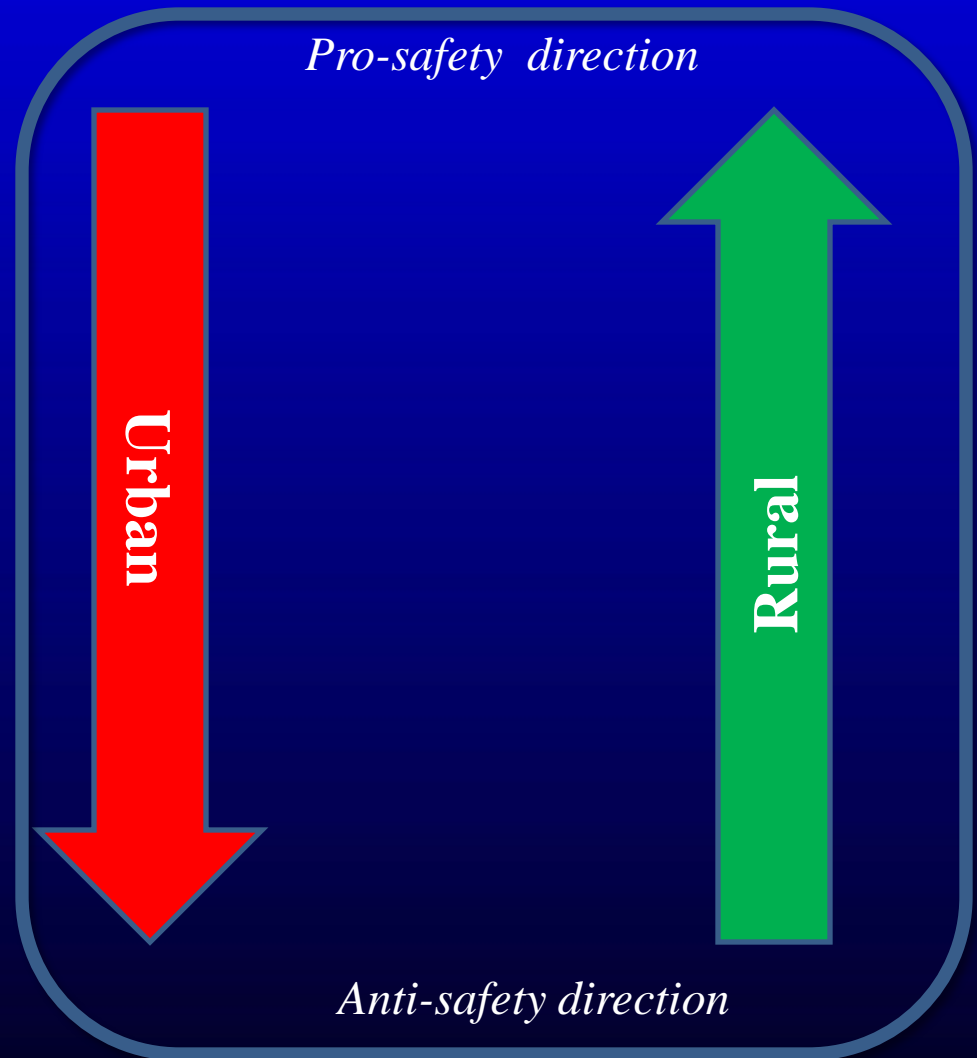
## Reported Low Speeding

“I usually go through towns at the higher speed (over 45 mph).”



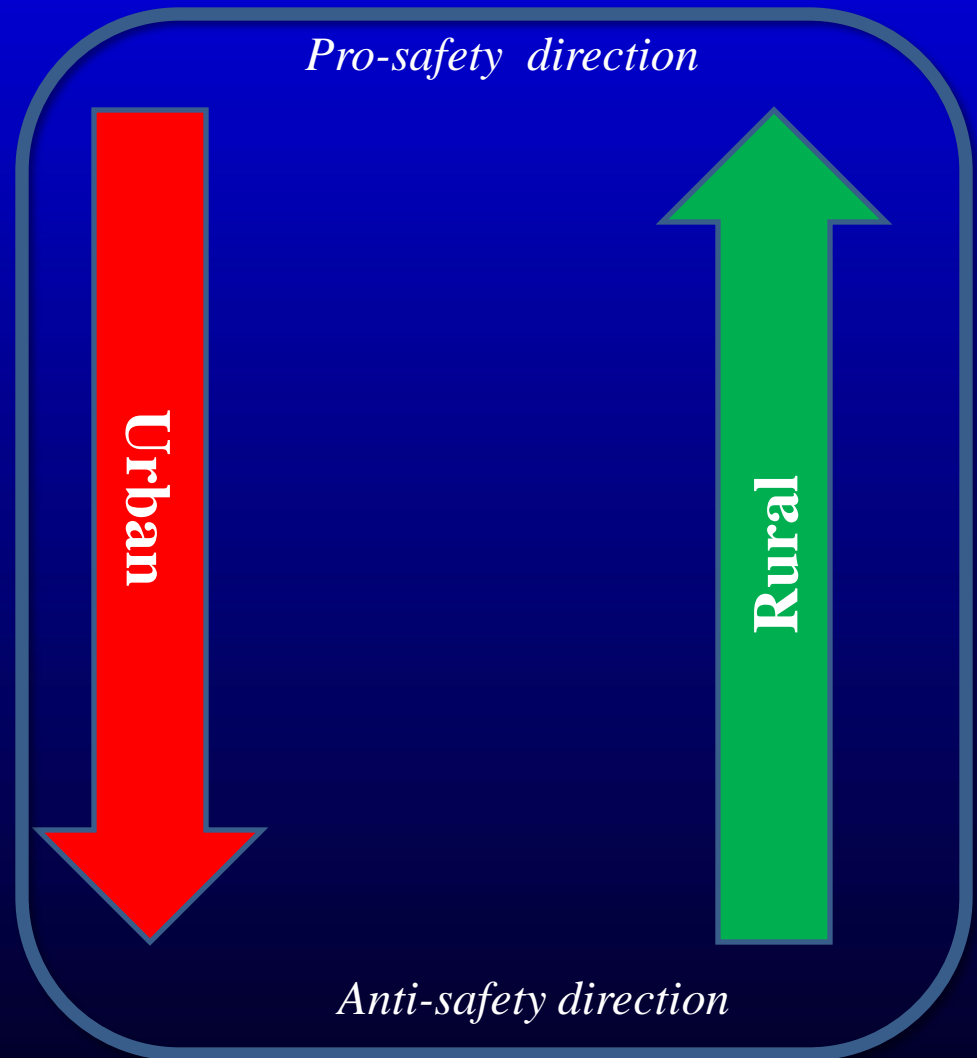
# Attitudes to Drink and Drive

“Driving after having a few drinks is acceptable.”



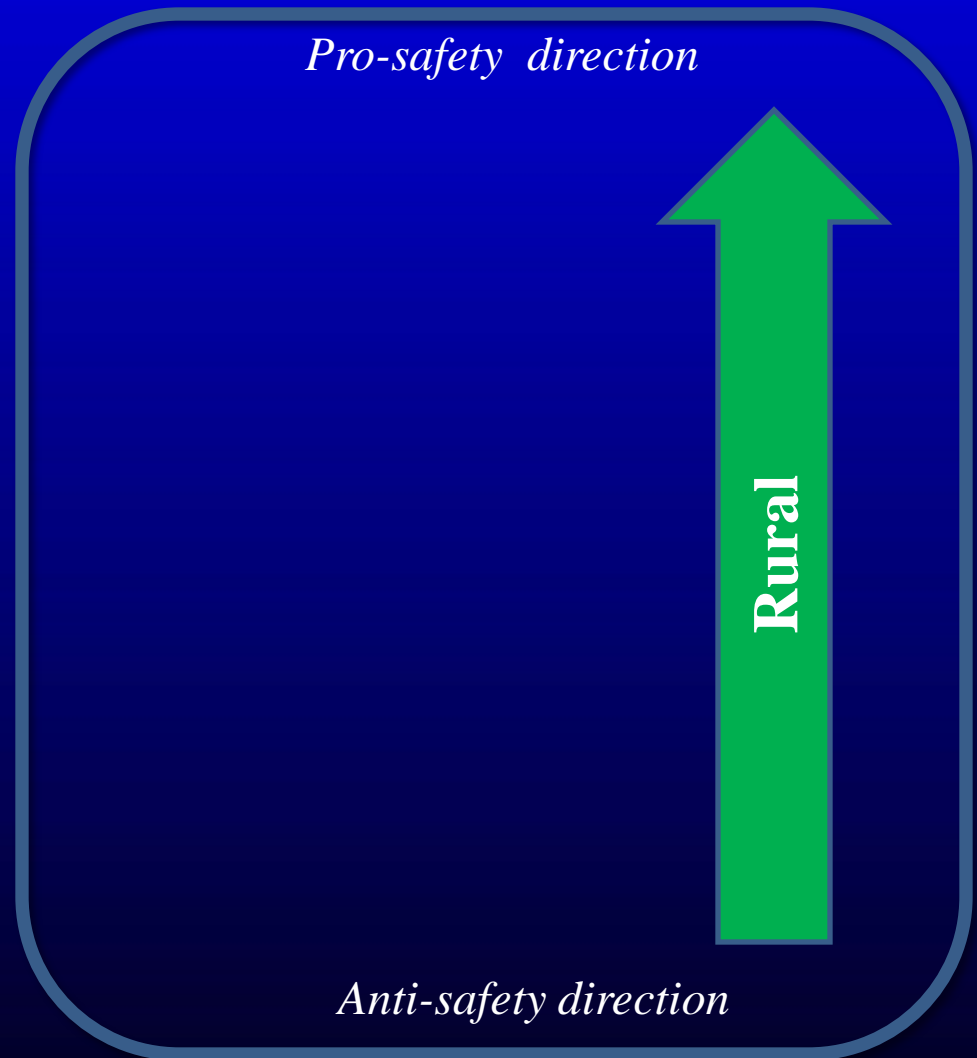
# Attitudes to Drink and Drive

“It is dangerous to drink and drive..”



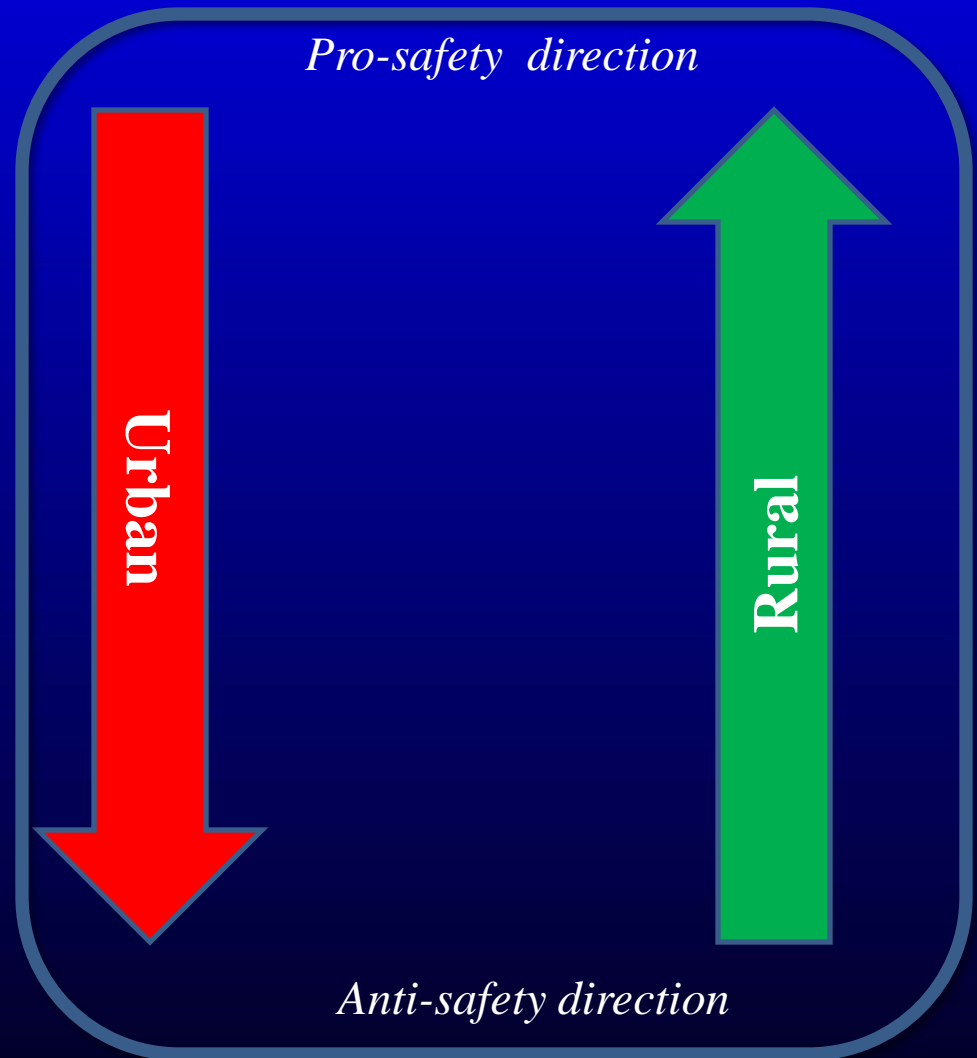
## Driving Behavior: Speeding

“Disregard the speed limit on a two-lane highway.”



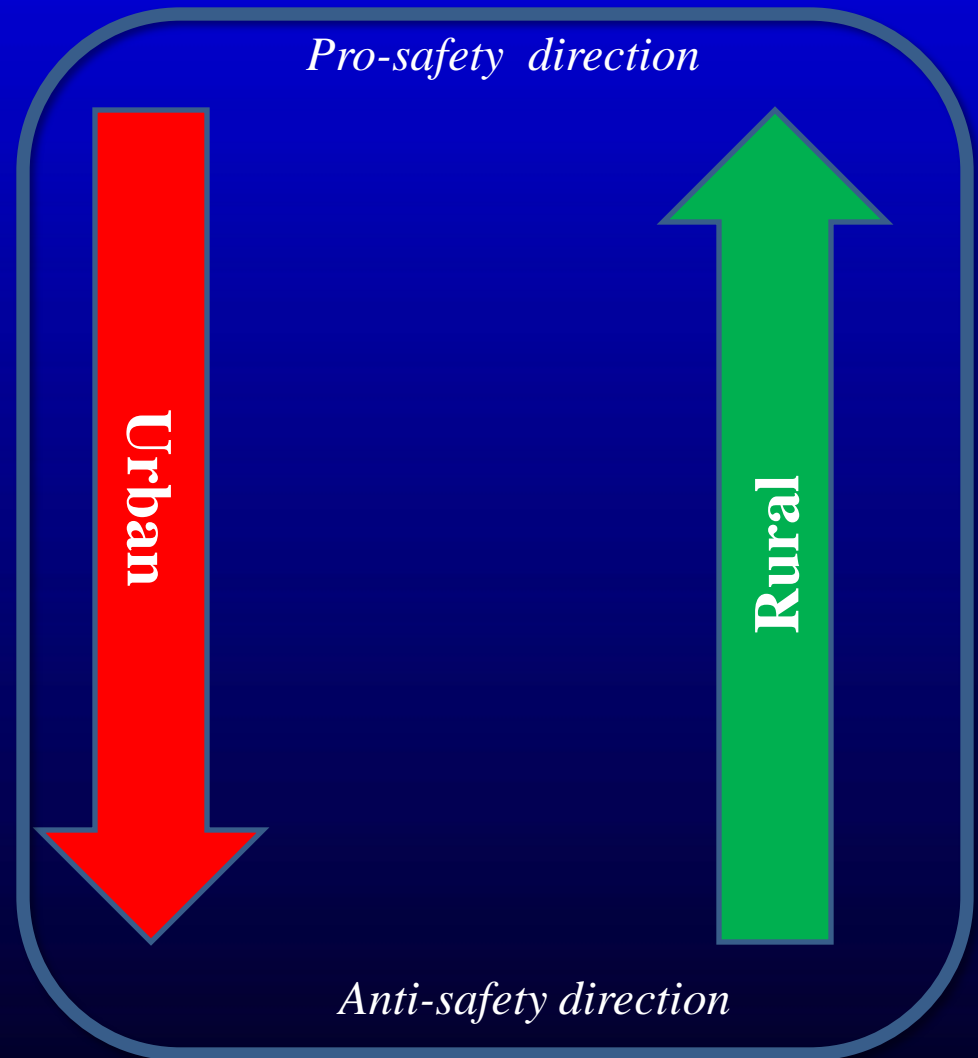
## Denial of Risk

“There is no danger in following close, as I am a very precise driver.”



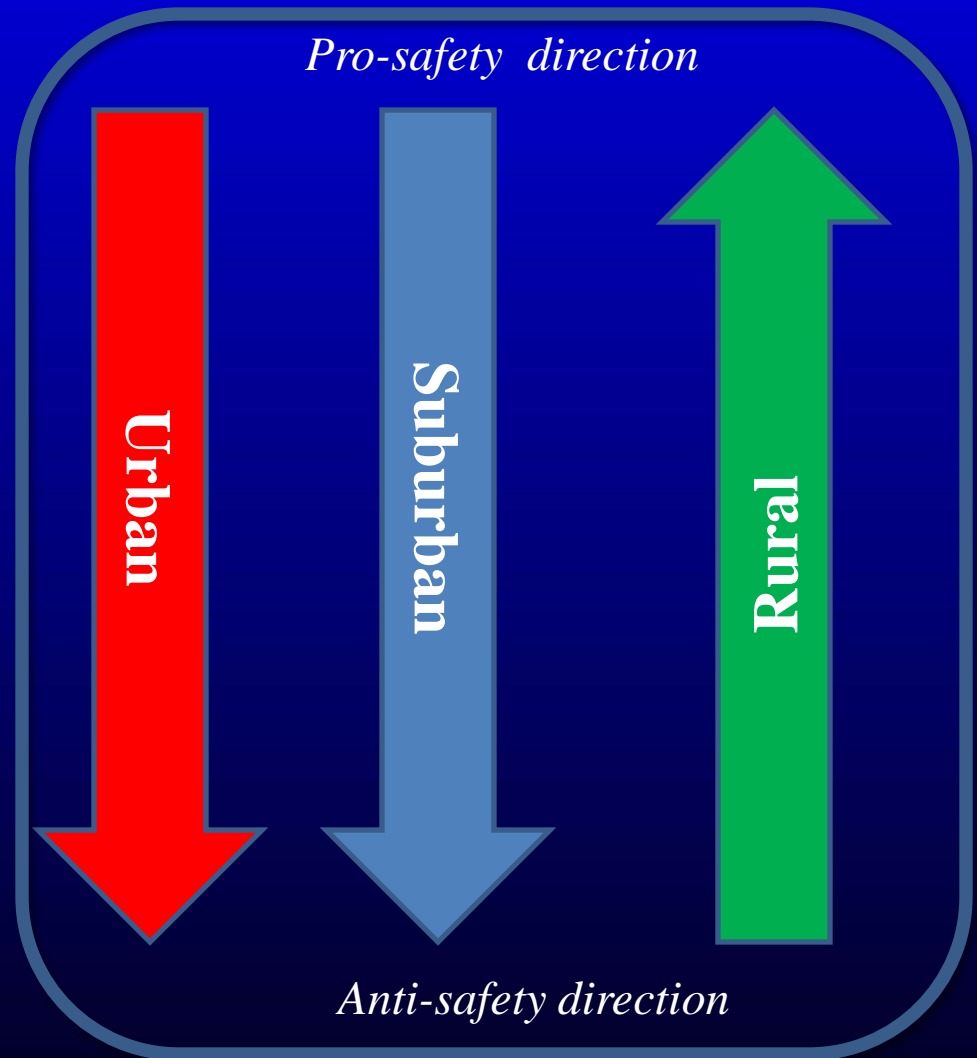
# Perceived Effectiveness of Aggressive Driving

“If I follow the car in front of me closely, then it is very likely that the car would move out of the left lane.”



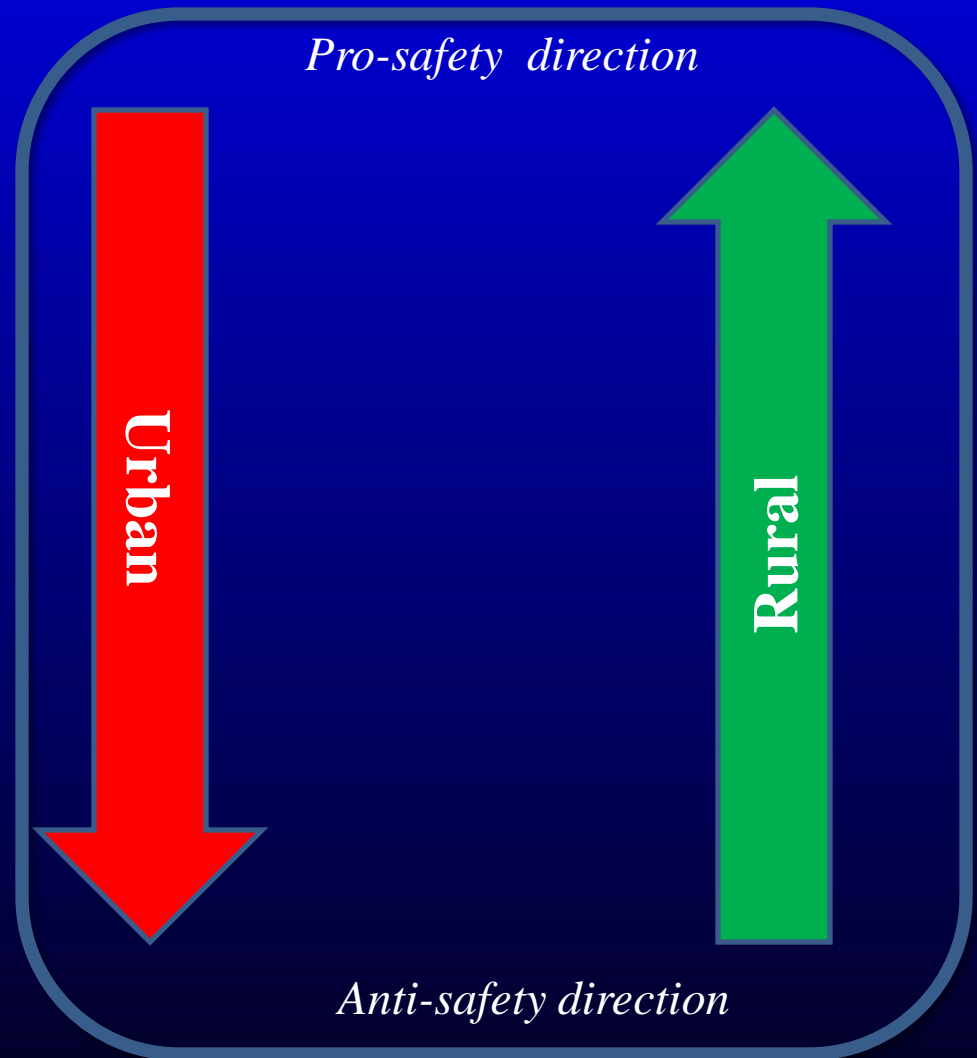
# Driving Behavior– Speed

“Go more than 75 mph on an interstate....”



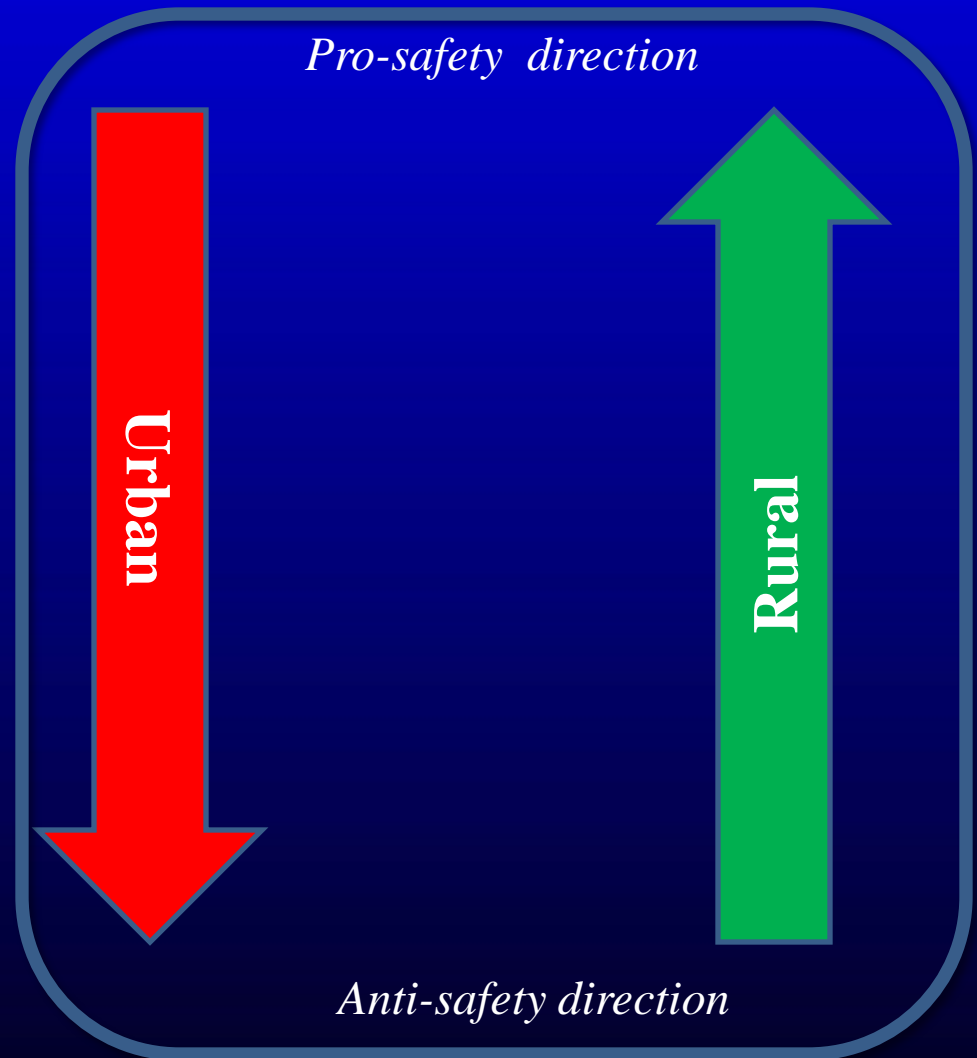
# Driving Behavior– Speed

“Go more than 80  
mph on an  
interstate....”



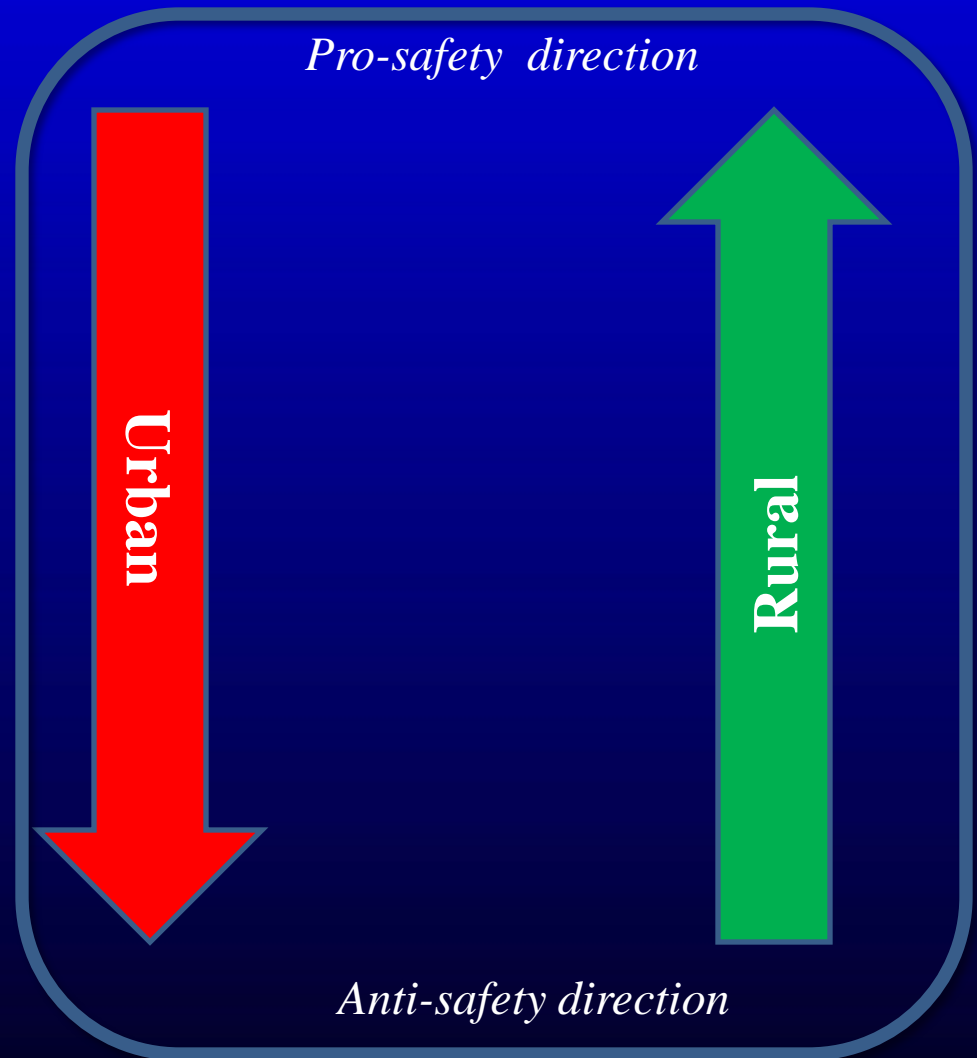
# Alcohol- Behavior

“Drive home after  
having drunk more  
than the legal  
limit.....



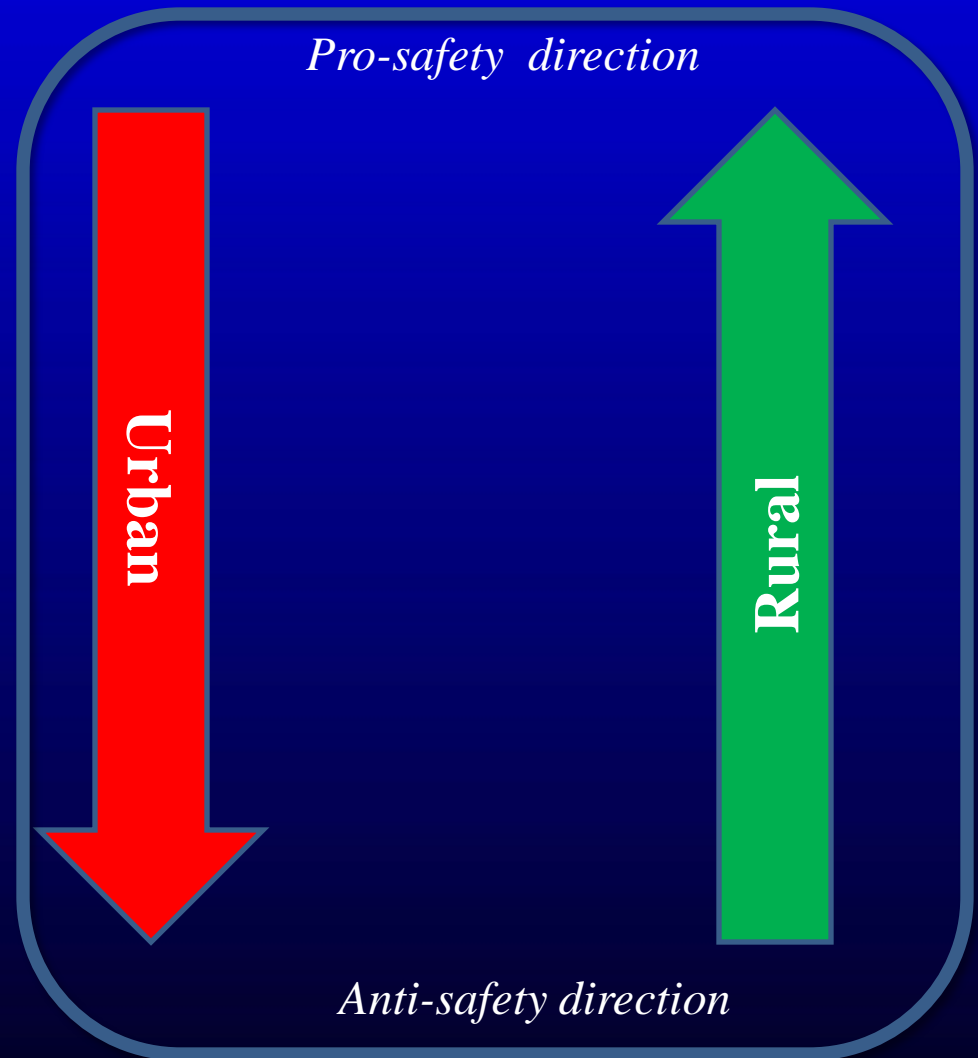
## Denial of Risk

“Tailgating the car in front of me would increase the chance of having a bad accident.”



# Dangerous Driving – Phone

“Use your cell phone while you are driving.”



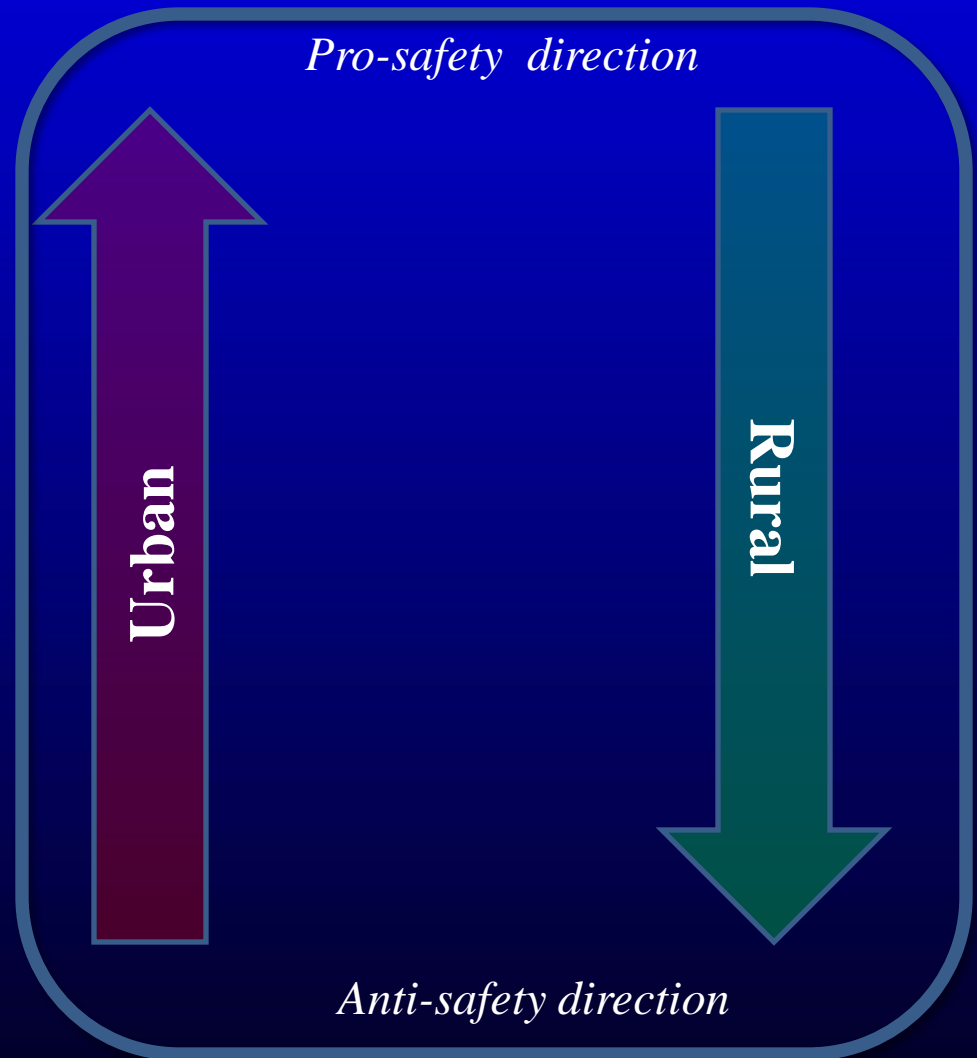
# Efficacy of the Seatbelt

**“Driving without a seatbelt is dangerous.”**

Urban Mean=5.96

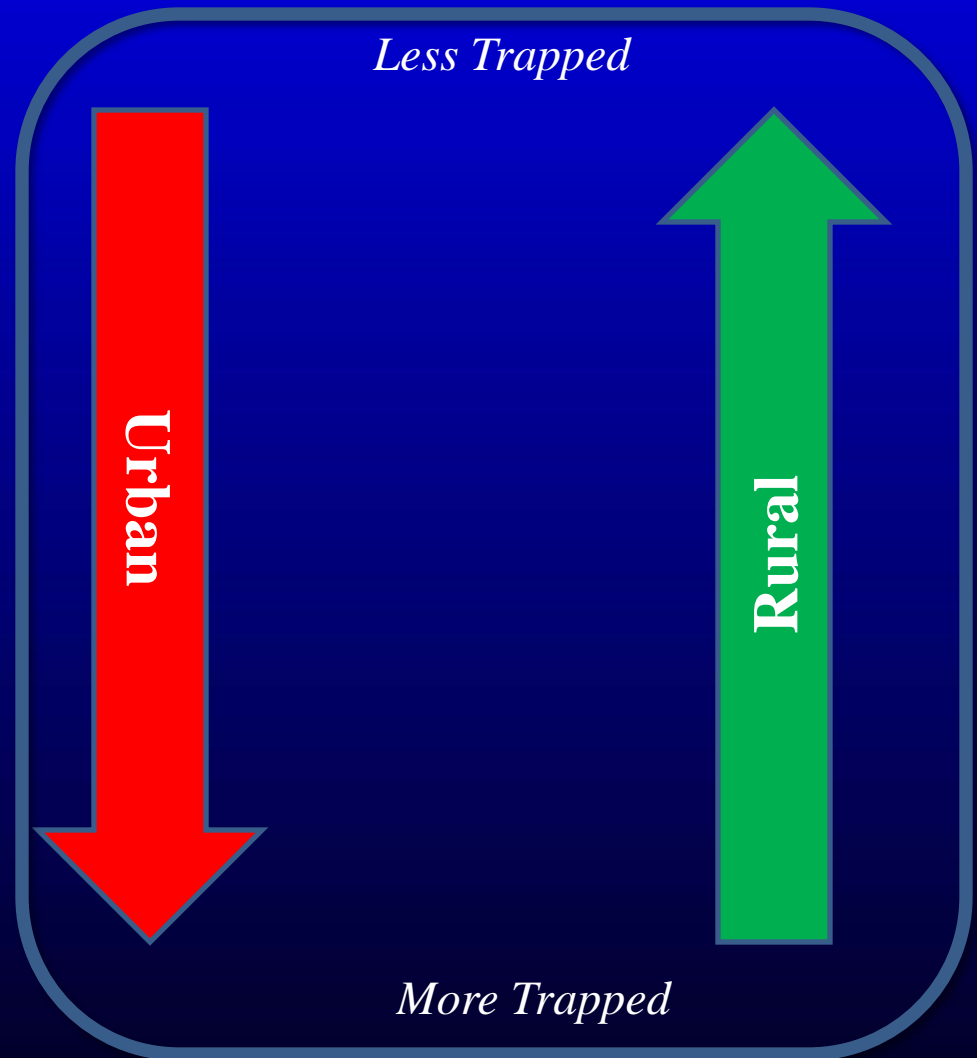
Rural Mean=5.92

(No significant difference)



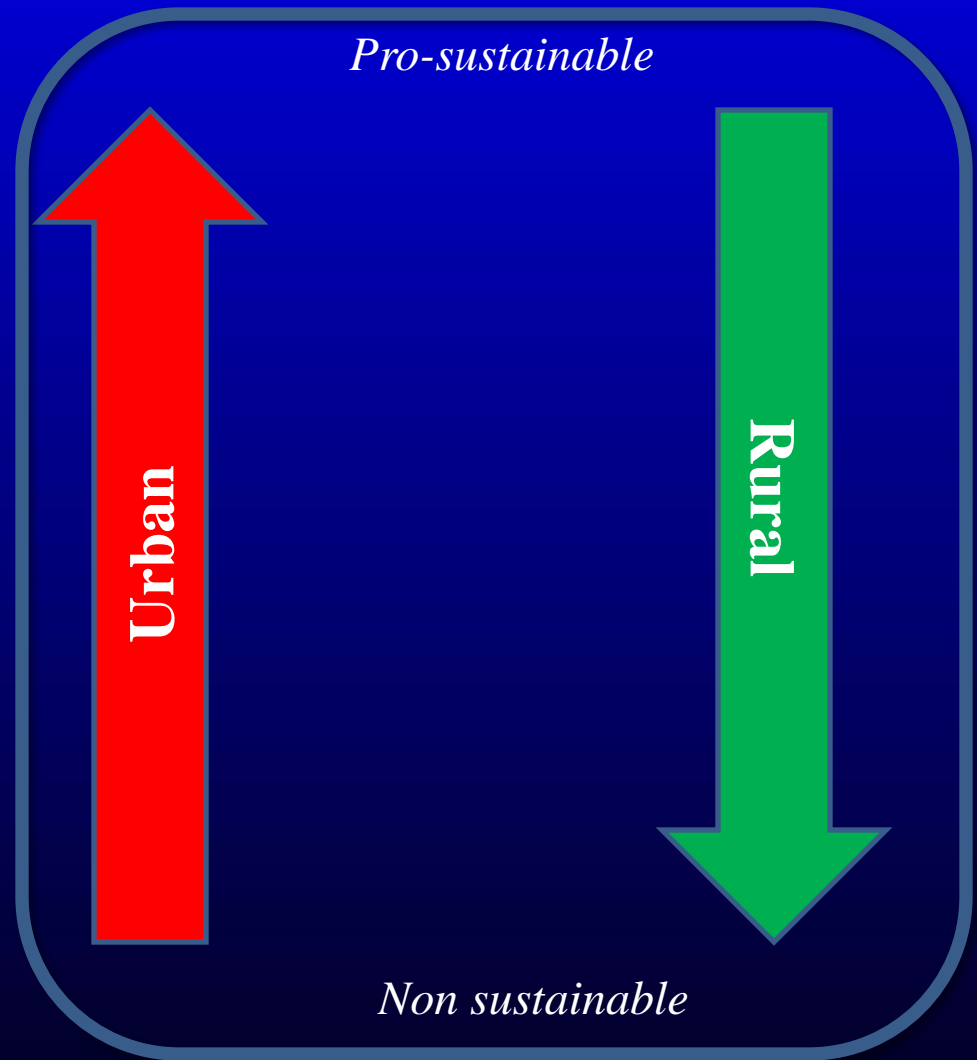
## Frustrated with Location?

“ Sometimes I think I am trapped in this place and cannot move away.”



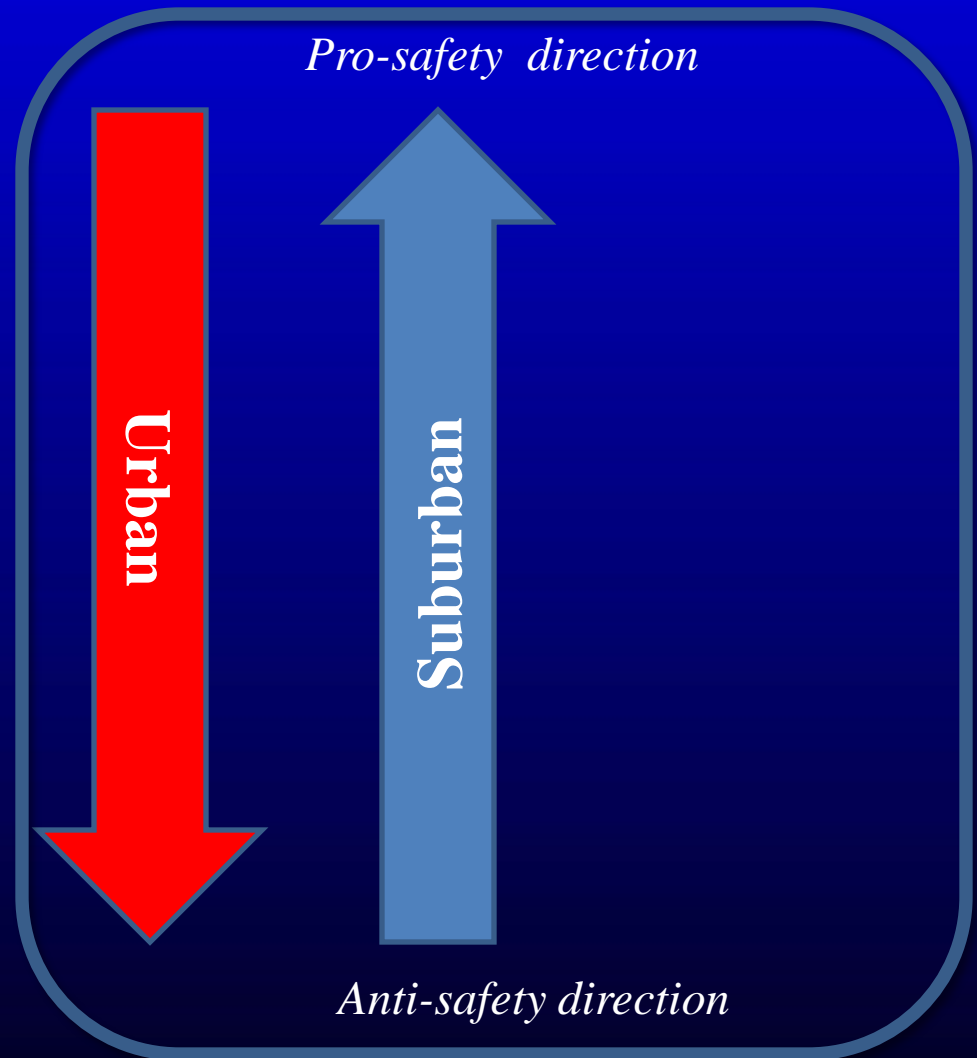
## Difficulty to be more sustainable

*“It would be hard for me to reduce my auto mileage and use of gasoline.”*



# Logic of Speeding

*“I like to watch a really good chase scene in the movies or on TV.”*

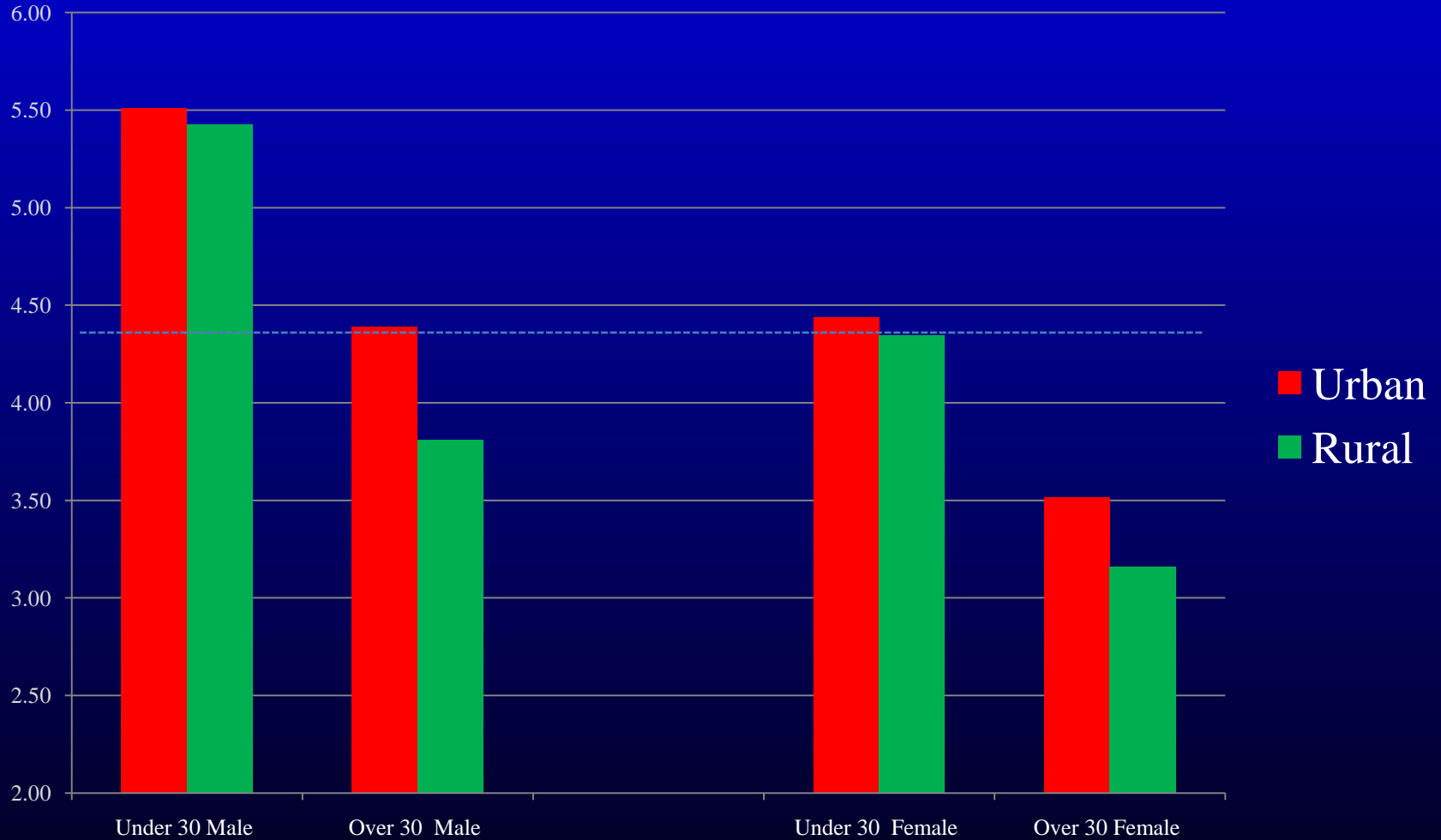


## Badness of Attitude vs Badness of Driving Behavior

- Factor analysis was applied creating two separate factors
- A ‘Culture of Risky Driving Index’ was created to reflect attitudes and cultures
- A ‘Behavior of Risky Driving Index’ was created to reflect self reported driving behavior

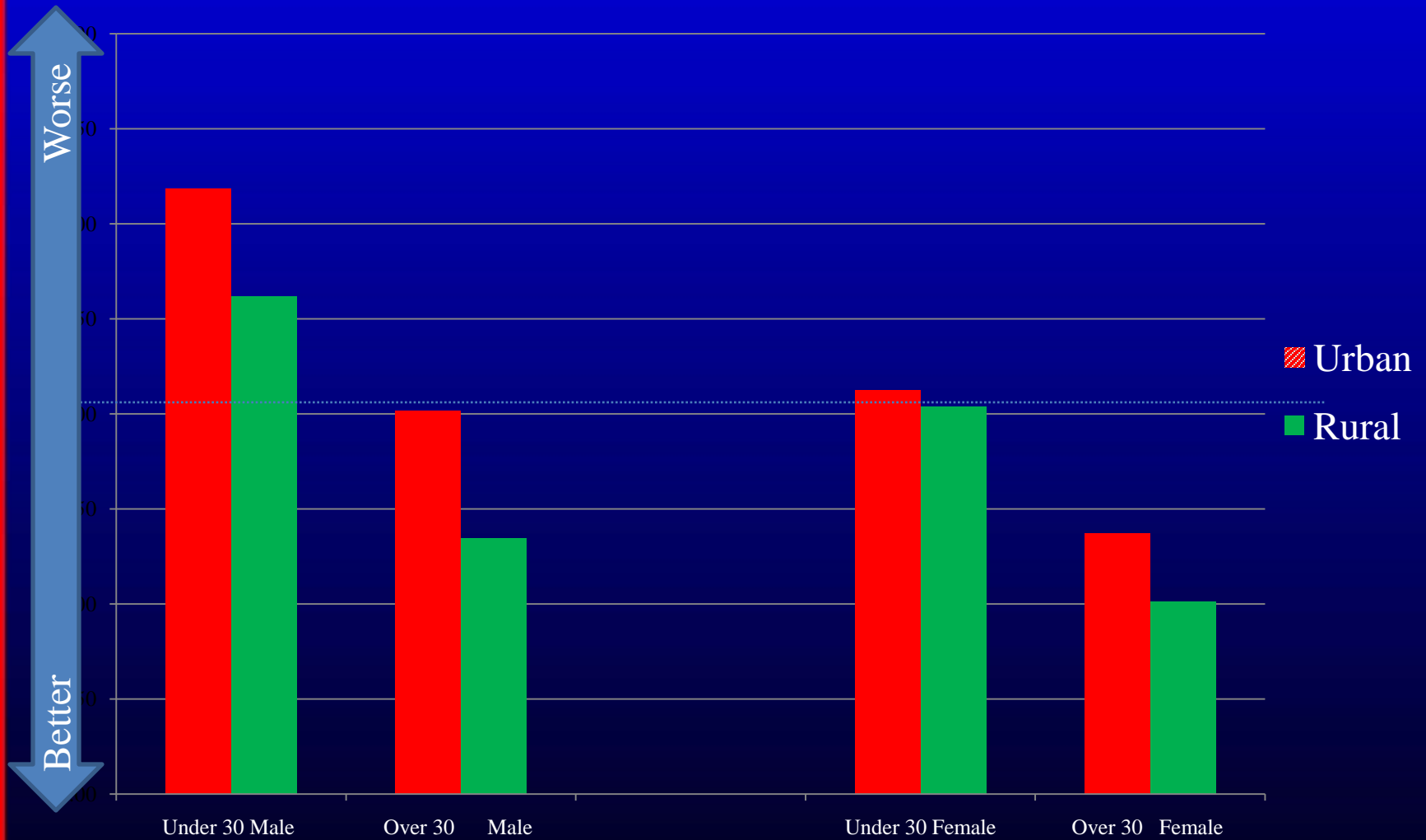
# The Culture of Risky Driving

*Urban/rural differences by age and gender*



# The Behavior of Risky Driving

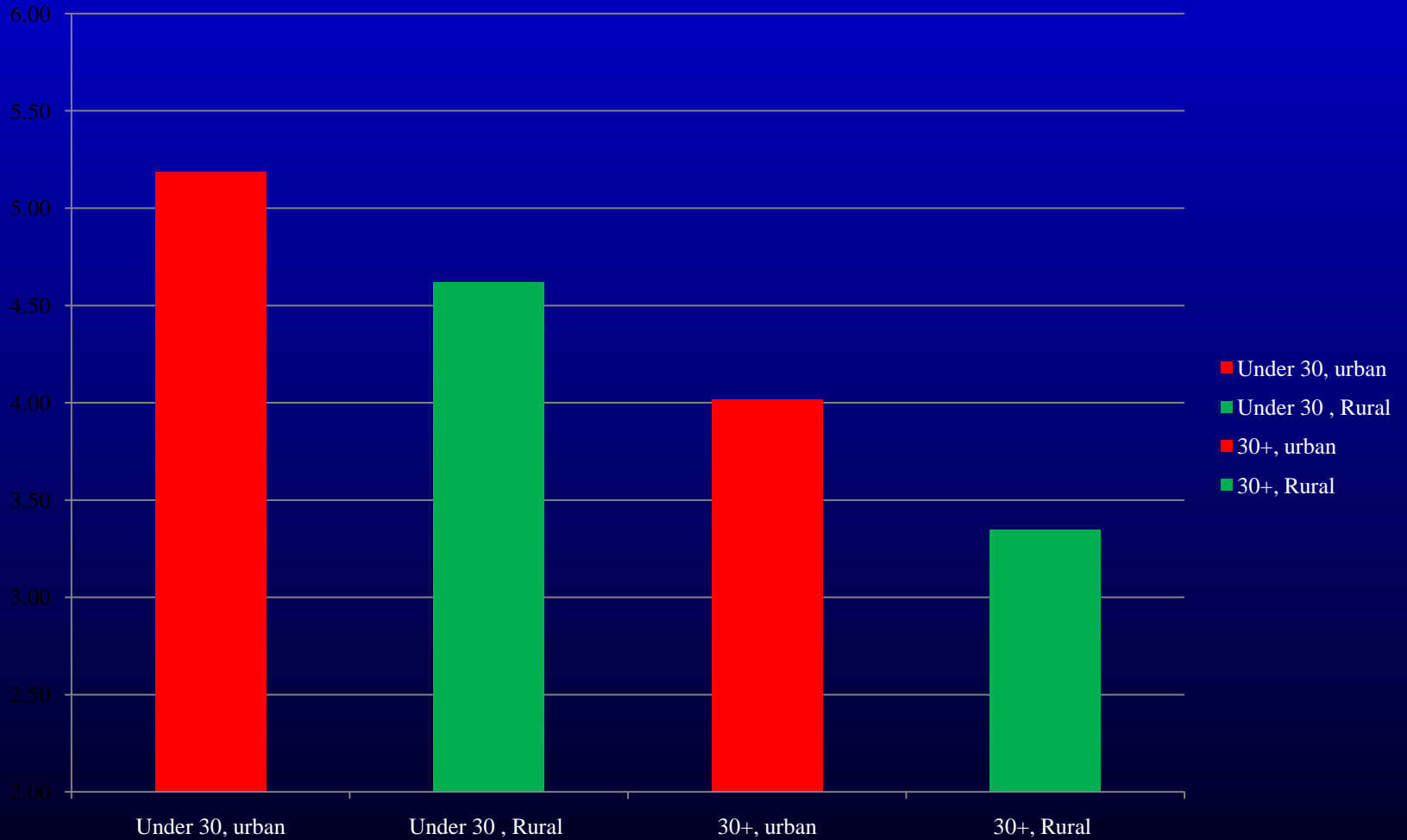
## *Urban Rural Differences by Age and Gender*



# The Behavior of Risky Driving

## *Influence of age and location*

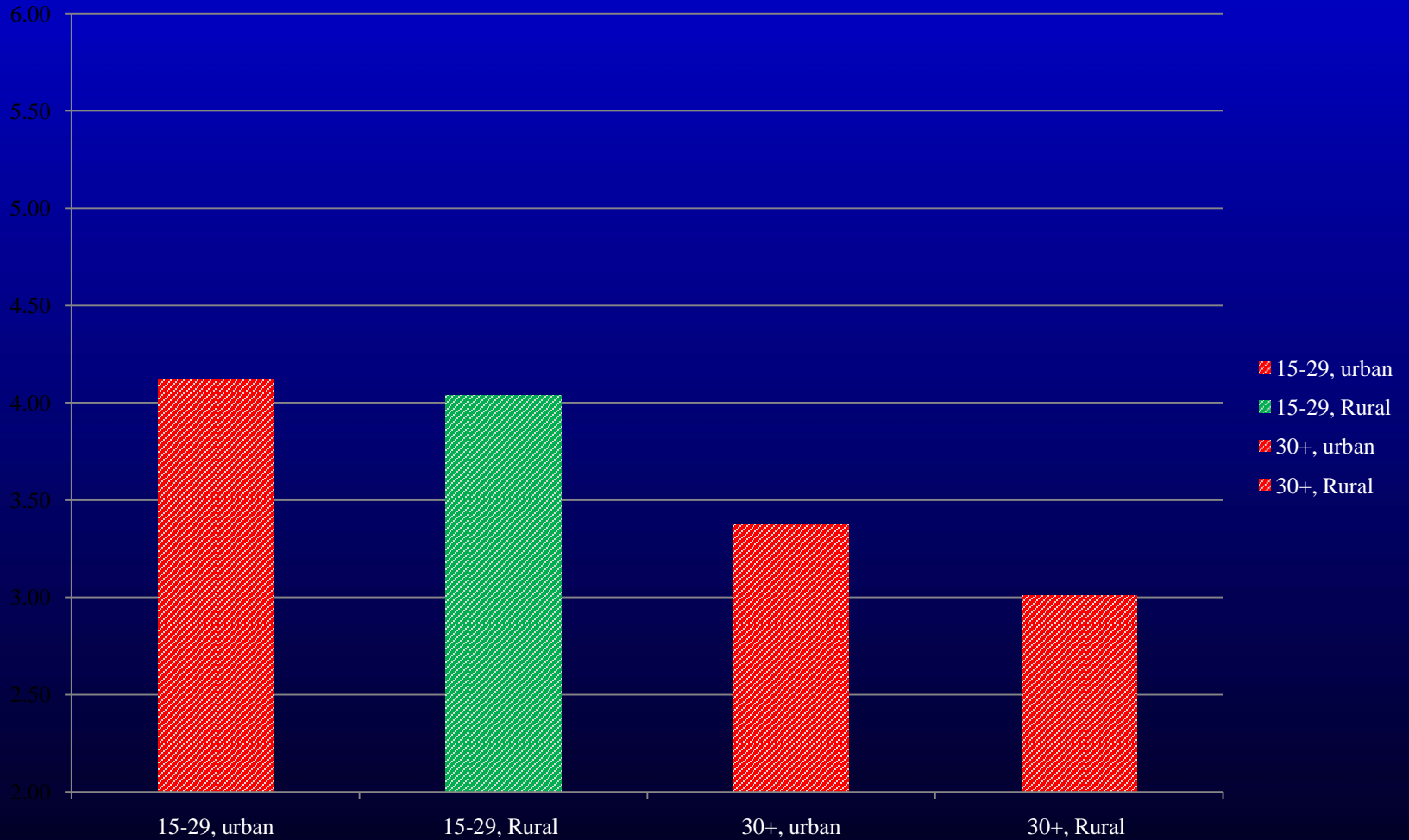
Male



# The Behavior of Risky Driving

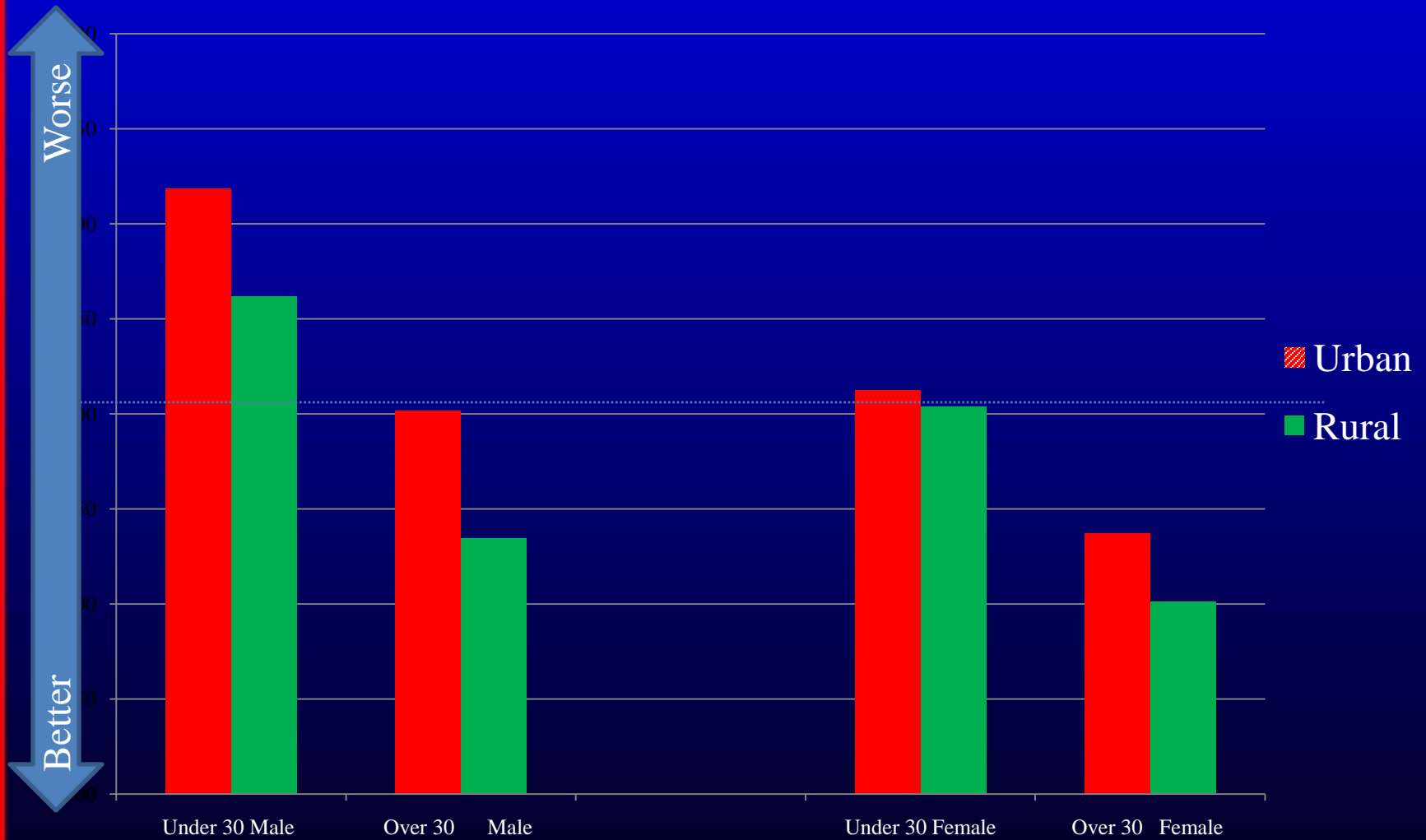
*Influence of age, gender and location*

## Female



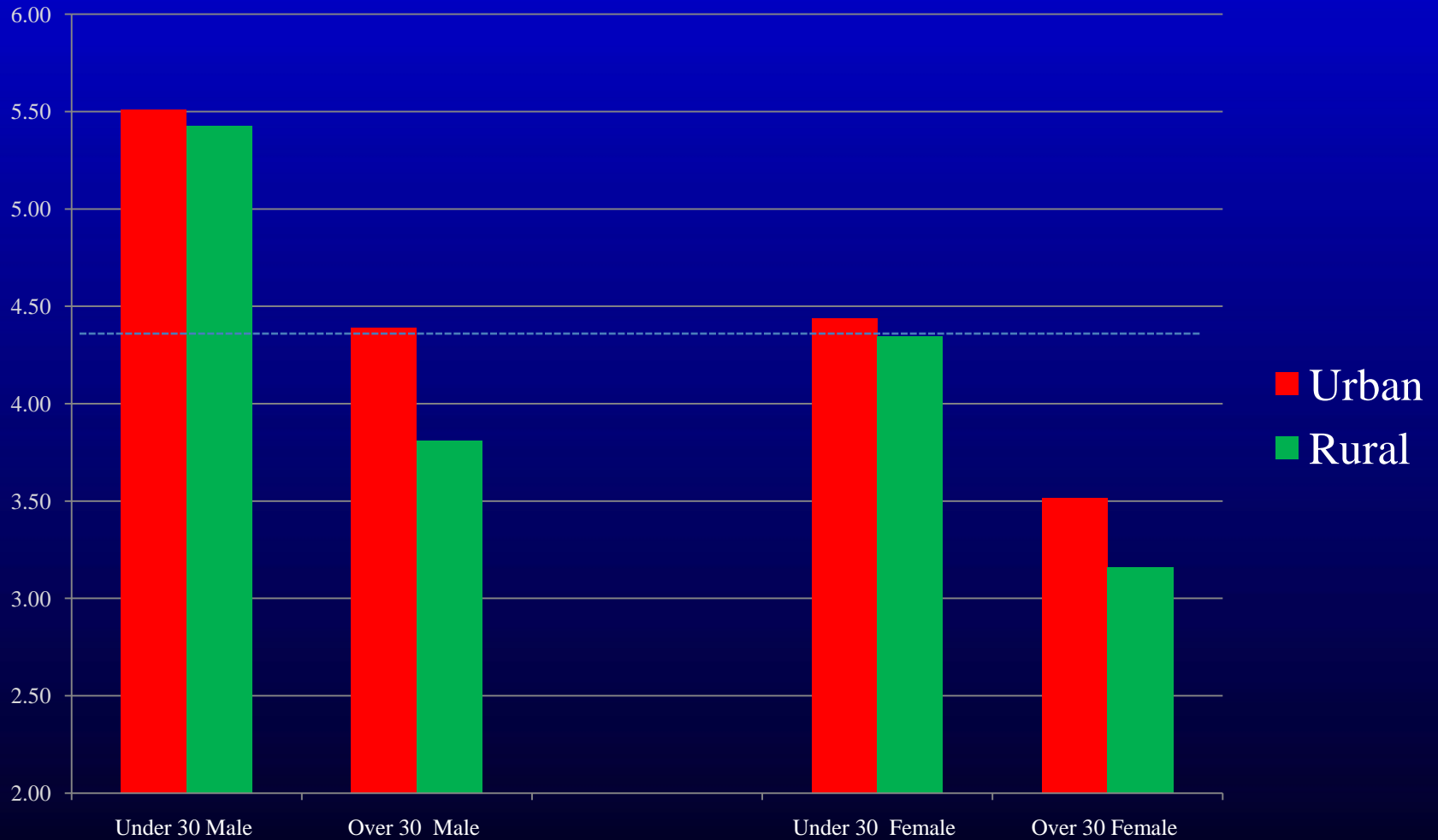
# The Behavior of Risky Driving

## *Urban Rural Differences by Age and Gender*



# The Culture of Risky Driving

*Urban/rural differences by age and gender*

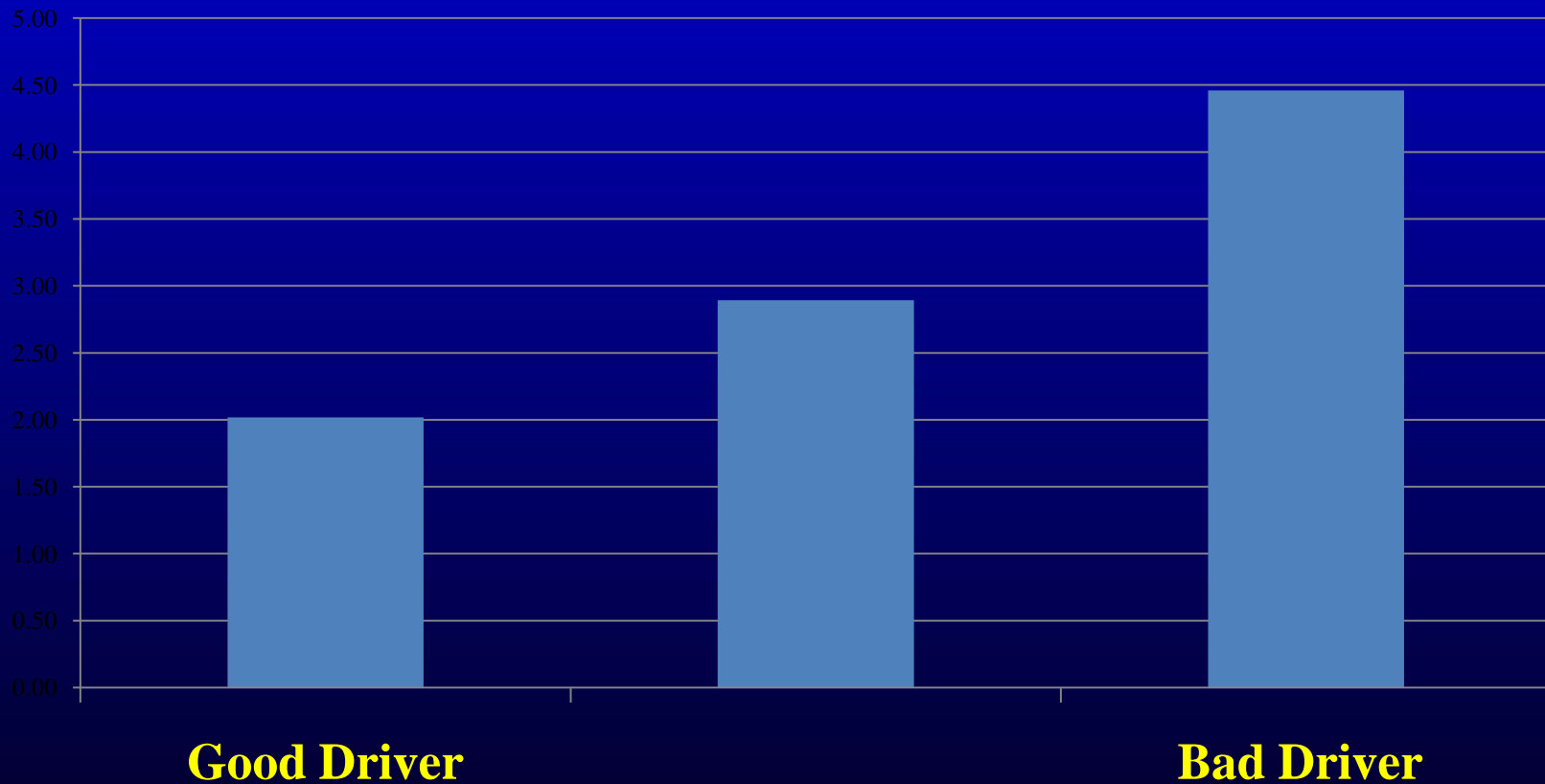


## What's Next

- Market research techniques are being applied to understand the psychographics of the separate market segments
- Market segments identified in terms of their propensity to have the dangerous culture of driving
  - Not rural vs urban
  - But market segment vs market segment

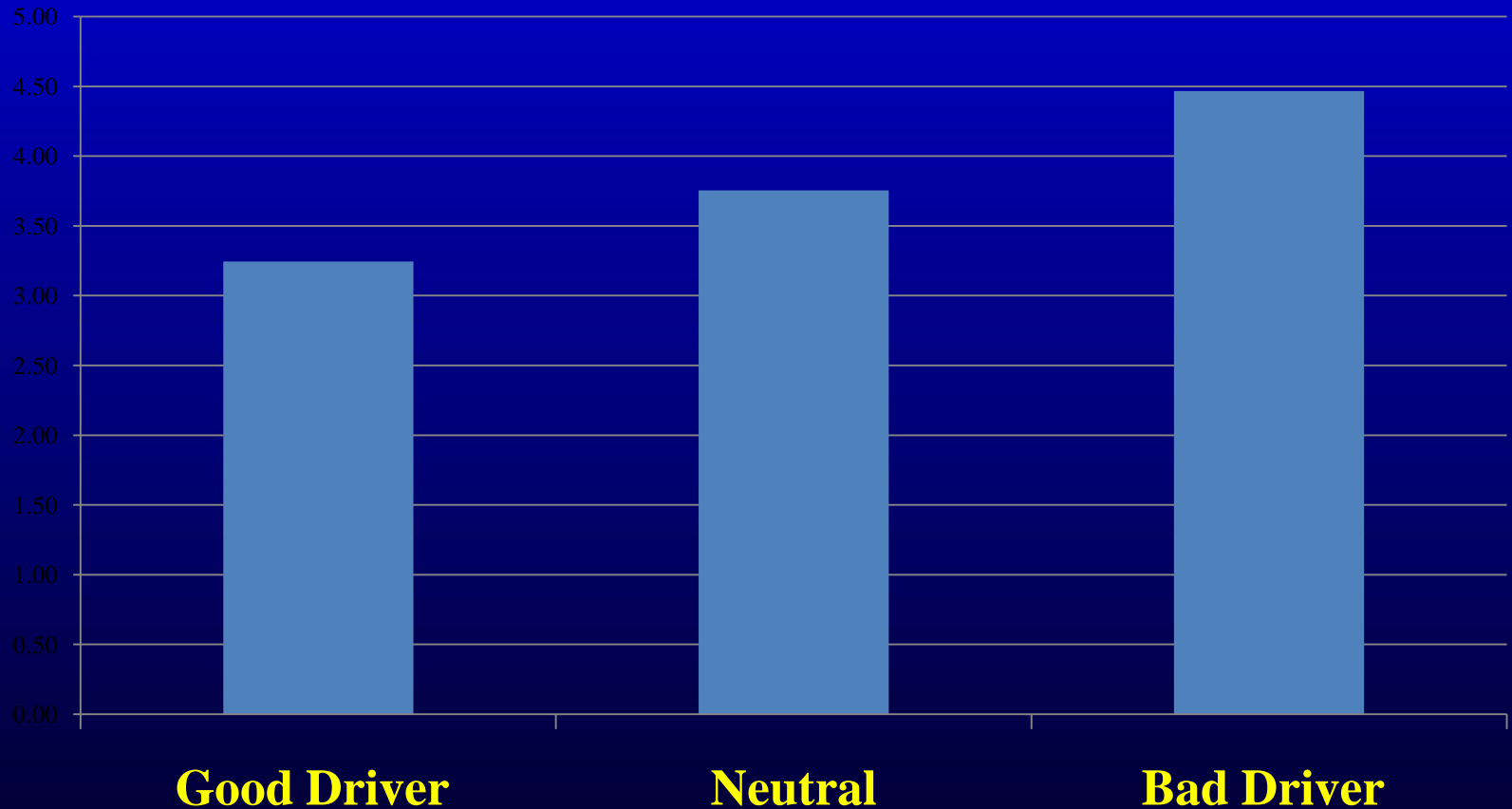
# Example of Psychographic Groups— Sensation Seeking

**I like new and exciting experiences, even if I have to break the rules.**



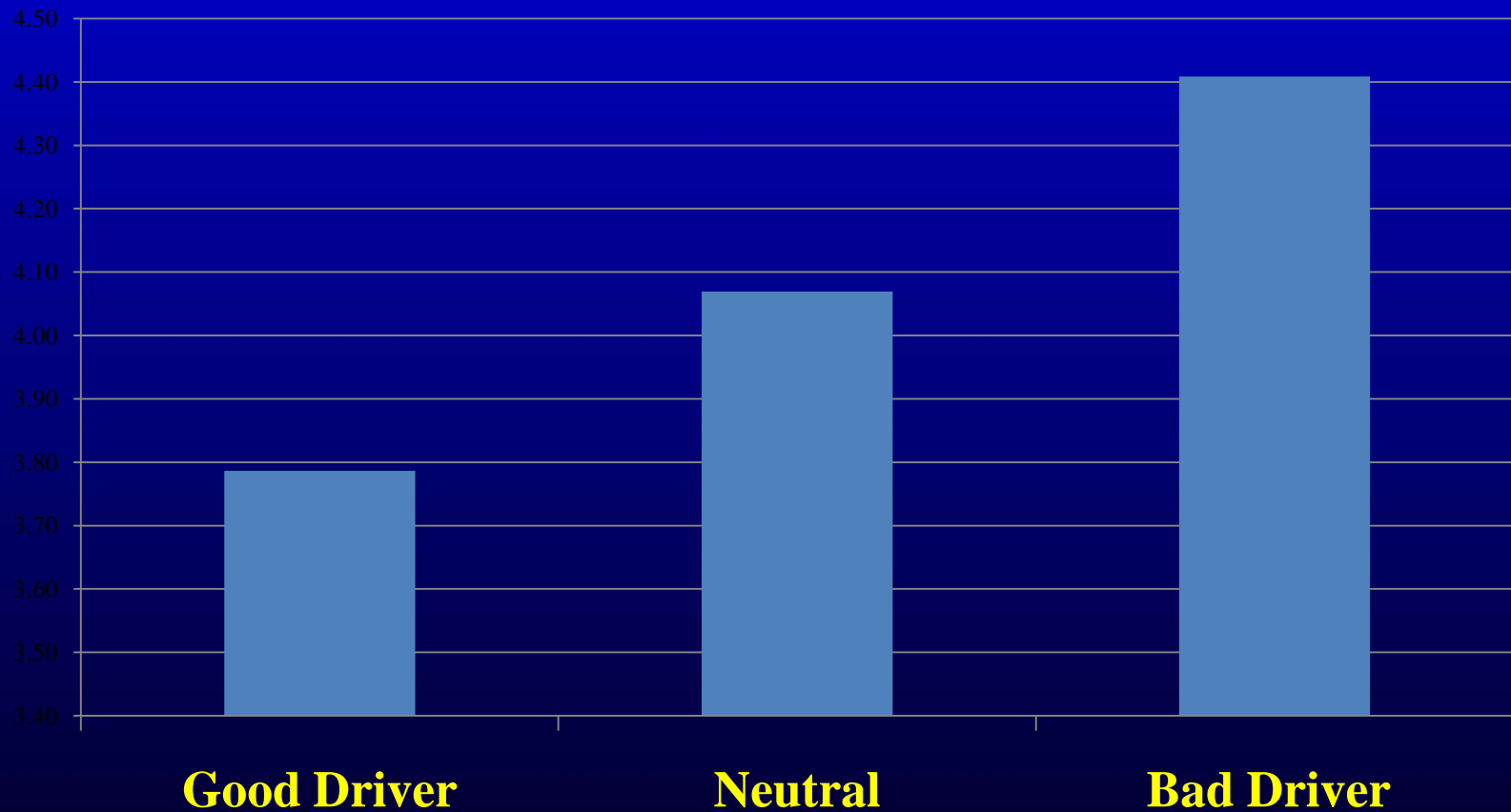
# Example of Psychographic Groups— Sensation Seeking

**I prefer friends who are exciting and unpredictable.**



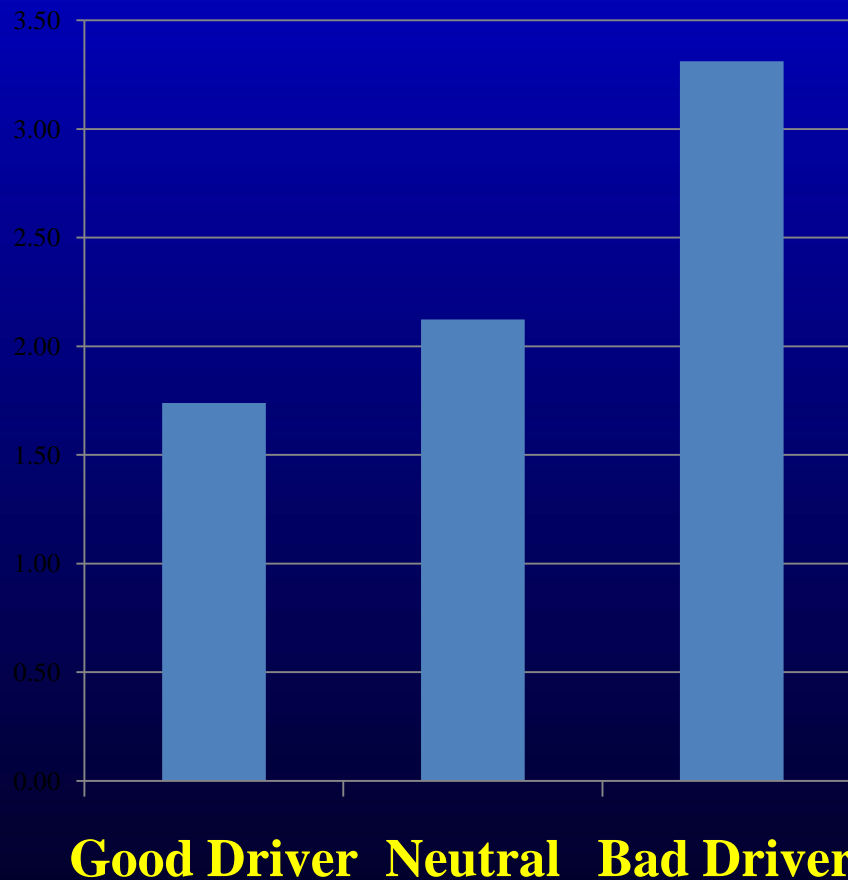
# Example of Psychographic Groups— Boredom

**There is nothing fun to do around here at night.**



# Example of Psychographic Groups— Moderate Anti-social Behavior

How often have you taken sick time off work when  
you have something more interesting to do?



## Conclusions

In our sample of Northeastern Rural States...

- *No negative rural driving culture was found*
- *No negative rural behavior pattern was found*
- But...
- Major impacts of psychographic groups can be observed
- This will be explored in the rest of the study

# The Logic of a “Culture of Driving Behavior”



- *Thanks.....*