

Angry Young Men

Generated: Jan 26, 2026

What is "Angry Young Men"?

"Angry Young Men" refers to a group of British playwrights and novelists who emerged in the 1950s and 1960s. They were known for their works that critiqued post-World War II Britain's social and political establishment. [John Osborne](#)'s groundbreaking play "[Look Back in Anger](#)" (1956) spawned the phrase "Angry Young Men". Like Jimmy in the play, these educated working-class young men were frustrated by the lack of future they see in economically depressed England.

"Look Back in Anger" is a significant play that departed from the conventional theatre of its time. The protagonist, Jimmy Porter, embodied the frustration, discontent, and disillusionment of the working-class youth of the era. His anger and outspoken criticism of the status quo symbolized the broader societal discontent that characterized the period.

The "Angry Young Men" movement reacted against British society's perceived complacency, particularly the upper and middle classes. These writers and their works often explored class divisions, inequality, and post-war malaise. In addition to John Osborne, notable figures associated with this movement include Kingsley Amis, John Braine, and Arnold Wesker.

The "Angry Young Men" impacted British literature and drama, paving the way for more honest and socially relevant storytelling. Their works challenged traditional norms and gave a voice to the frustrations and grievances of the youths. The term significantly contributed to the evolution of British theatre and literature in the 20th century.