

Mad as hell? New discoveries about the experience of anger

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Younger people, those with children and less-educated individuals are more likely to experience anger, according to new UofT research that examines one of the most common negative emotions in society.

Drawing upon national survey data of more than 1,000 Americans aged 18 and older, Professor Scott Schieman from the Sociology Department at the University of Toronto has published new findings about the experience of anger. In a chapter in the forthcoming International Handbook of Anger, to be released in January 2010, Schieman documents the basic social patterns and contexts of anger. His main findings include:

- Younger people experience more frequent anger than older adults. This is mainly due to the fact that younger people are more likely to feel time pressures, economic hardship, and interpersonal conflict in the workplace (three core stressors that elevate anger levels);
- Feeling rushed for time is the strongest predictor of anger, especially the "low-grade" forms like feeling annoyed;
- Having children in the household is associated with angry feelings and behaviour (i.e., yelling) and these patterns are stronger among women compared to men;

- Compared to people with fewer years of education, the well-educated are less likely to experience anger, and when they do, they are more likely to act proactively (e.g., trying to change the situation or talking it over);
- Individuals who experience more financial strain tend to report higher levels of anger. This relationship is much stronger among women and younger adults.

"The sociological analysis of anger can shed light on the ways that the conditions of society influence emotional inequality," says Schieman.

"Why do some people seem to experience more [anger](#) than others? And what does this say about [social inequality](#) and its impact in our everyday lives?"

Source: University of Toronto ([news](#) : [web](#))

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