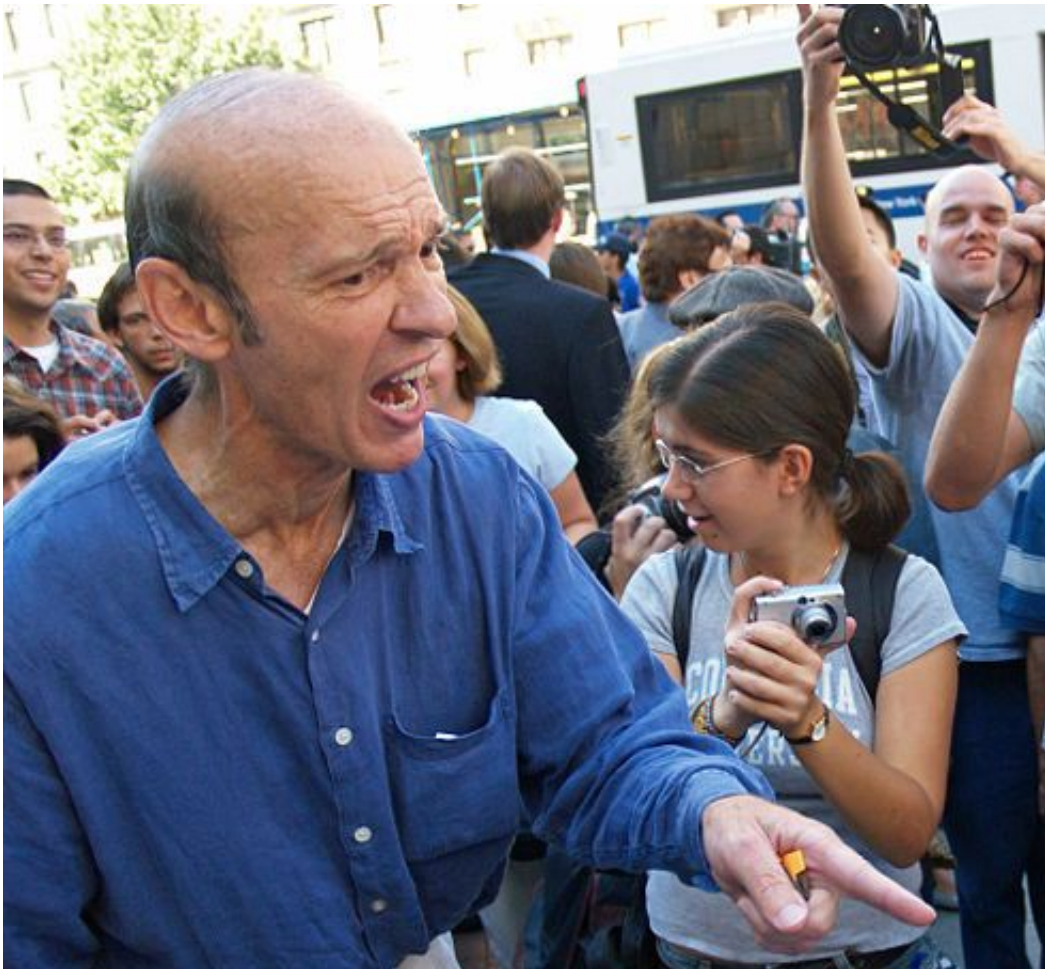


Angry people might not be as smart as they think they are

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Credit: David Shankbone/Wikipedia

People who are quick to lose their temper are more likely to overestimate their own intelligence, a new study from The University of

Western Australia and the University of Warsaw in Poland has found.

The investigation examined the role of trait-anger (people who get angry as a disposition) in the overestimation of cognitive ability in undergraduates from Warsaw, Poland.

The participants were asked to answer questions assessing their trait-anger, stability, [narcissism](#), and how they would rate their intelligence on a 25-point scale, before taking an objective intelligence test.

UWA Senior Lecturer Gilles Gignac, co-author of the paper with Professor Marcin Zajenkowski from the University of Warsaw, said the study found an interesting relationship between those with a clear tendency to become annoyed at things, big and small, and their perception of their own intelligence.

"Trait anger, in some cases, may be a consequence of less [emotional stability](#), such as anxiety," Professor Gignac said.

"However, for others, there is no anxiety fuelling the frustration, nastiness, and angry outbursts. Instead, for them, it looks like it may be narcissism. Consequently, when you ask this type of trait-angry person to rate their own intelligence, they tend to overestimate it."

The results of the newly published study answer important questions about the dynamics between trait-anger, emotional stability, and narcissism. By understanding more about how trait-anger functions, it will allow clinicians and members of the general public to deal with it better.

The study also leads into some important speculations that could be examined in future research.

"A narcissist, especially what we call the grandiose narcissist, has, as a defining characteristic, an inflated positive self-image," Professor Gignac said.

"So, it's not surprising to see a link between narcissism and the overestimation of one's [intelligence](#).

"The interesting element is that trait-anger appears to be involved in this process. It may be speculated that, for many grandiose narcissists, trait-anger develops over time, as they begin to gain some awareness of the difference between how important and good they think they are versus the reality of what they can do and what they have accomplished."

The research paper has been published in *Intelligence* (Elsevier).

More information: Marcin Zajenkowski et al. Why do angry people overestimate their intelligence? Neuroticism as a suppressor of the association between Trait-Anger and subjectively assessed intelligence, *Intelligence* (2018). [DOI: 10.1016/j.intell.2018.07.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intell.2018.07.003)

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