

## **MASTER DRIVING Alerts – Study reveals women are the angriest drivers**

It seems appropriate that as you read this I am sitting – in a 5 mile long traffic jam – in London being a real time observer of the driving antics of the British driver. Given that most British motorists are pretty competent it came as somewhat of a surprise to find out the following.

Women drivers are angrier than men, according to research by Hyundai Motor UK. The study of 1,000 UK drivers revealed women are, on average, 12 percent angrier than men when they're behind the wheel.

Researchers found driving sparked ancient 'defence' instincts from when humans were hunter-gatherers. These evolutionary traits kicked in during the test when women were either undertaken, shouted or beeped at, had to deal with a back-seat driver (women 14 percent angrier) or were faced with a road user who failed to indicate (women 13 percent angrier). In all test scenarios, women were more likely to respond with anger than male drivers.

The experiment, conducted by Patrick Fagan, behavioural psychologist from Goldsmiths University London, 'sense tested' the 1,000 drivers to see how sound, sight, smell, touch and taste provoke emotional responses in different driving scenarios.

The study found there are two dominant emotions: happiness – intrinsically linked to a sense of freedom when driving – and anger when drivers feel out of control.

Other key findings include:

The primary reasons for our continued love affair with driving are the freedom it gives us (51 percent), mobility (19 percent) and independence (10 percent)

Just under a third (29 percent) of men said they find it easier to have a conversation in the car.

54 percent of Brits said the thing that made them really happy in the car was singing

When the researchers looked at what makes us happy behind the wheel, 84 percent of people said "empty roads", 78 percent said "the countryside" and 69 percent "the seaside"

Music also makes drivers happy. Eight out of Ten people nearly always listen to something while driving with Meatloaf's Bat out of Hell and Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody top of the driving charts.

Explaining the results, Fagan commented: "Psychologically, women score higher than men on emotional and verbal intelligence, and on the personality trait of neuroticism. Evolutionary theory suggests our early female ancestors had to develop an acute sense of danger for anything that threatened them and their young if their cave was undefended while men were out hunting. That 'early warning system' instinct is still relevant today, and women drivers tend to be more sensitive to negative stimuli, so get angry and frustrated quicker."

Tony Whitehorn, Hyundai Motor UK's President and CEO added: "We are constantly striving to better understand what impacts people's behaviour when they are driving and this research has certainly revealed some interesting, and somewhat surprising results. By examining drivers' emotions, our aim is to help them get a better drive both today and in the future."

Well now that we know what the Brits do we can turn to the South African driver and start assessing them – if brave enough that is.

Till next time - Forget the caveman and think 21st century, and live.

Eugene Herbert

Group Managing Director

