

**EVENTS**  
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# ETC.

**SITE OF THE DAY**  
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# Well, my hands are shaking, and my knees are weak

staff writer **CRYSTAL DAVIS**

With finals right around the corner, test anxiety is plaguing college students at universities across the country.

For those who are unfamiliar with the term "test anxiety," it's that slimy feeling in your stomach, relentless pounding in your head and the desire to head for the hills every time a test rolls around.

But for those who prefer a more technical description, Roger Bowersock, psychologist and director of the USC Counseling Center, defines it as "the panic and overreaction that a student feels due to the lack of preparation for a test."

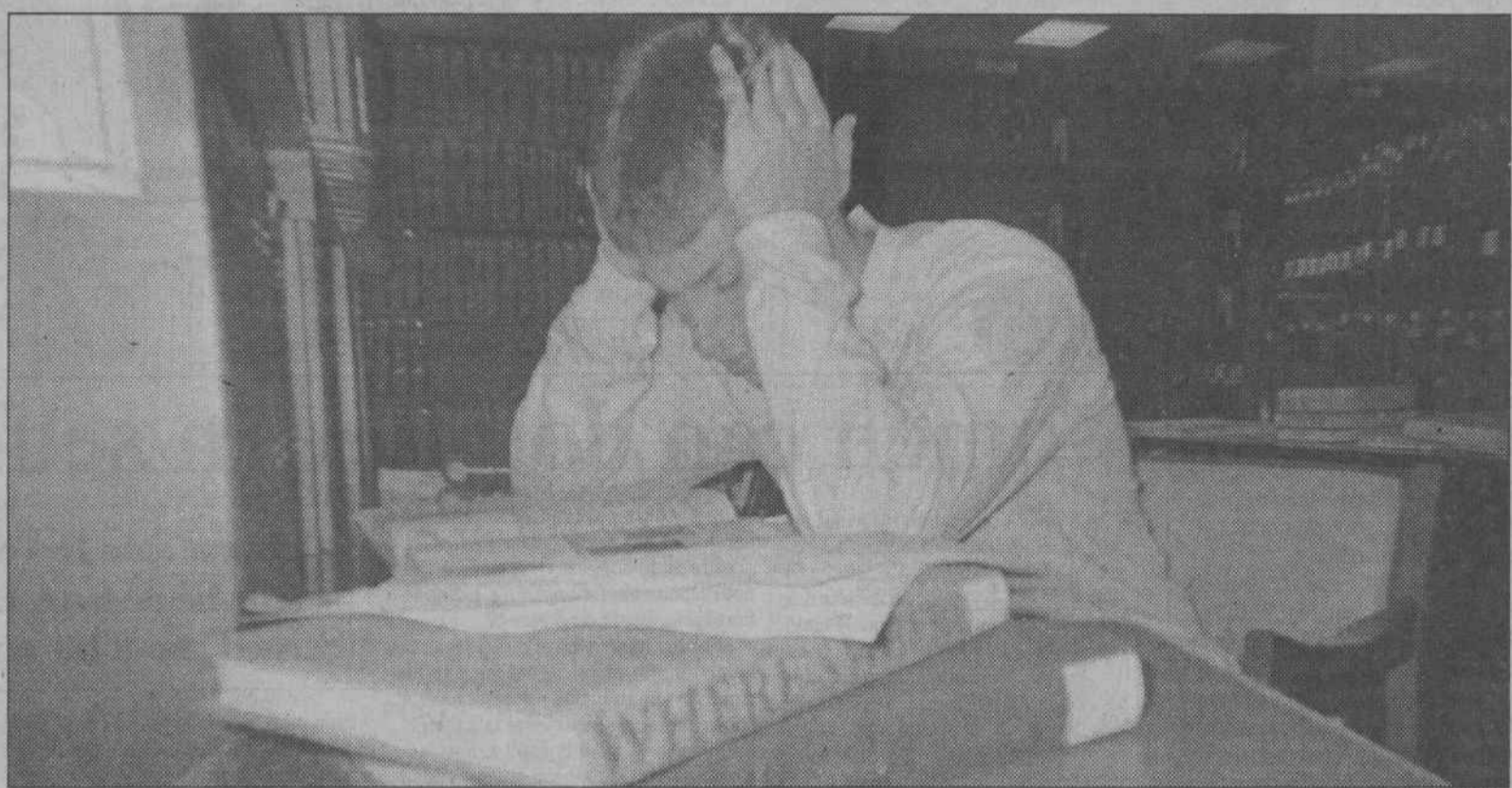
All students, whether geniuses or underachievers, are likely to feel this distress at least once in their college careers. However, there are differences in how each person deals with it.

Some students go to orientation sessions or workshops to get helpful hints on managing their workloads. But how many of us can honestly say we even come close to studying the recommended hour-and-a-half per subject per day?

It's natural to be doubtful and edgy before any test. As Bowersock said, the severity of insecurity depends on how well we prepare.

To help lessen test anxiety, Bowersock recommends the following:

- When it comes to studying, procrastinating only contributes to the anxiety.
- Study at least three days in advance for an exam. It's more effective than cramming five chapters of information into your head in one night.
- Read the chapters that are assigned to you.




Freshman Mike Williams struggles to stay awake Thursday as he studies for a test at the Thomas Cooper Library.

- When you read, remember three little words: highlight, highlight, highlight. But only take your marker to the important facts, don't tie dye the textbook.
- Make sure to constantly review all the important information, and prepare yourself to answer essay questions — not all exams are multiple choice.
- Give yourself a pep talk as soon as you wake up the day of the exam. Boost your self-confidence to a level that even the hardest questions can't shatter.
- Avoid talking with other students who appear to worry too much before tests — they'll only increase your anxiety.
- Never study the day of the test or review at the last minute.
- When you get the exam, briefly scan through it.
- Don't feel obligated to start with the first question; start where you feel comfortable, and work from there.
- Unfortunately, some students said no matter how well they prepare, their fears still get the best of them.
- Sophomore Joy Nesmith said she's constantly plagued with fear around finals time.
- "I can study for days, and I still don't feel prepared," she said. "I end up doing good on my exams, but taking them with distress is not very assuring after I'm finished."
- Bowersock said students need to look within themselves for that self-assurance that will get them through their struggles with exams.
- "Students need to look at their attitudes," he said. "They have to realize that a test is just a test; there will be others."


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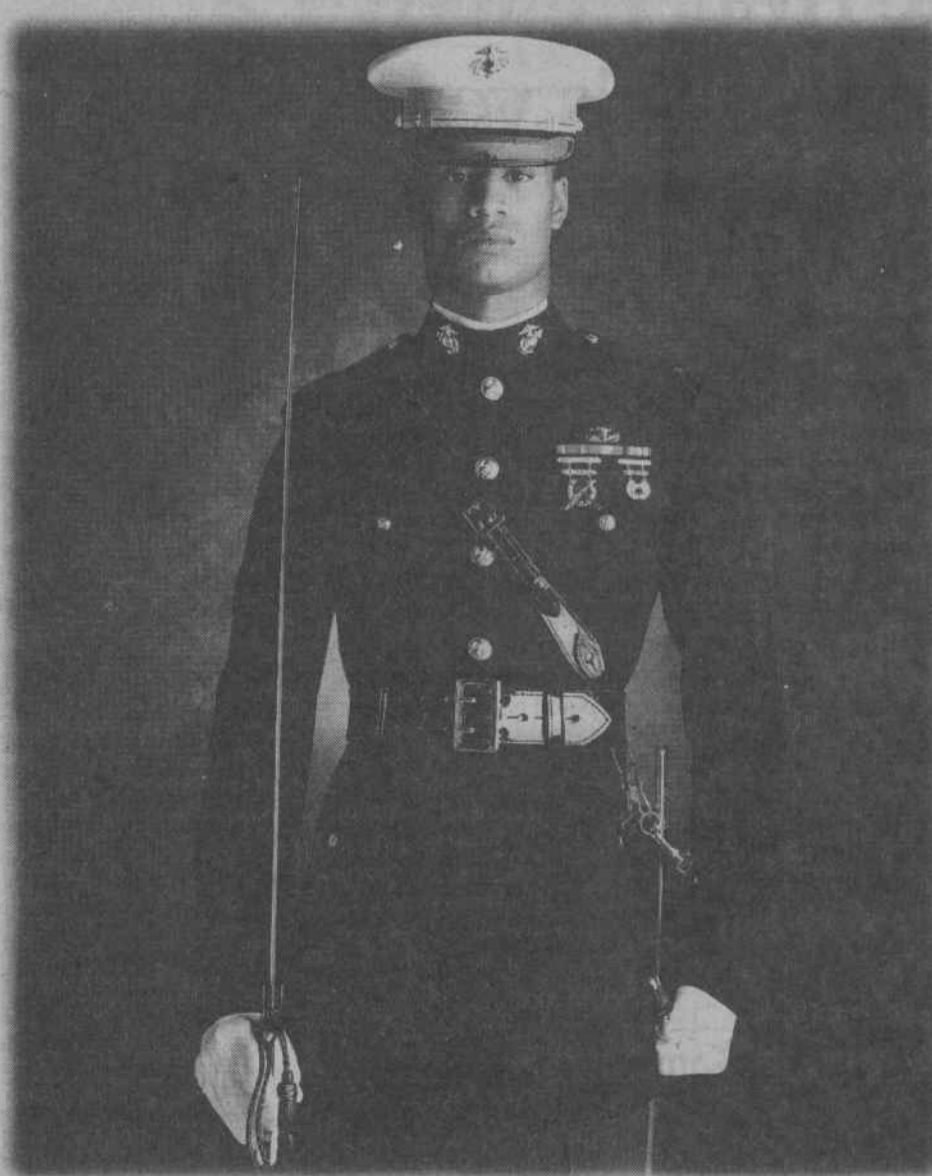


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