

Understanding Academic Stressors

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Whether it's before a big presentation, during an exam, or after grades have been posted, at some point or another, everyone experiences stress in school. Sian Beilock's research analyzes how stress in academic settings affects performance. She is interested in various academic stressors such as the chronic stress that a female math major might experience from the negative stereotype that "men are superior to women in math," the pressure that most people experience while taking a high-stakes college admissions test, and the anxieties some hold about their performance in a particular academic area (e.g., math anxiety). Her innovative and unique research enables her to get a deeper understanding of why poor performance occurs in stressful academic situations and to generate interventions to alleviate performance impediments. She is author of the book, *Choke: What the Secrets of the Brain Reveal about Getting in Right When You Have To* (<http://sianbeilock.com>). In 2011, Beilock received a [Janet Taylor Spence Award for Transformative Early Career Contributions](#) from the Association for Psychological Science (APS).

[Q&A with Sian Beilock](#)