

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

CHICAGO, IL
WEDNESDAY 664,584
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IN BRIEF

Compiled by Cassandra West

Psychology

**Minus men, women
test better in math**

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Women may perform better on math tests if men aren't around. In a small study of undergraduate students at Brown University, women had better scores when they outnumbered the men in the room. Their scores increased even more when only women were being tested. Men, on the other hand, had consistent scores whether they were in the minority or the majority. The gender difference was found only in math testing and not on verbal exams conducted at the same time.

"Women may suffer from 'stereotype threat,'" said Michael Inzlicht, graduate student of psychology and lead author of the study. "The presence of men may remind them of the stereotype that men are better at math. That anxiety can then affect their scores."

While more research into this theory needs to be done, women may benefit from all-female math classes, he added.

Sharon Honaker