Participants (N = 57, 34 males) who volunteered to participate in the study either completed an affirmation task, in which participants recalled past acts of kindness and provided examples, or a control task, in which participants gave a yes or no opinionated answer to the provided statements that contained no relevance to the concept of kindness. All participants then completed a measure of academic contingencies of self-worth, indicating how much of their self-esteem they derived from academic achievement.

The purpose of the present study was to examine one source of self-esteem males rely more heavily upon than females. Males who completed an affirmation task should base less self-esteem on academics than non-affirmed males, but females should exhibit no difference between groups.

Affirmations help to protect an individual’s self-esteem by shifting the basis of their self-worth to more intrinsic characteristics which cannot be threatened by outside sources. One study about the effect of threats against body image on self-esteem showed that females who completed an affirmation task held higher self-esteem than non-affirmed females (Armitage 2012). This difference was not present in males, however, because they already based their self-esteem on attributes other than body image. Males derive more self-worth from individual achievement, such as sports or academics, than females do (Tafarodi, Josephs, & Markus, 1992).

The Effect of Self-Affirmation and Gender on Self-Esteem
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PSY 211, Research Methods in Psychology

Introduction
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Method
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Results
To assess the effect gender and affirmations on self-esteem, a factorial ANOVA was conducted on academic contingency of self-worth scores (see Figure 1 for group means). No significant main effect for gender was found, $F(1, 53) = 0.60, p = 0.441$. There was also no significant main effect for affirmation, $F(1, 53) = 0.01, p = .937$. The interaction between these two factors was non significant, $F(1, 53) = 0.40, p = .528$.

Conclusion
To support our hypothesis, affirmed males would have had to score a lower academic contingencies of self-worth than non-affirmed males. However, females expressed no significant difference between affirmed and control conditions, which this study predicted. These results do not fully support our hypothesis, but instead show that both genders equally derive their self-esteem from academics.

References