

Running head: ROAD RAGE AND AGGRESSIVE DRIVING



**Comment: Trait #3a:** Oops!  
This running head should be left justified (i.e., started at the left margin). This is an example of an incorrectly placed surface element of APA format.

Other surface elements include the title page, short title, pagination, abstract, inclusion of title on first text page, line spacing, margins, subheadings, and reference list.

Road Rage and Aggressive Driving:



A Review of the Literature

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**Comment:** The assignment was 1) select a topic related to aggression; 2) identify a minimum of six empirical references; and 3) write a literature review that summarizes and integrates these studies for the purpose of informing peers on this topic.

This student identified "Road Rage" as an aspect of aggression, identified 14 references of which 6 were empirical studies, and integrated all references into this paper.

**Trait #1a:** Good!  
This student appropriately addressed the content requirements of the assignment at an accomplished level.

**Trait #2i:**  
This title is acceptable but overly broad. An example of a better title might be:

*Get Out of My Way: Factors Contributing to Road Rage and Aggressive Driving*

Abstract

The abstract (summarizing the paper) goes here...



**Comment: Trait #3a:**  
Ordinarily an abstract would be placed here (with text double-spaced and non-indented).  
For this particular assignment, no abstract was required.

## Road Rage and Aggressive Driving:

## A Review of the Literature

In today's society, where the vast majority of people drive on a daily basis in order to reach their destinations, it is no wonder that road rage has become a serious issue. In 1997, Vest, Cohen, and Tharp, reported that since 1990, aggressive driving had increased by 51%. Pepper (1997) reported that aggressive driving continues to increase about 7% every year. The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, in 1997, reported that since 1990, 218 deaths and 12,610 injuries occurred due to road rage.

According to Baron and Byrne (1994), there are two types of aggression, instrumental and hostile. Instrumental aggression while driving includes acts such as speeding off, running a red light, weaving in and out of traffic, etc. These are acts that will enable the driver to get away from the person or situation which is bothering them. Hostile aggression while driving may consist of insulting comments or gestures, horn honking, cutting someone off, etc. These acts are performed in order to hurt or get revenge on the person who is causing the frustration and/or anger.

Wells-Parker, et al. (2002), suggest that the term road rage "implies specific incidents of anger and aggression intentionally directed at another driver, vehicle, or object," (p. 271). Road rage varies from mild to extreme forms. Mild forms may include, "verbally expressing anger in unobtrusive ways such as yelling through a closed window, complaining to oneself or to other passengers in the vehicle, or using vehicle signals such as the lights to express frustration," (p.

**Comment: Trait #2a:**

The introductory paragraph should be the highlight of the paper and grab the reader's attention. It also should clearly identify the key issue or issues to be discussed in the paper. This introductory paragraph meets essential standards but needs revision to achieve an *accomplished* rating.

**Comment: Trait #2h:** Good!

Both instrumental and hostile aggression are defined using examples the audience can easily understand.

**Trait #2d:** Oops!

*Etc.* should almost never be used.

**Comment: Trait #3c:** Oops!

When using *et al.* no comma is needed after the first author's name. This error occurs throughout the paper.

**Trait #3c:** Good!

Normally, you would list all of the authors the first time you cite a reference. However, when there are six or more authors (in this case there are eight authors) it is correct to use *et al.* at the first citation.

272). More extreme forms may include “direct physical assaults with the vehicle or a weapon, or direct confrontation with another driver or passenger with the intent of injury ... deliberately tailgating, or cutting another driver off the road ... [or the] use of obscene gestures,” (p. 271).

**Comment: Trait #2j:** Oops!  
Three quotations within the same paragraph is too many! Further, the quotations are not critical to understanding these concepts.

**Trait #2f:** Oops!  
These quotations could easily be rephrased using the writers own words to convey similar meaning.

In their study of US adult drivers, Wells-Parker, et al. (2002), found that individuals who scored high on an angry/threatening driving subscale of road rage (extreme forms of road rage) were more likely to be involved in crashes, be habitual speeders, drive while under the influence of alcohol, and receive traffic violations. However, they did not find a correlation between high scores on a verbal/frustration expression subscale (mild forms of road rage) and any of the above outcomes, except for an increase in driving violations.

**Comment: Trait #2c:** Oops!  
This paragraph is out-of-sequence and disrupts the flow of information. It is preceded by a definition of road rage and it is followed by factors that contribute to road rage. It is unclear why it is here, and thereby confuses the reader. In that sense, it takes on an aspect of **Trait #2g** and makes it appear as *cut and paste* writing.

One way to correct this error would be to move the first sentence of the next paragraph (“Factors that are believed...”) earlier in the document. Then this paragraph and the one following it both deal with frustrations and no longer seem out of sequence.

Factors that are believed to influence the likelihood of road rage include frustration/irritation, traffic congestion, driver characteristics (such as age, gender, ethnicity, etc. of both instigator and aggressor), personality characteristics, and social status (of both instigator and aggressor). Shinar (1998) argued that frustration resulting from delays and traffic congestion is a contributor to aggressive driving. This study examined Israeli drivers’ reactions to a situation in which the driver ahead of them did not move when the traffic light turned green. Shinar found that when the light the participants were at only stayed green for a short amount of time, they were quicker to honk than when they were at a light which remained green for a longer period of time. He also found that drivers were quicker to honk during weekday rush hours than during the weekend and that males and younger drivers were more impatient.

**Comment: Trait #1b:** Good!...Oops!  
This sentence clearly *delineates the topic so that it is appropriately focused and manageable*. The rest of the paper explores in greater depth each of these factors. However, placing this sentence here (at the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph) is less effective than it would have been had it been placed earlier, resulting in an *essential* rather than an *accomplished* rating.

**Comment: Trait #3b:** Good!  
According to APA, when citing an author more than once in the same paragraph it is not necessary to repeat the publication year. This writer was correct in omitting the publication year.

However, another study that examined the effects of traffic congestion found different results (Lajunen, Parker, and Summala, 1999). Contrary to Shinar's study (1998) they found no significant correlations between rush hour driving and driver aggression. This study was carried out in Great Britain, Finland, and the Netherlands, and unlike Shinar's study (1998), was based on self-reported responses rather than observed behaviors. It was suggested that a possible explanation for this difference in results may be due to differences between cultures. Interestingly, in 2002, Parker, Lajunen, and Summala published another study of driver aggression in Great Britain, Finland, and the Netherlands. Contrary to their previous study, they suggest that traffic density may in fact provoke of aggression in drivers.

**Comment: Trait #3b:** Oops! According to APA, an "&" (ampersand) rather than "and" should be used in parenthetical citations in the text.

In a study by Dukes, Clayton, Jenkins, Miller, and Rodgers, (2001), participants were presented with driving scenarios and asked how they would respond to them. The characteristics of the drivers revealed in the scenarios were age, gender, and cell phone use. The results revealed that situations in which a driver was reckless produced higher reported levels of road rage than when a driver held up traffic. However, there were no significant differences in reported aggression resulting from any of the driver's characteristics.

Yagil (2001) found that drivers who are anxious or competitive and highly irritable are more likely to become aggressive when they are frustrated. This study took place in Israel and the sample consisted of only male participants. The participants were given three driving scenarios and then asked how they would react. It was also found that hostility was higher overall toward male drivers and drivers that the participant had a negative image of.

Social status is yet another factor that has been found to affect driver aggression. |



McGarva and Steiner (2000) preformed a study in which participants, driving their own vehicles, were honked and gestured at by a man driving either a low or high status automobile. The participants' level of aggression was measured by acceleration rate, verbal comments, gestures, and horn honking. The results showed that acceleration was quicker in the low status condition. However, none of the participants in either condition honked their horn and there were no significant differences when comparing the two conditions as far as verbal comments and gestures. McGarva and Steiner suggest that social status does contribute to driver aggression when it comes to instrumental aggression (speeding off).

**Comment: Trait #2b:** Good! This transition to a new topic begins with an idea. This is an improvement over other paragraphs many of which begin with a stereotyped phrase such as "In a study by..."

A similar study done in Germany by Diekmann, Jungbauer-Gans, Krassnig, and Lorenz (1996) examined aggressive responses (honking and flashing lights) of drivers who were blocked at an intersection. It was found that the higher the class of their vehicle, the quicker the drivers were to display aggressive responses toward the car blocking them. They also found that the younger drivers were quicker to honk or flash their lights at the car blocking them, compared to the older drivers. Interestingly, contrary to Shinar's study (1998), the day of the week did not result in any significant differences in aggressive behaviors.



**Comment: Trait #2h:** Good! "Honking and flashing lights" clearly defines aggressive responses, thus enhancing reader understanding.

**Trait #2h:** Oops! "The higher the class of vehicle" is not defined clearly, leaving the reader to wonder whether this means a more expensive or a larger vehicle.

Another factor that influences aggression in driving situations is whether one is aggressive in other situations. Lawton and Nutter (2002) found that individuals reported anger equally in both driving and non-driving experiences. However, in the driving situations, the participants reported displacing their anger more than in the non driving situations. They also

found that while driving, people with high anger levels, reported being more outwardly aggressive than when they were not driving.

In another similar study that compared aggression while driving to aggression in other activities, the results indicated that anger did occur more frequently when the participants were driving (Parkinson, 2001). This was found after they controlled for the almost 16 times greater amount of time people spend in activities other than driving. In other words, if you compared how often a person is angered when they spend 16 hours driving versus 16 hours engaged in other activities, the number will be higher while driving. The same would occur if you compared one hour of driving to one hour of non-driving activities. Parkinson believes this may be due to reports of low self-accountability while driving by the participants.

While the review of these studies on road rage and driving aggression has brought up conflicting results, one must note that the populations which were studied varied greatly. This suggests that among all the factors influencing driver aggressiveness and acts of road rage discussed above, societal norms should also be included. It is important for future researchers to compare driver aggression levels and acts of road rage across cultures in order to determine which societal characteristics increase the likelihood of such acts.

[General Comments]

**Comment: Trait #1f:** Good!  
This is a good example of the use of illustration to enhance reader understanding.

**Comment: Trait #1e & #1h:** Oops!  
By more thoroughly reporting, analyzing, and interpreting these findings the author would have shown greater care and accuracy and provided evidence of critical thinking.

**Comment: Trait #2a:** Oops!  
This conclusion seems premature; instead of concluding it actually identifies confounding variables in the research (sociocultural differences). A more satisfying conclusion would have addressed the five core factors that contribute to road rage and their relationships to society and culture.

**Comment: Trait #1d:** Good!  
This assignment required a review of the literature and this paper does that well. Had the assignment required a thesis, more details and support would have been necessary.

**Trait #1g:** Good!  
This paper demonstrates an acceptable understanding of the facts in the literature (as per the assignment), but somewhat neglects underlying theoretical constructs.

**Trait #2d:** Good!  
Overall, the grammar, punctuation, and spelling are correct in this paper. Although further editing could have improved the paper, it clearly meets the essential standard.

**Trait #2e:** Good!  
The varied sentence structure and word choice of this paper helps keep the reader engaged.



## References

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. (1997, November). *Aggressive driving: three studies*.

Washington, DC: AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety.

Baron, R. A. & Byrne, D. (1994). *Social Psychology* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Diekmann, A., Jungbauer-Gans, M., Krassnig, H., Lorenz, S. (1996). Social status and

aggression: A field study analyzed by survivor analysis. *The Journal of Social*

*Psychology*, 136, 761-768.

Dukes, R. L., Clayton, S. L., Jenkins, L. T., Miller, T. L., & Rodgers, S. E. (2001). Effects of

aggressive driving and driver characteristics on road rage. *The Social Science Journal*,

38, 323-331.

Lajunen, T., Parker, D., & Summala, H. (1999). Does traffic congestion increase driver

aggression? *Transportation Research Part F*, 2, 225-236.

Lawton R., & Nutter, A. (2002). A comparison of reported levels and expression of anger in

everyday and driving situations. *British Journal of Psychology*, 93, 407-423.

McGarva, A. R., Steiner, M. (2000). Provoked driver aggression and status: a field study.

*Transportation Research Part F*, 3, 167-179.

Parker, D., Lajunen, T., Summala, H. (2002). Anger and aggression among drivers in three

European countries. *Accident Analysis and Prevention*, 34, 229-235.

Parkinson, B. (2001). Anger on and off the road. *British Journal of Psychology*, 92, 507-526.

**Comment: Trait #3d:** This is a complete and accurate reference list. However, there are minor errors in formatting that should be corrected.

**Comment: Trait #3d:** Oops! Capitalize the first letter of the first word after a colon. This error occurs in one other reference in the list.

**Comment: Trait #3d:** Oops! Capitalize only the first letter of the first word, proper nouns, and the first letter of the first word after a colon. This is true for book titles and journal article titles.

**Comment: Trait #3d:** Oops! An "&" (ampersand) should be used prior to the last author's last name when there is more than one author. This error occurs in three subsequent references.

**Comment: Trait #1c:** Good! This is one of the six empirical resources required for this assignment. It is a relevant resource appropriate to the assignment.



Pepper, M. (1997). What about road rage. *US News and World Report*, (April). Available at:



<http://www.drivers.com/issues/roadrage/pepper.html>.

**Comment: Trait #3d:** Oops! This online reference is incorrectly formatted and the title is incorrect. *We have rewritten the citation (in red) so that it is correct and correctly formatted.*

Format errors also occurred in Vest et al. below.

Pepper, M. (1997). Road rage. *US News and World Report*, (1997, June 9). Retrieved April 2,

2003 from <http://www.drivers.com/issues/roadrage/pepper.html>

Shinar, D. (1998). Aggressive driving: The contribution of the drivers and the situation.

*Transportation Research Part F, 1*, 137-160.

Vest, J., Cohen, W., & Tharp, M. (1997). Road rage. *US News Online*, (June). Available at:

<http://www.drivers.com/issues/roadrage/2driv.htm>.

Wells-Parker, E. Ceminsky, J., Hallberg, V., Snow, R. W., Dunaway, G., Guiling, S., Williams,



M., Anderson, B. (2002). An exploratory study of the relationship between road rage and

crash experience in a representative sample of US drivers. *Accident Analysis and*

*Prevention, 34*, 271-278.

**Comment: Trait #3d:** Oops! According to APA, only the first six authors are listed in a reference, followed by *et al.* [italics added for emphasis]

Yagil, D. (2001). Interpersonal antecedents of drivers' aggression. *Transportation Research Part*

*F, 4*, 119-131.