

Does studying science make you a better person?

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Pacific Standard:

That's the implication of newly published research, which finds people who study science — or who are even momentarily exposed to the idea of scientific research — are more likely to condemn unethical behavior and more inclined to help others.

“Thinking about science leads individuals to endorse more stringent moral norms,” report psychologists Christine Ma-Kellams of Harvard University and Jim Blascovich of the University of California, Santa Barbara. Their research is published in the online journal PLOS One.

The researchers describe four experiments, all conducted at UCSB, that back up their surprising conclusion.

The first featured 48 undergraduates who read a vignette describing a date rape. (In the story, John engages in “nonconsensual sex” with Sally.) They were then asked to judge John's behavior on a scale from 1 (completely justified) to 100 (totally wrong).

Read the whole story: [*Pacific Standard*](#)