

PostPartisan

College men really hate studying, love partying

By **Catherine Rampell** March 11, 2014

I mentioned in my [column](#) that women are keener on studying than men are. That might sound like an unfair stereotype: the diligent female student versus the beer-swilling bro. But it's actually borne out by data on both how many hours the sexes spending studying, and how difficult it would likely be to get male students to study more.

Here are the findings from the [2008-2009 College Senior Survey](#), a national survey administered through UCLA's Cooperative Institutional Research Program:

The numbers are of course self-reported, so take them with a grain of salt. That said, you'll see that 47 percent of women say they study at least 11 hours a week, compared to 37.9 percent of men.

And men seem to find the idea of additional study *extremely* distasteful.

[Check out this paper](#) — by Todd Stinebrickner at The University of Western Ontario and Ralph Stinebrickner of Berea College — which relies on longitudinal survey data of students at a single school, [Berea College](#). Like UCLA's national survey, it finds that men spend less time studying than women do (about a half hour less per day).

Fascinatingly, the survey includes a series of questions about how much students would need to get paid in order to agree to spend an *extra* hour studying. Students were asked:

Think about your schedule today. If someone was willing to pay you exactly \$1.00 to study one extra hour today and have one less hour of leisure today (and studying this hour would have no effect on your grades) would you be willing to do this?

YES NO

The next question in the survey offers \$3, then \$5, etc., up to \$20.

Even though men study less than women already, they would require, on average, 15 percent more money to convince them to put up with another hour of study (\$8.47 vs. \$7.40), the authors find.

They add:

A similar conclusion comes from Question J which elicits why students did not study more in the first semester; on average, males assign 20% more weight to the categories “studying is unenjoyable” and “leisure activities are particularly enjoyable” (54.96% vs. 45.45%)...

In other words, when it comes to homework, men have big opportunity costs — alternate uses of their time that they believe to be higher-value.

So what might those “leisure activities” that are “particularly enjoyable” be? Let’s go back to the U.C.L.A. survey about how college seniors say they spend their time. There’s at least one activity that men seem more devoted to than women are. Here’s the breakdown of responses to a question about how much time students admitted to spending during the typical week on “partying”:

Among male respondents, 34.6 percent say they typically party six or more hours a week, compared to only 23.8 percent of women. Again, this is self-reported, and perhaps men and women have different definitions for what activities count as “partying.” But it does give you a sense of how college men think about prioritizing their time.

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