

Gender and Emotion in the United States: Do Men and Women Differ in Self-Reports of Feelings and Expressive Behavior?¹

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U.S. emotion culture contains beliefs that women are more emotional and emotionally expressive than men and that men and women differ in their experience and expression of specific emotions. Using data from the 1996 emotions module of the GSS, the authors investigate whether men and women differ in self-reports of feelings and expressive behavior, evaluating whether the patterns observed for men and women are consistent with cultural beliefs as well as predictions from two sociological theories about emotion and two sociological theories about gender. Surprisingly, self-reports do not support cultural beliefs about gender differences in the frequency of everyday subjective feelings in general. Men and women do, however, differ in the frequency of certain positive and negative feelings, which is explained by their difference in social position. The implications of the findings for theory and research on both gender and emotion are discussed.

According to several emotions scholars, societies contain emotion cultures, which include beliefs about gender and emotion (Cancian 1987; Gordon

¹ We are grateful to Peggy Thoits, Sarah Rosenfield, Dawn Robinson, Jim Jasper, Allan Horwitz, and especially Brian Powell and the *AJS* reviewers for their contributions to this article. Thanks, too, to members of the sociology department at Florida State University for their thoughtful remarks. We are also thankful to the National Science Foundation for funding the emotions module in the 1996 General Social Survey. An earlier version of the article was presented at the 2001 annual meetings of the American Sociological Association in Anaheim, California. Direct correspondence to Robin Simon, 613 Bellamy Building, Department of Sociology, Center for Demography and Population Health, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2240. E-mail: rsimon@fsu.edu

1981; Hochschild 1975, 1979; Shields 2002; Smith-Lovin 1995; Stearns 1992; Thoits 1989). Part of U.S. emotion culture is the long-standing and widely held belief that women are both more emotional and more emotionally expressive than men. Our emotion culture also includes beliefs about the frequencies and distributions of specific affective experiences and behavior among males and females. Women are believed to feel and express sadness more frequently than men, whereas men are believed to feel and express anger more frequently than women. Beliefs about men's and women's subjective feelings and expressive behavior are evident in everyday social life as well as in popular culture—including self-help and advice books, literature, music, television, and film. However, we do not know whether men's and women's affective experiences and behavior are consistent with cultural beliefs about gender and emotion since until recently, we lacked systematic information about the social distribution of everyday subjective feelings and expressive behavior among adults in the United States. We use data from the emotions module of the 1996 General Social Survey (GSS) that contains respondents' self-reports of everyday feelings and expressive behavior to assess whether men and women differ in affective experience and behavior. We also evaluate whether the patterns observed for men and women are consistent with predictions from two sociological theories about emotion and two sociological theories about gender.

BACKGROUND

Sociological Theories about Gender and Emotion

Contemporary emotions theorists generally agree that emotions involve complex combinations of physiological sensations, cognitive appraisals of situations, cultural labels, and free or inhibited affective displays (see Thoits [1989] for this particular formulation and Schachter and Singer [1962] for an earlier two-factor theory of emotion). However, although few sociologists of emotion would deny that the social context in which situations occur influences individuals' emotional responses and that cultural beliefs about men's and women's emotions exist in the United States, they offer different—and often conflicting—theoretical predictions about what we should find with respect to the relationship between gender and emotion. We focus on two sociological theories about emotion—Hochschild's normative theory and Kemper's structural theory.

Hochschild's normative theory about emotion (1975, 1981) predicts male-female differences in feelings and expressive behavior that are consistent with gender-specific emotion beliefs. Hochschild argues that cultural beliefs about emotion influence individuals' feelings and expressions

vis-à-vis feeling and expression norms that specify the emotions individuals should (and should not) feel and express in given situations. Feeling rules are cultural norms that specify the appropriate type, intensity, duration, and target of subjective feelings (or internal experience). Expression rules are cultural norms that regulate the type, intensity, duration, and target of emotional behavior (or affective displays). According to Hochschild, feeling and expression rules provide standards by which individuals judge their own and other's emotions. When people's feelings and expressions depart from cultural norms, they often engage in emotion management, expression management, or both in order to create a more appropriate emotional response. To the extent that our emotion culture includes feeling and expression norms—which specify that women should, and men should not, be emotional and emotionally expressive—we should find that women report that they experience and express emotions more often than men *in general*. Similarly, insofar as our emotion culture contains norms that discourage men from feeling and expressing sadness and women from feeling and expressing anger, we should also find that women report that they experience and express *sadness* more often than men and that men report that they experience and express *anger* more often than women.

In contrast to Hochschild's normative theory, Kemper's structural theory about emotion (1978, 1981, 1990, 1991) predicts a pattern of subjective feelings for men and women that departs from cultural beliefs about gender and emotion. According to Kemper, structural factors such as individuals' social position vis-à-vis others—rather than cultural derived emotion norms—influence their emotional responses to social situations. Kemper argues that status and power are two fundamental dimensions of social relationships that elicit specific emotions during social interaction when relational power and status are maintained or changed. He claims that persons with more status and power in a relationship experience positive emotions such as happiness and security, whereas those with less power and status experience negative emotions such as fear, sadness, and anger. Although Kemper focuses on relational status and power between persons in interaction episodes, an implication of his theory is that persons with higher status and power in society experience more positive feelings, whereas persons with lower status and power experience more negative feelings. A further implication is that since women tend to have lower status and power than men in the United States, we should find that men report *positive* emotions more often than women, while women report *negative* emotions (including *anger*) more often than men. We should also find, however, that gender differences in the frequency of positive and negative emotional experiences are explained by male-female differences in social position (i.e., status and power).

Sociological theories about gender also offer predictions about the relationship between gender and emotion. Once again, we focus on two of these theories—Parsons's functional theory and structural theories about gender. Parsons's functional theory about gender (1955, 1964) predicts male-female differences in subjective feelings and expressive behavior that are generally consistent with cultural beliefs about men's and women's emotions. Parsons argues that the division of labor in modern societies requires men and women to specialize in different roles, which is functional for the maintenance and well-being of the family. Women's expressive roles—which involve caring for others within the home—require emotionality. In contrast, men's instrumental roles—which involve earning a family wage outside the home—require unemotionality (or emotional reserve). According to Parsons, boys and girls learn the emotional temperaments associated with their future roles through gender role socialization. Although he attributes women's presumed emotionality and men's supposed unemotionality to the emotional requirements of their roles in the family—rather than to cultural norms about emotion as does Hochschild—we should find that women report *most*, if not *all*, emotions more often than men. We should also find that women report that they express their emotions more readily than men.²

While Parsons claims that men and women have fundamentally different emotional predispositions, structural theorists of gender assert that what appears from the outset to be gender differences in a range of social psychological characteristics and behavior are what Epstein (1988) calls "deceptive distinctions." According to structural theories about gender, the different characteristics and behavior that are often observed for men and women mask the different positions they hold in social institutions such as the workplace and family (Kanter 1977; Risman 1987). Ridgeway (1993; Ridgeway and Johnson 1990) provides a similar argument for gender differences in socioemotional behavior, which she attributes to male-female differences in status expectations. Indeed, this theoretical perspective posits that men and women would be similar were it not for their different (and unequal) structural positions in society. Extending these insights to emotions, this theoretical perspective predicts that most, if not all, gender differences in feelings and expressive behavior can be explained by differences between men's and women's structural locations and role experiences. Similar to Kemper's structural theory about emotion, an im-

² Parsons's functional theory about gender is based on a division of labor that was common in the 1950s but is no longer typical in a period when the majority of women work outside the home. Nevertheless, we examine his theory's predictions about gender differences in emotion because it reflects *current* cultural beliefs about men's and women's everyday subjective feelings and expressive behavior.

plication of structural theories about gender is that men and women differ in the frequency with which they experience *positive* and *negative* feelings according to their different (and unequal) social positions.

Research on Gender and Emotion

In light of prevailing cultural beliefs about gender differences in emotion as well as the surge of scholarly interest in both gender and emotion, there is surprisingly little sociological research that compares men's and women's everyday feelings and expressive behavior. As Thoits (1989) and Smith-Lovin (1995) both note in their reviews of the field of emotion, the sociology of affect is theoretically rich but limited in empirical evidence. There is some evidence of gender-specific norms about certain emotions. In-depth qualitative studies have identified feeling and expression norms about male and female anger (Cancian and Gordon 1988; Shields and Koster 1989; Stearns and Stearns 1986) and romantic love (Cancian 1987; Simon, Eder, and Evans 1992; Swidler 1980). There is also some evidence of gender differences in feelings and expressive behavior that are consistent with cultural beliefs and norms about males' and females' emotions. Thorne's (1993) and Eder's (1995) ethnographic studies of children and adolescents show that boys are given greater latitude than girls in expressing anger in playground and school contexts. Moreover, based on college students' descriptions of an emotional experience, Hochschild (1981) finds that women pay closer attention to feelings of love than do men (also see Peplau and Gordon 1985). Using a similar methodology, Thoits's (1989) study of college students reveals that, when faced with a stressful situation, women are more likely to express their feelings and cope with their emotions by seeking social support. However, while these studies provide rich and detailed information about gender and emotion in the United States with respect to a few specific emotions in small, highly select samples, they offer little insight into gender differences in a range of feelings and expressive behavior in the general population.

To date, most of the empirical research on gender and emotion has been conducted by psychologists, who focus on gender differences in emotion beliefs as well as on subjective feelings and expressive behavior among children, adolescents, and young adults. This research, which tends to be based on experimental methods, indicates that both males and females judge and subsequently label females as more emotional and emotionally expressive than males (e.g., Robinson and Johnson 1997). This research also shows that as early as preschool age, both males and females believe that sadness and fear are closely associated with females, whereas anger is closely associated with males (e.g., Birnbaum 1983). Studies further find that females are more expressive than males in response to a

variety of experimental stimuli (Blier and Blier 1989; Brody 1997; Kring and Gordon 1998), although findings are mixed with regard to gender differences in experienced emotion. While some studies find that females report more feelings than males, others find no significant gender differences in experienced emotion (see Brody [1985] and Brody and Hall [1993] for an extensive review). On the basis of these and other findings, developmental psychologists have suggested that the expression of emotion may be more heavily socialized than the experience of emotion (Brody 1993; Fischer 2000; Kring and Gordon 1998). From a developmental perspective, these findings also suggest that males learn to conceal their feelings relatively early in life, whereas females learn to express their emotions more freely. These studies contribute to our understanding of gender and emotion among children, adolescents, and young adults in experimental settings; however, they tell us little about gender differences in everyday feelings and expressive behavior in the general population.

In contrast to the above literatures, a large body of sociological research on mental health has examined gender differences in emotional distress in the general population. This research, which is based on survey data from community and national samples of adults, consistently indicates that women report more symptoms than men of generalized emotional distress, anxiety, and depression (Meyers et al. 1984; Mirowsky and Ross 2003). Because feelings of fear and sadness are key components of anxiety and depression subscales, epidemiological research strongly suggests that women experience negative emotions more often than men and, by extension, that men experience positive feelings more often than women (Bradburn and Caplovitz 1965; Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers 1976; Mirowsky and Ross 1995). Indeed, these suggested patterns would be consistent with Kemper's structural theory about emotion and structural theories about gender, which argue that lower status persons (i.e., women) experience more negative feelings, while higher status persons (i.e., men) experience more positive emotions.

On the other hand, research on mental health also documents that there are no gender differences in overall levels of emotional distress when male and female *types* of emotional problems are both considered (Kessler et al. 1993). That is, although women report higher levels of *internalizing* emotional problems such as anxiety and depression, men report higher levels of *externalizing* emotional problems such as substance abuse (Aneshensel 1992; Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend 1976; Horwitz, White, and Howell-White 1996; Lennon 1987; Rosenfield 1999; Simon 2002). Moreover, epidemiological studies of adolescents echo these patterns of emotional distress among adults (Avison and McAlpine 1992; Gore, Aseltine, and Colten 1992; Rosenfield et al. 2000). These latter findings suggest that males and females may differ in the expression, but not necessarily

in the experience, of certain negative emotions. However, while research on mental health provides insight into gender differences in emotional distress in the general population of adolescents and adults, anxiety and depression are chronic moods and are not everyday emotional responses to social situations. This research, therefore, also tells us little about the social epidemiology of everyday feelings and expressive behavior in the United States.

Sociologists have recently begun to systematically examine group differences in emotion, particularly anger. Interestingly, a study based on survey data from a national sample of adults reveals that, in contrast to cultural beliefs, women report that they experience and express anger more frequently than men (Ross and Van Willigen 1996). Since anger is a negative emotion, these findings provide some preliminary support for structural theories about emotion and about gender. However, while this research has begun to assess gender differences in anger in the general population of adults, researchers have not yet examined whether men and women differ in the ways in which they cope with and express anger. This is an important issue for emotions research since there is some psychological evidence that females express anger verbally, whereas males express anger behaviorally (Brody 1993, 1997; Buntaine and Costenbader 1997; Frost and Averill 1982; Kring 2000).

Taken together, although research has come a long way by identifying some gender-specific feeling and expression norms, elucidating normative influences on some of the feelings and expressions of males and females and documenting some gender differences in feelings and expressive behavior, there are still considerable gaps in our knowledge about gender and emotion. As Thoits (1989) pointed out over a decade ago, we lack basic information about the frequencies and distributions of a range of affective experiences and behavior among men and women in the United States. Consequently, we still do not know whether men's and women's everyday subjective feelings and expressive behavior are consistent with cultural beliefs about gender and emotion. Since assumptions about men's and women's feelings and behavior underlie sociological theories about emotion as well as sociological theories about gender, the findings of such analyses have important implications for theoretical debates about emotion and about gender.

In this article, we assess whether men and women differ in affective experience and behavior by focusing on self-reports of everyday subjective feelings and expressive behavior in a nationally representative sample of adults. The following three questions guide our analyses: *First*, do women report more frequent emotions than men? *Second*, do men and women differ in the frequency with which they report a range of different emo-

tions—including sadness and anger? *Third*, do women report greater emotional expressiveness than men?

We also evaluate whether the patterns observed for men and women are consistent with predictions from Hochschild's and Kemper's theories about emotion as well as Parsons's and structural theories about gender. If Hochschild's normative theory about emotion and Parsons's functional theory about gender are correct, we should find gender differences that are consistent with cultural beliefs about gender and emotion. That is, we should find that women report that they experience and express emotions more often than men *in general*. We should also find that women report that they experience and express *sadness* more often than men, while men report that they experience and express *anger* more often than women. However, if Kemper's structural theory about emotion and structural theories about gender are correct, 'we should find that men report *positive* emotions more often than women, while women report *negative* emotions—including *anger*—more often than men. We should also find that gender differences in the frequency of positive and negative emotions are *explained* by male-female differences in *social position*. Overall, while our analyses shed light on men's and women's everyday feelings and expressive behavior in the United States, they also provide insight into the feelings and expressive behavior of other social groups in the population as well as the social structuring of emotion.

METHODS

Data

Our analyses are based on data from the 1996 emotions module of the GSS. The GSS, which has been conducted regularly since 1972, is based on a nationally representative sample of adults living in households in the United States. About one-half ($N = 1,460$) of the 2,904 respondents who were interviewed that year were asked a variety of questions about their affective experiences and behavior. The module contained questions about the frequency with which respondents experienced 19 different emotions, including a range of both positive and negative feelings. A subset of respondents who reported that they felt anger at least one day during the previous week ($N = 1,125$) were asked follow-up questions about their anger. About one-half of the module respondents ($N = 755$) were selected to answer questions about their expressive behavior.

Measures

Emotional experience.—Respondents were asked how many days in the previous week they felt “calm,” “contented,” “at ease,” “happy,” “excited,” “overjoyed,” “proud,” “fearful,” “anxious,” “restless,” “worried,” “blue,” “sad,” “lonely,” “outraged,” “mad,” “angry,” “ashamed,” and “embarrassed.” In order to assess whether women report emotions more frequently than men *in general*, we computed a summary measure of *all feelings* by adding scores on these 19 feelings; this measure ranges from 4 to 107 ($\alpha = .65$). Moreover, in order to assess whether men and women differ in the frequency with which they report positive and negative emotions, we computed a summary measure of *all positive feelings*, which consists of the first seven feelings, and a summary measure of *all negative feelings*, which is based on the latter 12 emotions. Scores on these measures range from 0 to 49 ($\alpha = .76$) and 0 to 71 ($\alpha = .84$), respectively.

We also conducted factor analyses on the 19 feelings, which clustered into five different factors. Based on the results of these analyses as well as prior research on the cognitive structure of emotions (Ortony, Clore, and Collins 1988) and the structure of psychological well-being (Bradburn 1969; Mirowsky and Ross 2003), we constructed measures of six different feeling states, including: *calm feelings* (from a low of 0 to a high of 21; $\alpha = .74$), *excited feelings* (from 0 to 28; $\alpha = .67$), *anxious feelings* (from 0 to 21; $\alpha = .69$), *sad feelings* (from 0 to 21; $\alpha = .73$), *angry feelings* (from 0 to 21; $\alpha = .86$), and *feelings of shame* (from 0 to 14; $\alpha = .63$). The items that comprise all of our measures of emotional experience appear in appendix A (table A1), which also shows the mean scores for each item and each measure for the total analysis sample as well as separately for women and men.³

Anger.—A subset of respondents who reported that they felt angry at least one day during the previous week were asked a series of follow-up questions about their anger, including: “How intense was your anger?” “How long did your anger last?” and “Do you feel your reaction was appropriate?” Because emotions scholars, including Hochschild and Kemper, have focused on anger, and because it is an emotion that is presumed to be more common among men than women, we explored whether the respondents differed in these aspects of their angry feelings. Scores for

³ Although we created separate measures for calm and anxious feelings, the variables included in these two measures actually loaded into a single factor in the exploratory factor analyses, which suggests that these constructed feeling states represent two sides of a continuum for a similar type or class of emotions. We analyze these feeling states as two separate measures because calm feelings represent positive, and anxious feelings represent negative, emotional experiences. We also wanted to compare our results for anxious feelings with the findings of research on gender and mental health, which tends to focus on these (and other) negative emotions.

intensity of anger experienced range from 0 (not at all intense) to 10 (very intense), *length of time anger was experienced* range from 1 (a few seconds) to 6 (continuously), and *felt their reaction was appropriate* range from 0 (completely inappropriate) to 10 (very appropriate).

We also explored whether men and women differ with respect to their self-reports of 15 strategies people use to cope with and manage their anger, including whether they “thought about the situation,” “had a drink or took a pill,” “talked to the person they are angry at,” “talked to someone else,” “tried to forget about the situation,” “tried to change the situation,” “prayed for help from God,” “fantasized about a magical solution,” “went out to get some exercise,” “yelled or hit something,” “waited for the feelings to pass,” “tried to accept the situation,” “left the situation,” “thought about how to get revenge,” and “planned how to end the relationship.” These coping strategies are measured as dichotomous variables (yes = 1) and are shown in appendix table B1, which also presents the mean scores on all of the anger-related variables for the total analysis sample and separately for women and men.

Expressive behavior.—Finally, a subset of respondents were asked whether they strongly agree (coded “1”) to strongly disagree (coded “5”) with the following six statements pertaining to their expressive behavior:

1. I keep my emotions to myself.
2. When anxious, I try not to worry anyone else.
3. I don’t tell friends something upsetting.
4. I try to be pleasant so as not to upset others.
5. I’m not afraid to show my feelings.
6. When I’m angry, I let people know.

With the exception of the last two variables—which were reverse coded—high scores, therefore, reflect *disagreements* with these statements. In order to assess whether women report more emotional expressiveness than men in general, we computed a summary measure of *emotional expressiveness* based on the first five items listed above. Scores on this measure range from 5 to 25 ($\alpha = .58$), with high scores indicating *greater* expressiveness. Note that we did not include the sixth item of emotional expression in our summary measure because it focuses on the expression of anger—which our emotion culture and Hochschild’s normative theory about emotion assume is greater for men than for women. We did, however, conduct analyses of this item along with the other five individual items of emotional expression. Appendix table C1 presents the means for each of these items and the summary measure for the total analysis sample and separately for women and men.

Sociodemographic and status characteristics.—To assess whether so-

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ciodemographic differences between men and women are involved in gender differences in emotion, we include age (in years), education (in years), and household income (in dollars) as well as three dummy variables for race (white = 1; black = 1; other = 1) in all of our analyses. To reduce the number of missing cases, we assigned mean scores on household income to respondents who had missing data on this variable—those scores were imputed on the basis of the respondent's gender, age, race, and education as well as their marital, parental, and employment status. Moreover, to assess whether differences between men's and women's role involvements and experiences are implicated in gender differences in emotion, our analyses also include respondents' marital, parental, and employment status, all of which were measured as dichotomous variables (married = 1; parent = 1; employed = 1). Gender, which is our main independent variable of interest, is also measured as a dichotomous variable (female = 1).⁴

Analytic Strategy

The analyses are straightforward and follow the same logic for each set of dependent variables. To examine the associations between gender and emotion, our first model includes gender only. To assess the influence of sociodemographic characteristics on emotion as well as on the relationship between gender and emotion, we add respondents' age, race, education, and household income in the second model. The third and final model also includes respondents' marital, parental, and employment status in order to investigate the influence of these social positions on emotion as well as on the associations between gender and emotion. The analyses are based on respondents who had complete information on the variables in our models; our resulting sample contains 1,346 persons for the emo-

⁴ Whites are the omitted category for race in the analyses. Consistent with earlier research on gender and mental health, we coded respondents as parents if they had one or more children under 18 living at home. Since greater numbers of children, rather than simply their presence, may be critical for understanding gender differences in emotion—as Ross and Van Willigen's (1996) study of anger demonstrated—all of the analyses presented here were also conducted with a continuous variable for the number of children under 18 living in the respondent's household in place of the dichotomous parental status variable. While the inclusion of the continuous parental status variable does not change our main substantive results, we found that the presence of young children at home is a better predictor of affective experience than the number of young children in the household. The tables we present, therefore, include the dichotomous parental status variable but we mention the significant results for the continuous parental status variable in the results section that follows. Tables for these analyses are available upon request.

tional experience analyses, 1,035 individuals for the anger analyses, and 683 people for the analyses of expressive behavior.

Although they do not appear in the tables we present, we also conduct interactional analyses for gender with all of the independent variables in order to explore whether the effects of sociodemographic and status characteristics on emotion differ for women and men. We are especially interested in testing two hypotheses—found in theory and research on gender and mental health—that marriage and parenthood have different consequences for the emotions of women and men. In particular, we evaluate whether being unmarried is associated with more frequent negative emotions for women than for men (e.g., Simon 2002). We also evaluate whether living with young children is associated with more frequent negative emotions for mothers than for fathers (e.g., Ross and Willigen 1996). We only discuss significant interactions in the results section, but tables that include these analyses are available upon request.

The GSS emotions module is an excellent resource for emotions researchers because it allows us to compare self-reports of feelings and expressive behavior of different social groups in the United States. As we mentioned earlier, most prior research on emotion has been based on either qualitative data from small, highly select samples or on data based on experimental methods in laboratory settings. These are very informative, but they cannot be used to answer questions about the social distribution (and social structuring) of everyday feelings and affective behavior in the general population. However, because cultural beliefs about gender and emotion may be influential, results of analyses based on subjective self-reports should be interpreted cautiously: impression management concerns may lead respondents to give what they believe are socially desirable responses. The problem of potential response bias in data based on self-reports is, of course, not limited to the study of emotion. If in this case, responses were guided by cultural norms, we would find a great deal of correspondence between men's and women's self-reports of feelings and expressive behavior and cultural beliefs about gender and emotion. As we will show, this is *not* the case. The gender differences we do find in affective experience and expression often depart from cultural beliefs about men's and women's emotions.

Relatedly, it is possible that cultural expectations about gender and emotion lead men and women to interpret differentially questions about emotion, and these interpretational differences may then be actually responsible for observed gender differences in self-reports of feelings and expressive behavior. To investigate this possibility, we conducted confirmatory factor analyses of both the emotional experience and expression items separately for males and females. Although there is some interesting variation in the factor loadings for some of our summary measures of

emotional experience, the overall patterns are similar for men and for women, which suggests that the gender differences in self-reports of feelings and expressive behavior we find are *not* simply due to interpretational differences between the genders.⁵

The sociodemographic and status characteristics of the analysis sample by gender appear in table 1. Although the men and women in our sample do not differ with respect to race, age, and education, there are notable gender differences in household income as well as in marital, parental, and employment status. Not surprisingly, women are more likely to report lower household incomes than men. Moreover, while men are more likely than women to be both married and employed, women are more likely than men to be residing with children under the age of 18.

RESULTS

Do Women Report More Frequent Emotions than Men?

In our first set of analyses, we assess whether women report emotions more frequently than men in general. We also examine whether men and women differ in the frequency with which they report positive and negative emotions. Table 2 contains the results of analyses in which we regress *all feelings*, *all positive feelings*, and *all negative feelings*—first on respondents' gender, then on their sociodemographic characteristics, and finally on their social statuses. There are two main findings regarding gender and emotion in table 2.

First, women do *not* report emotions more frequently than men. In contrast to cultural beliefs as well as Hochschild's normative theory about emotion and Parsons's functional theory about gender, we do not find a significant difference in the frequency with which men and women report feelings *in general* (see model 1). This finding holds after controlling for respondents' sociodemographic characteristics in model 2 and social statuses in model 3. There is significant age and household income variation in the frequency of emotional experiences. Younger persons and those with lower levels of household income report more frequent feelings than

⁵ Although the clusters for our six measures of feeling states are generally consistent for men and women, confirmatory factor analyses of these items revealed some interesting variation by gender. For example, while feelings of anxiety and sadness form two distinct factors for women, they form only one factor for men—which suggests that men do not distinguish between these types of negative emotions as clearly as do women. We also found that the magnitude of the loadings for shame and embarrassment is greater for women than for men. These patterns are consistent with those reported by Lively and Heise (2004), who also evaluated these items using the same data.

TABLE 1
 SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ANALYSIS SAMPLE BY GENDER

Characteristics	Total	Male	Female
Age (mean years)	44.3	44.0	44.5
	(16.3)	(15.9)	(16.6)
Race:			
White (%)	81.4	84.0	79.3
Black (%)	13.5	10.1	16.2
Other (%)	5.1	5.9	4.5
Education (mean years)	13.5	13.6	13.4
	(2.8)	(2.8)	(2.8)
Household income (\$)	24,750	28,999	23,250
Married (%)	47.3	51.0	44.3
Children under 18 at home (%)	35.6	29.3	40.6
Employed (%)	69.1	77.4	62.5
<i>N</i>	1,346	594	752

NOTE.—Nos. in parentheses are SDs.

older persons and those with higher household incomes (see model 2). Additionally, while there is no significant black-white difference in the frequency of all feelings, white persons report significantly more frequent feelings than persons with other racial backgrounds. Although there are no significant social status differences in the frequency with which persons report feelings in model 3, results of supplemental interactional analyses (not shown here but available upon request) indicate that the negative effect of household income on the frequency of emotional experiences is significantly greater for men than for women.

Second, although there is no significant difference in the frequency with which men and women report emotions *in general*, there *are* significant gender differences in the frequency with which they report *positive* and *negative* emotions. Men report positive feelings more often than women (see model 4). In fact, the gender difference in positive feelings remains significant after sociodemographic and status characteristics are included in models 5 and 6. Age and education are also associated with positive feelings; older persons and those with higher levels of education report positive emotions significantly more often than their younger and less educated peers (see model 5). Moreover, while respondents with children under 18 at home do not significantly differ from persons not residing with young children (see model 6), supplemental analyses (not shown here but available upon request) reveal that the number of children under 18 in the household is significantly (and negatively) related to the frequency of positive emotions.

In contrast to positive affect, women report negative feelings significantly more often than men (see model 7). However, the difference in the

TABLE 2
UNSTANDARDIZED COEFFICIENTS FROM REGRESSIONS OF THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH
RESPONDENTS REPORTED FEELINGS

	ALL FEELINGS			ALL POSITIVE FEELINGS			ALL NEGATIVE FEELINGS		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
Female (0, 1) .....	.01 (.81)	-.37 (.81)	-.61 (.82)	-1.74** (.56)	-1.76** (.56)	-1.67** (.57)	1.75* (.78)	1.39 (.76)	1.06 (.78)
Black (0, 1) ^a		-.76 (1.19)	-.87 (1.20)		.90 (.83)	1.14 (.84)		-1.66 (1.12)	-2.01 (1.13)
Other (0, 1) ^a		-4.53** (1.82)	-4.77** (1.83)		-.04 (1.27)	-.01 (1.27)		-4.48** (1.72)	-4.76** (1.72)
Age		-.12*** (.03)	-.13*** (.03)		.07*** (.02)	.05** (.02)		-.19*** (.02)	-.18*** (.03)
Education		-.08 (.15)	-.05 (.16)		.33** (.11)	.33** (.11)		-.41** (.14)	-.38** (.15)
Household income		-.27** (.09)	-.19 (.10)		.01 (.06)	.01 (.07)		-.28*** (.09)	-.20* (.10)
Married (0, 1)			-.91 (.92)			.78 (.64)			-1.69* (.87)
Children under 18 at home (0, 1) .....			.44 (.92)			-1.16 (.64)			1.59 (.87)
Employed (0, 1)			-1.76 (.98)			-.56 (.68)			-1.20 (.92)
Adjusted <i>R</i> ²	-.01	.02	.02	.01	.02	.02	.00	.06	.07

NOTE.—Nos. in parentheses are SEs. *N* = 1,346.

^a Whites are the reference (i.e., omitted) category.

* *P* < .05, two-tailed tests.

** *P* < .01.

*** *P* < .001.

frequency with which men and women report negative emotions becomes nonsignificant once their sociodemographic characteristics are held constant in model 8. Interestingly, supplemental analyses (not reported here but available upon request) reveal that household income is responsible for reducing the gender coefficient to nonsignificance. Younger persons and those with lower levels of education and household income also report negative feelings significantly more often than their older and more educated and economically advantaged counterparts (see model 8). Furthermore, while race is not associated with positive emotions, white persons report significantly more frequent negative feelings than persons with other racial identities. Finally, although marital, parental, and employment statuses do not have significant main effects on the frequency of negative emotions (see model 9), interactional analyses (not shown here but available upon request) reveal that the negative effect of household income on the frequency of these feelings is significantly greater for men, while the modest negative effect of being married on these feelings is significantly greater for women. The latter finding is consistent with the hypothesis that being unmarried is associated with more frequent negative emotions for women than for men—a finding that has been documented in research on gender, marital status, and mental health (e.g., Simon 2002).

Overall, these findings provide support for Kemper's structural theory about emotion and structural theories about gender, which both argue that persons with higher status in society (i.e., men) experience more frequent positive emotions, whereas lower-status persons (i.e., women) experience more frequent negative feelings. Indeed, our results indicate that differences between men's and women's *household income*—which is a major component of individuals' socioeconomic status—account for differences in the frequency with which they report negative feelings. Additional support for Kemper's structural theory about emotion is evident in our results for the effects of age, education, and household income on self-reports of the frequency of positive and negative feelings. Taken together, this first set of analyses indicates that women do not report more frequent emotional experiences than men in general, although there are gender differences in the frequency with which men and women report positive and negative emotions.⁶

⁶ We also examined whether men and women differ in the *sheer number* of feelings they reported in the previous week. Since the emotions module contains more negative than positive feelings (and women report more frequent negative feelings than do men), it is not surprising that women report that they experience a greater number of feelings during the past week relative to men. Tables for these auxiliary analyses are available upon request.

Do Men and Women Differ in the Frequency with Which They Report Specific Emotions?

Our next set of analyses assesses whether men and women differ in the frequency with which they report specific emotions. Table 3 contains the results of analyses in which we regress the six different constructed *feeling states*, including *calm feelings*, *excited feelings*, *anxious feelings*, *sad feelings*, *angry feelings*, and *feelings of shame*—on gender, sociodemographic characteristics, and social statuses. A number of interesting findings are evident in table 3.

Men report calm feelings more frequently than women (see model 1). The gender difference in self-reports of feeling calm remains significant with the inclusion of respondents' sociodemographic characteristics in model 2, but becomes nonsignificant when respondents' social statuses are included in model 3. Interestingly, auxiliary analyses (not shown here but available upon request) reveal that having children under 18 in the household is responsible for reducing the gender coefficient to nonsignificance. Older and more educated persons also report calm feelings significantly more often than younger and less educated individuals (see model 2). Moreover, parents with children younger than 18 at home report calm feelings significantly less often than persons not living with young children (see model 3). Additional analyses (not reported here but available upon request) reveal that the number of children under 18 in the household is also significantly (and negatively) associated with calm feelings.

Additionally, men report feelings of excitement significantly more frequently than women (see model 4), and this pattern holds after sociodemographic and status characteristics are controlled in models 5 and 6. Although there are no significant age or social status differences in self-reports of the frequency of excited feelings, more highly educated individuals report these emotions significantly more often than their less educated peers (see model 5).

On the other side of the coin, women report anxious feelings significantly more often than men (see model 7). This finding is consistent with research on gender and mental health, which documents more symptoms of anxiety among women (Mirowsky and Ross 2003). The gender difference in self-reports of the frequency of anxious feelings persists after sociodemographic characteristics are included in model 8, but becomes nonsignificant when social statuses are held constant in model 9. Paralleling our findings for calm feelings, auxiliary analyses (not shown here but available upon request) reveal that having young children in the household is responsible for reducing the gender coefficient for anxious feelings to nonsignificance. There is also significant race, age, educational, and household income variation in anxious feelings; persons who are

TABLE 3
UNSTANDARDIZED COEFFICIENTS FROM REGRESSIONS OF SIX CONSTRUCTED FEELING STATES

	CALM FEELINGS			EXCITED FEELINGS			ANXIOUS FEELINGS		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
Female (0, 1)	-.66*	-.65*	-.56	-1.09***	-1.11***	-1.11**	.92**	.80*	.65
	(.32)	(.31)	(.32)	(.34)	(.35)	(.35)	(.36)	(.36)	(.36)
Black (0, 1) ^a .....		.50	.71		.40	.43		-1.33**	-1.46**
		(.46)	(.46)		(.51)	(.51)		(.53)	(.53)
Other (0, 1) ^a .....		.24	.28		-.28	-.29		-2.31**	-2.43**
		(.70)	(.70)		(.78)	(.78)		(.80)	(.81)
Age .....		.09***	.07***		-.02	-.02		-.08***	-.07***
		(.01)	(.01)		(.01)	(.01)		(.01)	(.01)
Education .....		.14*	.14*		.19**	.19**		-.23***	-.21**
		(.06)	(.06)		(.07)	(.07)		(.07)	(.07)
Household income .....		.04	.03		-.03	-.03		-.12**	-.11**
		(.04)	(.04)		(.04)	(.04)		(.04)	(.05)
Married (0, 1) .....			.65			.13			-.31
			(.36)			(.39)			(.41)
Children under 18 at home (0, 1)			-1.04**			-.11			1.00**
			(.35)			(.39)			(.41)
Employed (0, 1)			-.41			-.15			-.13
			(.38)			(.42)			(.43)
Adjusted R ² .....	.00	.06	.07	.01	.01	.01	.00	.06	.06

	SAD FEELINGS			ANGRY FEELINGS			FEELINGS OF SHAME		
	Model 10	Model 11	Model 12	Model 13	Model 14	Model 15	Model 16	Model 17	Model 18
Female (0, 1)	1.01*** (.26)	.80** (.26)	.70** (.26)	-.09 (.27)	-.10 (.27)	-.21 (.27)	-.09 (.11)	-.10 (.11)	-.08 (.11)
Black (0, 1) ^a		-.21 (.38)	-.36 (.38)		.04 (.40)	-.03 (.40)		-.17 (.17)	-.15 (.17)
Other (0, 1) ^a		-.31 (.58)	-.39 (.58)		-1.37* (.60)	-1.47* (.61)		-.50* (.25)	-.47 (.25)
Age		-.03*** (.01)	-.04*** (.01)		-.07*** (.01)	-.06*** (.01)		-.01** (.00)	-.01** (.00)
Education		-.16*** (.05)	-.16*** (.05)		-.05 (.05)	-.03 (.05)		.03 (.02)	.02 (.02)
Household income		-.14*** (.03)	-.06 (.03)		-.01 (.03)	-.01 (.03)		-.02 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Married (0, 1)			-1.20*** (.29)			-.13 (.31)			-.06 (.13)
Children under 18 at home (0, 1) .....			.11 (.29)			.71* (.30)			-.22 (.13)
Employed (0, 1)			-.91** (.31)			-.16 (.33)			-.01 (.14)
Adjusted R ² .....	.01	.05	.07	-.00	.04	.04	.00	.01	.01

NOTE.—Nos. in parentheses are SEs. $N = 1,346$.

^a Whites are the reference (i.e., omitted) category.

* $P < .05$, two-tailed tests.

** $P < .01$.

*** $P < .001$.

white, younger, less educated, and have lower household incomes report these feelings more often than blacks and people with other racial backgrounds as well as those who are older, more educated, and have higher household incomes (see model 8). Not surprisingly, persons with young children at home also report anxious feelings significantly more often than persons not residing with young children (see model 9). These findings are also consistent with research that documents status differences in anxiety (Mirowsky and Ross 2003). Supplemental interactional analyses (not reported here but available upon request) reveal that the negative effect of household income on the frequency of anxious feelings is significantly greater for men, whereas the modest negative effect of being married on the frequency of these emotions is significantly greater for women—which is consistent with the interactional hypothesis about marriage.

Additionally, women report feelings of sadness significantly more often than men (see model 10), and this pattern holds after respondents' sociodemographic and status characteristics are included in models 11 and 12. This finding is consistent with cultural beliefs about gender and sadness as well as the vast literature on gender and depression, which documents higher rates of depression among females (Kessler et al. 1993; Meyers et al. 1984; Mirowsky and Ross 2003; Simon 2002). Age, education, and household income are also significantly associated with feelings of sadness; persons who are younger and who have lower levels of education and household income report these feelings more often than their older, more educated, and more economically advantaged counterparts (see model 11). While there is no significant parental status difference in the frequency of feelings of sadness, both married and employed persons report these emotions significantly less often than their unmarried and nonemployed peers (see model 12). These findings are also consistent with earlier research, which documents less depression among both the married and the employed (Mirowsky and Ross 2003). Interestingly, auxiliary interactional analyses (not shown here but available upon request) reveal that while the negative effect of household income on feelings of sadness is significantly greater for men, the negative effect of being married on the frequency of these emotions is not significantly greater for women—which is inconsistent with the interactional hypothesis about marriage.

We do *not*, however, find a gender difference in self-reports of the frequency of feelings of anger. While the gender coefficient for anger is negative, it is not significant in models 13–15. This finding is inconsistent with cultural beliefs about gender and anger as well as recent survey research, which shows a female excess of this emotion (Ross and Van

Willigen 1996).⁷ There are, nevertheless, significant associations between race, age, parental status, and anger. Whites, younger persons, and parents living with young children report angry feelings more often than those with other racial backgrounds, older people, and persons not residing with young children (see models 14 and 15). Supplemental analyses (not reported here but available upon request) further reveal that the number of children under 18 residing in the household significantly increases self-reports of feelings of anger. These latter findings are in line with recent research on anger, which finds that younger adults report anger more often than older persons (Schieman 1999) and that parents with young children at home report anger more often than persons not living with children (Ross and Van Willigen 1996).

Finally, men and women do not significantly differ in the frequency with which they report feelings of shame (see models 16–18). In fact, the only significant coefficient for shame is age; younger persons report this emotion more frequently than older people.

Taken together, table 3 analyses indicate that men and women differ in the frequency with which they report certain emotions—only one of which is culturally linked to gender in the United States. Men report feeling calm and excited more often than women, whereas women report feeling anxious and sad more often than men. Although gender differences in excited and sad feelings remain significant after respondents' socio-demographic and status characteristics are controlled in analyses, gender differences in calm and anxious feelings become nonsignificant once parental status is held constant. Indeed, male-female differences in the frequency of these particular emotions appear to be due to male-female differences in residing with young children.⁸ In short, there appears to be little correspondence between cultural beliefs about the frequency with which men and women experience certain feelings and men's and women's self-reports of the frequency with which they experience these emotions.

To the extent that our emotion culture contains feeling norms about

⁷ We suspect that the difference between our findings and Ross and Van Willigen's is due to differences in the ways in which the frequency of anger was measured in each study. Our measure is based on the number of days in the previous week respondents felt anger, mad, and *outrage*, which is a more severe form of anger. In contrast, Ross and Willigen's measure is based on the number of days in the past week respondents felt angry and *annoyed*, which is a milder form of anger, as well as the number of days they yelled at someone.

⁸ Although we find that gender differences in living with young children explains gender differences in the frequency of calm and anxious feelings, we do *not* find support for the hypothesis that residing with young children is associated with significantly more frequent negative feelings (including anger) for mothers than for fathers.

sadness and anger that encourage women to feel sadness and men to feel anger, these findings provide mixed support for Hochschild's normative theory about emotion; women report sadness more often than men, but men do not report anger more often than women. However, insofar as individuals' status in society influences their everyday feelings, these findings provide fairly consistent support for Kemper's structural theory about emotion. Although there are no gender differences in the frequency of feelings of anger and shame (which are two negative emotions that Kemper's theory predicts are more common among persons with lower status), men report more frequent feelings of calm and excitement, while women report more frequent feelings of anxiety and sadness. Moreover, and consistent with structural theories about gender, differences between men's and women's role experiences—particularly their *involvement in the parent role*—are responsible for gender differences in calm and anxious feelings.⁹

Gender and anger.—Although we did not find a significant difference in the frequency with which men and women report anger, we nevertheless wanted to explore whether men and women differ in other aspects of their angry feelings. To this end, table 4 presents analyses in which we regress respondents' self-reports of the *intensity of anger experienced*, the *length of time anger was experienced*, and whether they *felt their reaction was appropriate* on the same set of variables. Table 4 analyses provide additional insight into the experience of anger among women and men.

We were surprised that women report that their anger is more intense than do men (see model 1). The gender difference in the intensity of angry feelings remains significant even after the inclusion of respondents' sociodemographic and status characteristics in models 2 and 3. Moreover, women report anger of longer duration than do men (see model 4). Again, the gender difference in the length of time anger was experienced remains significant after sociodemographic and status characteristics are controlled in models 5 and 6. Although gender differences in both the intensity and duration of anger may be due to gender differences in power, the inclusion of men's and women's socioeconomic status in analyses does not explain these differences.

While there is not a significant gender difference in models 7 and 8,

⁹ We also conducted separate analyses for each of the 19 feelings, which revealed significant gender differences in only seven of these feelings after respondents' sociodemographic and status characteristics are held constant. While men report feeling calm, excited, overjoyed, and proud more often than women, women report feeling worried, sad, and lonely more often than men. Interestingly, and in contrast to cultural beliefs about gender and emotion, these analyses further revealed that women do *not* report feeling fearful more frequently than men, and men do *not* report feeling happy more frequently than women. Tables for these analyses are available upon request.

TABLE 4
UNSTANDARDIZED COEFFICIENTS FROM REGRESSIONS OF ANGRY FEELINGS

	INTENSITY OF ANGER			LENGTH OF TIME OF ANGER			FELT REACTION WAS APPROPRIATE		
	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Female (0, 1) .....	.72*** (.15)	.68*** (.15)	.63*** (.16)	.31*** (.09)	.31*** (.09)	.31*** (.10)	.34 (.21)	.39 (.21)	.43* (.22)
Black (0, 1) ^a .....		.42 (.23)	.35 (.23)		.25 (.14)	.24 (.14)		.02 (.32)	-.02 (.32)
Other (0, 1) ^a .....		.27 (.34)	.22 (.35)		.15 (.21)	.16 (.21)		-.01 (.48)	.07 (.48)
Age		-.02*** (.01)	.02*** (.01)		-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)		.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Education		-.05 (.03)	-.04 (.03)		.01 (.02)	.01 (.02)		.07 (.04)	.06 (.04)
Household income		-.01 (.02)	.01 (.02)		.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)		.02 (.02)	.02 (.03)
Married (0, 1)			-.31 (.17)			-.08 (.11)			-.14 (.24)
Children under 18 at home (0, 1) .....			.14 (.17)			-.03 (.10)			-.04 (.23)
Employed (0, 1)			-.29 (.19)			.00 (.11)			.37 (.26)
Adjusted R ² .....	.02	.04	.04	.01	.01	.01	.00	.00	.00

NOTE.—Nos. in parentheses are SEs. $N = 1,035$.

^a White is the reference (i.e., omitted) category.

* $P < .05$, two-tailed tests.

** $P < .01$.

*** $P < .001$.

women are significantly more likely than men to report that they feel their reaction was appropriate once sociodemographic and social status variables are held constant in model 9. Interestingly, with the exception of the effect of respondents' age on the intensity of anger, none of the sociodemographic and status variables (including the continuous parental status variable) significantly predict these various aspects of angry feelings.

To further explore gender differences in anger, we also investigated whether men and women differ in the ways in which they cope with their angry feelings. Here, we conducted logistic regression analyses, in which we regress 15 different coping strategies on the same set of variables. These analyses provide insight into the *management* and *expression* of angry feelings.

Overall, we find significant gender differences for only *four* of the 15 coping strategies after respondents' sociodemographic characteristics and social statuses are controlled in our models. However, based on our analyses of these four strategies—which are shown in table 5—it appears that men and women cope with and manage their angry feelings in gender-specific ways. For example, models 3, 6, and 9 indicate that women are more likely to report that they cope with anger by talking about their angry feelings with others—including the target of their anger—and by praying to God. In contrast to the use of verbal and spiritual coping strategies, model 12 indicates that men are more likely to report that they cope with their angry feelings by having a drink or taking a pill. These findings closely parallel psychological research on children and adolescents mentioned earlier, which indicates that females express anger verbally, while males express anger behaviorally (Brody 1993, 1997; Frost and Averill 1982; Kring 2000). These findings also echo research on the mental health of adolescents and adults, which finds that males manifest emotional distress vis-à-vis *externalizing* symptoms such as substance abuse.¹⁰ Additionally, these findings are consistent with Thoits's (1991) study of college students, which shows that women are more likely to cope with their emotions by seeking social support.

In sum, although we do not find a significant difference in the frequency with which men and women report angry feelings, these analyses reveal some significant differences in the ways in which men and women *experience* and *cope* with anger. Women report that their anger is more

¹⁰ While this latter finding suggests that men are more likely than women to *express* anger with certain types of behaviors (e.g., by using chemical substances, presumably for the purpose of *altering* their feelings), our analyses of the 11 other coping strategies (not shown) indicate that men are *not* more likely than women to report that they express anger by yelling or hitting something. Tables for these analyses are also available upon request.

TABLE 5
UNSTANDARDIZED COEFFICIENTS FROM LOGISTIC REGRESSIONS OF STRATEGIES USED TO COPE WITH ANGER

	TALKED TO THE PERSON ANGRY AT			TALKED TO SOMEONE ELSE			PRAYED FOR HELP FROM GOD			HAD A DRINK OR TOOK A PILL		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 12
Female (0, 1) .....	.23 (.13)	.29* (.14)	.30* (.14)	.53*** (.13)	.65*** (.13)	.69*** (.14)	.75*** (.15)	.68*** (.15)	.67*** (.15)	-.47 (.26)	-.64* (.27)	-.67* (.28)
Black (0, 1) ^a .....		.14 (.20)	.19 (.20)		-.61** (.20)	-.63** (.20)		.94*** (.20)	1.06*** (.21)		.61 (.33)	.71* (.35)
Other (0, 1) ^a		-.43 (.32)	-.44 (.32)		-.18 (.30)	-.14 (.30)		.42 (.32)	.38 (.32)		-6.60 (13.67)	-6.70 (13.51)
Age		-.01** (.00)	-.02** (.01)		-.01** (.00)	-.01* (.01)		.01 (.01)	.00 (.01)		-.02* (.01)	-.03** (.01)
Education .....		.01 (.03)	.01 (.03)		.07** (.03)	.06* (.03)		.00 (.03)	.02 (.03)		-.04 (.05)	-.04 (.05)
Household income .....		.05*** (.02)	.05** (.02)		.02 (.02)	.02 (.02)		-.01 (.02)	-.03 (.02)		-.04 (.03)	-.02 (.03)
Married (0, 1) .....			.07 (.15)			-.09 (.15)			.43** (.17)			.06 (.32)
Children under 18 at home (0, 1)			-.18 (.15)			-.11 (.15)			-.07 (.16)			-.39 (.31)
Employed (0, 1)			-.18 (.16)			.17 (.16)			-.21 (.17)			-.76** (.31)
Nagelkerke R^2 .....	.00	.03	.04	.02	.07	.07	.04	.07	.08	.01	.06	.08

NOTE.—Nos. in parentheses are SEs. $N = 1,035$.

^a Whites are the reference (i.e., omitted) category.

* $P < .05$, two-tailed tests.

** $P < .01$.

*** $P < .001$.

intense and of longer duration, and they are more likely to view their anger as appropriate than are men. While these findings belie cultural beliefs about gender and anger as well as predictions from Hochschild's normative theory about emotion, they are consistent with predictions from Kemper's structural theory about emotion and structural theories about gender. Moreover, to cope with their angry feelings, women are more likely to talk with others and pray, whereas men are more likely to use mood-altering substances.

Do Women Report Greater Emotional Expressiveness than Men?

Recall that part of the emotion culture in the United States is the widely held belief that women express their emotions more readily than men. To answer this final question, table 6 presents analyses in which we regress the summary measure of emotional expressiveness—as well as the five individual expression items upon which it is based and a sixth item that focuses on the expression of anger—on respondents' gender, sociodemographic characteristics, and social statuses. Bear in mind that with the exception of the last two expression items—which were reversed coded—high scores reflect *disagreements* with these statements, and that high scores on all of these variables (including the summary measure) indicate greater emotional expressiveness. As we noted earlier, we did not include the sixth item of emotional expression in our summary measure because it focuses on the expression of anger—which our emotion culture and Hochschild's normative theory about emotion assume is greater for men than for women. This final table sheds light on gender differences in expressive behavior among adults in the United States.

In concert with cultural beliefs as well as with Hochschild's normative theory about emotion and Parsons's functional theory about gender, women *are* significantly more likely than men to report that they express their emotions *in general* (see model 1). This finding is consistent with Thoits's (1991) study of college students discussed earlier, which shows that women are more likely than men to express their feelings in the face of stress. Moreover, the gender difference in emotional expressiveness remains significant with the inclusion of respondents' sociodemographic characteristics in model 2 and social statuses in model 3. There are also significant age and educational differences in emotional expressiveness; younger and more educated persons report that they express their emotions more readily than their older and less educated peers (see model 2).

It is, however, noteworthy that we find significant gender differences for only *two* of the five items included in our summary measure of emotional expressiveness. Women are more likely than men to disagree with the statement, "I keep my emotions to myself" (see model 4). Similarly,

women are more likely than men to disagree with the statement, “When anxious, I try not to worry anyone else” (see model 7). The gender coefficients for both of these items remain significant after respondents’ sociodemographic and status characteristics are included in models 5, 6, 8, and 9. We would like to point out that our results for the second item strongly suggest that women are *less* rather than *more* likely than men *to conceal* (i.e., *manage*) their expressions when they are feeling anxious in order to protect other people from experiencing unpleasant emotions. In other words, women appear to be less concerned about other people’s feelings when they themselves are experiencing these particular negative emotions.

It is also noteworthy that we do *not* find a significant gender difference for the sixth item of emotional expression, which was not included in our summary measure. In contrast to cultural beliefs and Hochschild’s normative theory about emotion, men are *not* more likely than women to agree with the statement, “When I’m angry, I let people know” (see model 19), and this pattern holds after respondents’ sociodemographic and status characteristics are held constant in models 20 and 21.¹¹ Despite this last finding, there nevertheless appears to be at least some support for the notion that women express their emotions more readily than men in general.¹²

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Americans believe that women are more emotional and emotionally expressive than men and that males and females differ in the frequency with which they experience and express specific emotions. However, it was unclear whether men’s and women’s affective experiences and behavior are consistent with those beliefs, since we lacked systematic in-

¹¹ Interestingly, our analyses indicate that neither the dichotomous nor the continuous parental status variable significantly predicts the expression of anger—a finding that is inconsistent with Ross and Willigen’s (1996) research. Once again, it is likely that this inconsistency in findings is due to differences in our respective measures of anger.

¹² Although the purpose of our study is to *assess* whether men and women differ in self-reports of feelings and expressive behavior rather than to *explain* self-reports of feelings and expressive behavior (and gender differences therein), it is noteworthy that the R^2 for all of our analyses are very low—despite the inclusion of key sociological variables in our models. While we completely agree with Schachter and Singer’s (1962) and Thoits’s (1989) arguments that the *context* in which situations occur influence individuals’ emotional responses, with the exception of anger, the emotions module did not include information about the particular situations that elicited respondents’ feelings nor the specific contexts surrounding the eliciting situations. We strongly suspect that the omission of this information from our models helps account for our very low R^2 .

TABLE 6
UNSTANDARDIZED COEFFICIENTS FROM REGRESSIONS OF RESPONDENTS' SELF-REPORTS OF EMOTIONAL EXPRESSIVENESS

	EMOTIONAL EXPRESSIVENESS ^a			KEEPS EMOTIONS TO SELF ^b			TRY NOT TO WORRY OTHERS ^b			DON'T TELL SOMETHING UPSETTING ^b		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 12
Female (0, 1) .....	.54*	.53*	.49*	.22*	.22*	.18*	.13*	.14*	.15*	.09	.08	.09
	(.24)	(.24)	(.24)	(.09)	(.09)	(.09)	(.07)	(.07)	(.07)	(.08)	(.08)	(.08)
Black (0, 1) ^d .....		.33	.23		.08	.06		-.18	-.14		.23*	.21
		(.35)	(.35)		(.13)	(.14)		(.10)	(.10)		(.12)	(.12)
Other (0, 1) ^d .....		.18	.12		.08	.04		.09	.10		-.15	-.13
		(.58)	(.58)		(.22)	(.22)		(.17)	(.17)		(.19)	(.19)
Age		-.03***	-.03**		-.01*	-.01		-.01**	-.01**		-.01***	-.01***
		(.01)	(.01)		(.00)	(.00)		(.00)	(.00)		(.00)	(.00)
Education .....		.15***	.15***		.04**	.05**		.04**	.04**		.04*	.03*
		(.05)	(.05)		(.02)	(.02)		(.01)	(.01)		(.02)	(.02)
Household income .....		.03	.05		.01	.01		.01	.00		.00	.01
		(.03)	(.03)		(.01)	(.01)		(.01)	(.01)		(.01)	(.01)
Married (0, 1)			-.36			-.05			.17*			-.09
			(.27)			(.11)			(.08)			(.09)
Children under 18 at home (0, 1) .....			.20			.17			-.06			-.04
			(.27)			(.10)			(.08)			(.09)
Employed (0, 1)			-.21			-.05			.02			.03
			(.29)			(.11)			(.08)			(.10)
Adjusted R ² .....	.01	.05	.05	.01	.03	.03	.00	.04	.04	.00	.04	.04

	TRY TO BE PLEASANT ^b			NOT AFRAID TO SHOW FEELINGS ^c			LET PEOPLE KNOW I'M ANGRY ^c		
	Model 13	Model 14	Model 15	Model 16	Model 17	Model 18	Model 19	Model 20	Model 21
Female (0, 1)	-.01 (.06)	.02 (.07)	.02 (.07)	.10 (.08)	.08 (.09)	.05 (.09)	.10 (.09)	.07 (.09)	.05 (.09)
Black (0, 1) ^d		-.03 (.10)	-.06 (.10)		.23 (.13)	.16 (.13)		.28* (.13)	.26* (.13)
Other (0, 1) ^d .....		.20 (.16)	.21 (.16)		-.04 (.21)	-.09 (.21)		.05 (.22)	.02 (.22)
Age		-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)		.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)		-.01** (.00)	-.01** (.00)
Education .....		.02 (.01)	.02 (.01)		.02 (.02)	.02 (.02)		-.03 (.02)	-.02 (.02)
Household income .....		.01* (.01)	.02** (.01)		-.00 (.01)	.01 (.01)		-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Married (0, 1)			-.12 (.07)			-.28** (.10)			-.05 (.10)
Children under 18 at home (0, 1)			-.02 (.07)			.14 (.10)			.04 (.10)
Employed (0, 1)			-.01 (.08)			-.19 (.10)			-.15 (.11)
Adjusted <i>R</i> ²	-.00	.01	.01	.00	.00	.01	.00	.02	.02

NOTE.—Nos. in parentheses are SEs. *N* = 683. The labels of the six areas of emotional expressiveness are shortened here for easier presentation; see app. table C1 and the numbered list in the text for the complete statement.

^a This summary measure is based on five items. High scores indicate greater emotional expressiveness.

^b High scores on this variable reflect disagreements with the statement.

^c This variable was reverse coded. High scores reflect agreements with the statement.

^d White is the reference (i.e., omitted) category.

* *P* < .05, two-tailed tests.

** *P* < .01.

*** *P* < .001.

formation about the frequencies and distributions of subjective feelings and expressive behavior in the United States. In this article, we assessed whether men and women differ in affective experience and behavior by focusing on their self-reports of everyday subjective feelings and expressive behavior. We also evaluated whether the patterns observed for men and women are consistent with two sociological theories about emotion as well as two sociological theories about gender. Overall, based on our findings from a national sample of adults, we conclude that there is *little* correspondence between men's and women's feelings and expressive behavior and gender-linked cultural beliefs about emotion.

In contrast to cultural beliefs, our analyses revealed that women do *not* report more frequent emotional experiences than men in general. We did, however, find differences in the frequency with which men and women report positive and negative emotions. While men report more frequent positive feelings than women, women report more frequent negative feelings than men. We also found that women's more frequent negative emotions are explained by their lower household incomes. Although we cannot address this issue with the data at hand, researchers should examine whether gender inequality in the workplace and family also contributes to gender inequality in the frequency of negative, and especially positive, feelings.

Further analyses revealed differences in the frequency with which men and women report specific emotions. Men report more frequent feelings of calm and excitement, whereas women report more frequent feelings of anxiety and sadness. While gender differences in calm and anxious feelings are explained by male-female differences in living with young children, gender differences in excited and sad feelings remain significant. Women's more frequent feelings of sadness are consistent with cultural beliefs as well as the vast literature on gender and depression. We did not, however, find a gender difference in the frequency of anger. In fact, our analyses showed that women's anger is more intense and of longer duration than men's. In light of cultural beliefs about gender and anger, it is ironic that women are also more likely than men to view their anger as *appropriate*. A next step for research is to assess whether men and women differ in the frequency with which they report other feelings—such as empathy, sympathy, grief, gratitude, frustration, humiliation, disgust, jealousy, betrayal, guilt, and remorse—as well as determine whether differences between men's and women's structural positions (including their socioeconomic status and role involvements) are responsible for such differences.

Additional analyses further revealed some differences in the ways in which men and women cope with their anger. Recall that while women are more likely to talk about their feelings with others and pray, men are more likely to use mood-altering substances. We noted earlier that our

findings on adults echo the findings of psychological research on children and adolescents, which shows that females express anger verbally, whereas males express anger behaviorally (Brody 1993, 1997; Frost and Averill 1982; Kring 2000). These findings are also consistent with Thoits's (1991) study of college students, which shows that women cope with stressful experiences by seeking social support. Since certain emotions underlie emotional well-being and emotional distress, these findings provide some indirect support for recent claims that males and females may differ in the *expression*, but not necessarily the *experience*, of emotional problems (Aneshensel 1992; Lennon 1987; Rosenfield 1999; Rosenfield et al. 2000; Simon 2002). These findings also suggest that future research should focus on the *meaning*, *significance*, *antecedents*, and *consequences* of anger (as well as other emotions) for women relative to men.

Finally, we found that women report that they express their emotions more readily than men, which persists after respondents' sociodemographic and status characteristics are held constant (see also Thoits 1991). When considered in tandem with our findings for the summary measure of emotional experience, this last finding is consistent with some developmental psychologists' claim that *expression* of emotion may be more heavily socialized than the *experience* of emotion (Brody 1993; Kring and Gordon 1998). It is possible that males learn to conceal their feelings, whereas females learn to more freely express their emotions. We found it interesting that while women report that they express their emotions more readily than men *in general*, men do *not* report that they express *anger* more readily than women. Unfortunately, data limitations prevented us from assessing whether men and women differ in the expression of sadness, an important issue for theory and research on gender and emotion as well as for gender and mental health.¹³

It is, however, important to emphasize that our findings for the summary measure of emotional expressiveness should be interpreted cautiously since some of the items included in this measure are very general. Psychological research indicates that self-report measures based on questions that do not include a specific emotion and a specific time frame are more vulnerable to social desirability than measures based on questions about a specific emotion within a specific time frame (Kelly and Hutson-Comeaux 1999; Shields 2002). Indeed, this research finds that gender differences in self-reports of emotion that are consistent with cultural beliefs are more likely to occur the more general the question and the more distant the occurrence of the emotion. Unlike our measures of emo-

¹³ See Mirowsky and Ross (1995) for an interesting discussion and sophisticated analysis of gender differences in emotional expressiveness, feelings of sadness and anger, and symptoms of emotional distress—including depression.

tional experience—which are based on questions about the *number of days in the previous week respondents experienced 19 specific feelings*—our summary measure of expressiveness may, therefore, be vulnerable to social desirability. Recall that we found significant gender differences in only two of the five items in this measure, and one of those items—“I keep my emotions to myself”—is very *general*. Future research should include self-report measures of emotional expressiveness that are emotion specific and time limited. Since emotional expressions are observable phenomena, future research should also include observational data. Our failure to find much correspondence between men’s and women’s everyday subjective feelings and cultural beliefs about males’ and females’ emotions provides indirect evidence that our measures of emotional experience do *not* reflect social desirability.

In light of pervasive cultural beliefs about gender differences in emotion, we were initially surprised to find that the men and women in this national sample differ little in their self-reported emotional lives and wondered what could explain our “no difference” results. One potential explanation is that we failed to include variables in our models that suppress the relationship between gender and emotion. This possibility is, however, unlikely because our analyses contain a sizable array of independent variables—including household income as well as marital, parental, and employment status—which typically *help explain* gender differences in emotional well-being and distress. Indeed, we found that differences in the frequency with which men and women report certain positive and negative feelings are *explained* by these variables.

Alternatively, it is possible that our “no difference” results for everyday subjective feelings are not “real” because they are based on invalid measures. Although we do not think this is the case for reasons discussed above, we do believe that multiple types of data should ideally be used in empirical work on emotion, particularly on emotional experience. In contrast to expressive behavior—which is directly accessible to outsiders—feelings are known only to the person experiencing them. Since subjective feelings can only be ascertained through self-reports, there may be little alternative but to rely on self-report measures in emotions research. However, sociologists should make every attempt to supplement self-reports of feelings in surveys with self-reports from in-depth interviews, daily dairies, and/or experiments in future work.

Taken as a whole, our findings for emotional experience are more consistent with predictions based on Kemper’s structural theory about emotion and structural theories about gender than with predictions based on Hochschild’s normative theory about emotion and Parsons’s functional theory about gender. *Women do not report more frequent emotional experiences than men in general, although men and women differ in the*

frequency with which they report certain positive and negative feelings—which is explained by differences between their social positions.

In fact, our results illustrate what Mills (1959) referred to as the connections between social structure and the private feelings of individuals. Sociologists of mental health have long argued that individuals' position in social structure—including their socioeconomic status and role involvements—affect their emotional well-being by differentially exposing them to stressful situations (Pearlin 1989; Mirowsky and Ross 2003). Our findings indicate that individuals' structural location and role involvements also affect their day-to-day emotions—presumably by differentially exposing them to positive and negative emotion eliciting situations. It is, however, possible, if not likely, that cultural beliefs *interact* with structural factors in complex and little understood ways to influence men's and women's everyday subjective feelings.

In reflecting on our findings, we are no longer too surprised that most of men's and women's self-reports of feelings are inconsistent with beliefs about gender differences in emotion. After all, sociologists have been debunking beliefs about various social groups in the United States for some time. It is, however, instructive to think about the origins of our beliefs about gender and emotion and to speculate about why they persist.

Historians have documented that Americans' beliefs about women's emotionality and men's unemotionality (or emotional reserve) are rooted in 19th-century gender ideologies, which were used to justify the division of labor between women and men that developed during the early stages of industrial capitalism. According to Stearns and Stearns (1986), women's roles involved caring for family members within the private sphere of the home, which required emotional sensitivity to others and the suppression of anger. In contrast, men's roles involved earning a family wage in the public sphere of work, which required emotional reserve but permitted anger. Clearly, the division of labor between men's and women's roles is less rigid today than it was earlier in our nation's history due to broad social changes that have occurred since this period. Although research documents the persistence of gender inequality in the workplace and family, women are actively involved in the labor force and men are actively involved in family life. *Why*, then, do these beliefs about gender and emotion persist? It is possible that we continue to believe that women are more emotional than men because they may be more likely than men to *express* their emotions. Gender differences in expressive behavior, which is an outward and observable manifestation of deeply private emotional experience, may reinforce, maintain, and ultimately reproduce cultural beliefs about gender and emotion. This is an important issue not only for emotions and gender researchers but also for sociologists more generally, since cultural beliefs about men's and women's emotions may continue

to be used to justify gender inequality in the family, workplace, polity, and society.

Our article contributes to the growing literatures on emotion in general and gender and emotion in the United States in particular, but there are some obvious limitations to our research. Most important, data limitations prevented us from examining the situations that elicited men's and women's feelings as well as the social contexts surrounding these eliciting situations. Sociologists of emotion emphasize the importance of contextual factors for understanding children's, adolescents', and adults' emotional responses to situations (Smith-Lovin 1995; Thoits 1989; Lively and Powell 2001). An emphasis on situational contexts is also evident in much psychological work on emotion (Brody 1997; Kelly and Hutson-Comeaux 1999; Kring 2000; Shields 2002). Indeed, a central argument of contemporary emotions theorists that we acknowledged earlier is that the *social contexts in which situations occur* are crucial for a specific emotional response (Schachter and Singer 1962; Thoits 1989). While contextual factors undoubtedly play a role in the experience (and expression) of a wide range of everyday feelings, they are likely to be especially valuable for understanding men's and women's anger. Future research should identify the situational contexts that elicit anger as well as other emotions for women compared to men as well as identify the targets and psychological consequences of anger and other emotions.

Despite some data limitations—which future research should strive to overcome—our study challenges longstanding and widely held beliefs about men's and women's everyday subjective feelings and expressive behavior that are part of the emotion culture in the United States. At the same time, our study invites sociologists of emotion and sociologists of gender to systematically examine the multiple ways in which contemporary social arrangements—including men's and women's structural positions and role experiences as well as cultural beliefs and norms about both gender and emotion—shape affective experiences and behavior. While our research sheds light on men's and women's self-reports of feelings and expressive behavior in the United States today, there is still much to be learned about the complex linkages between gender and emotion.

APPENDIX A

TABLE A1
MEANS AND SDS FOR FEELINGS

	TOTAL		MALES		FEMALES		<i>P</i> VALUES*	RELIABILITY
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
<i>N</i>	1,346		594		752			
All feelings	45.10	14.66	45.10	15.16	45.10	14.27	NS	.65
All positive feelings	27.33	10.19	28.30	10.17	26.56	10.14	.002	.76
All negative feelings	17.77	14.14	16.80	13.87	18.55	14.31	.024	.84
Calm feelings	13.64	5.78	14.01	5.74	13.35	5.80	.038	.74
Calm	4.57	2.33	4.83	2.29	4.37	2.35	.000	
Contented	4.53	2.46	4.50	2.54	4.57	2.40	NS	
At ease	4.54	2.35	4.69*	2.33	4.42	2.36	.039	
Excitement	13.68	6.23	14.29	6.31	13.20	6.13	.002	.67
Happy	5.30	2.00	5.35	2.00	5.26	2.01	NS	
Excited	3.63	2.30	3.81	2.22	3.49	2.36	.010	
Overjoyed	1.79	2.14	1.92	2.28	1.69	2.02	.051	
Proud	2.97	2.32	3.21	2.32	2.77	2.31	.001	
Anxiety	7.73	6.60	7.22	6.39	8.13	6.74	.011	.69
Fearful	1.16	1.93	1.05	1.79	1.25	2.04	NS	
Anxious	2.26	2.25	2.19	2.19	2.32	2.29	NS	
Restless	1.50	2.25	1.56	2.30	1.44	2.20	NS	
Worried	2.81	2.71	2.41	2.57	3.12	2.78	.000	
Sadness	4.29	4.76	3.73	4.44	4.74	4.96	.000	.73
Blue	1.19	1.82	1.06	1.75	1.30	1.87	.015	
Sad	1.64	1.90	1.42	1.81	1.81	1.96	.000	
Lonely	1.46	2.17	1.25	2.01	1.63	2.27	.001	
Anger	4.70	4.92	4.75	5.01	4.66	4.84	NS	.86
Outraged	1.52	1.88	1.48	1.86	1.55	1.90	NS	
Mad	1.69	1.92	1.75	1.97	1.64	1.88	NS	
Angry	1.49	1.77	1.51	1.79	1.46	1.75	NS	
Shame	1.06	2.02	1.11	2.05	1.02	2.00	NS	.63
Ashamed .....	.47	1.16	.47	1.13	.47	1.17	NS	
Embarrassed .....	.59	1.21	.63	1.28	.55	1.15	NS	

NOTE.—Nos. in parentheses are SDs.
* *P* values are based on two-tailed tests.

APPENDIX B

TABLE B1
MEANS AND SDs FOR ALL ANGER-RELATED VARIABLES

	Total	Males	Females	<i>P</i> Values*
<i>N</i>	1,035	444	591	
Intensity of anger	6.24 (2.43)	5.83 (2.41)	6.54 (2.40)	.000
Length of time of anger	3.53 (1.48)	3.35 (1.43)	3.67 (1.50)	.001
Felt reaction was appropriate	6.40 (3.32)	6.20 (3.31)	6.54 (3.32)	NS
Coping with angry feelings:				
Thought about the situation .....	.35 (.48)	.37 (.48)	.34 (.47)	NS
Had a drink or took a pill .....	.06 (.24)	.08 (.27)	.05 (.22)	NS
Talked to the person I was angry at .....	.37 (.48)	.34 (.47)	.39 (.49)	NS
Talked to someone else .....	.59 (.49)	.51 (.50)	.64 (.48)	.000
Tried to forget it .....	.31 (.46)	.34 (.47)	.29 (.46)	NS
Tried to change the situation .....	.27 (.44)	.27 (.44)	.27 (.45)	NS
Prayed for help from God .....	.28 (.45)	.20 (.40)	.34 (.47)	.000
Fantasized about a magical solution .....	.07 (.26)	.07 (.26)	.07 (.26)	NS
Went out to get some exercise .....	.14 (.35)	.14 (.35)	.15 (.36)	NS
Yelled or hit something .....	.08 (.27)	.08 (.27)	.08 (.27)	NS
Waited for feelings to pass .....	.29 (.46)	.30 (.46)	.29 (.45)	NS
Tried to accept the situation .....	.47 (.50)	.45 (.50)	.48 (.50)	NS
Left the situation .....	.15 (.36)	.15 (.36)	.16 (.37)	NS
Thought about how to get revenge .....	.06 (.24)	.05 (.22)	.07 (.25)	NS
Planned how to end the relationship .....	.10 (.30)	.08 (.27)	.12 (.32)	.049
Other reasons04 (.20)	.04 (.19)	.05 (.22)	NS

NOTE.—Nos. in parentheses are SDs.

* *P* values are based on two-tailed tests.

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APPENDIX C

TABLE C1
MEANS AND SDs FOR EMOTIONAL EXPRESSIVENESS

	Total	Males	Females	<i>P</i> Values*
<i>N</i>	683	310	373	
Emotional expressiveness [†]	13.86 (3.11)	13.57 (3.04)	14.10 (3.15)	.024
I keep my emotions to my- self [‡]	3.08 (1.19)	2.96 (1.17)	3.18 (1.19)	.017
When anxious, I try not to worry anyone else [‡]	2.34 (.90)	2.27 (.82)	2.40 (.96)	.050
I don't tell friends some- thing upsetting [‡]	2.61 (1.03)	2.55 (1.00)	2.65 (1.06)	NS
I try to be pleasant so as not to upset others [‡]	2.19 (.83)	2.20 (.82)	2.19 (.84)	NS
I'm not afraid to show my feelings [§]	3.63 (1.10)	3.58 (1.08)	3.68 (1.11)	NS
When I'm angry, I let peo- ple know [§]	3.46 (1.15)	3.41 (1.13)	3.50 (1.16)	NS

NOTE.—*N* = 683.

* *P* values are based on two-tailed tests.

[†] This summary measure is based on the first five items shown below. High scores indicate greater emotional expressiveness.

[‡] High scores on this variable reflect disagreements with the statement.

[§] This variable was reverse coded. High scores reflect agreements with the statement.

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