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**THE RELATIONSHIP OF CONDITIONING EXPERIENCES
TO STRENGTH OF FEAR, ANXIETY RESPONSES
AND FEAR-ONSET MEMORIES:
AN EXAMINATION OF RACHMAN'S THREE-PATHWAYS THEORY**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Arts in Psychology
at Massey University.

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1994

For Dad

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was twofold: First, to test Rachman's (1977) theory which predicts that "direct" conditioned fears will differ from "indirect" conditioned fears in magnitude and anxiety response patterns. Secondly, to explore validity issues related to the questionnaire methodology typically used in fear acquisition research. The questionnaire comprised three anxiety scales and three fear-onset questions used in prior research, a specifically developed 36-item fear list and two validity-check items. One hundred and ninety-one subjects completed the questionnaire. After selecting and rank-ordering ten fears from the fear list, subjects answered questionnaire items for their first- and then their tenth-ranked fear. Results failed to confirm Rachman's predictions: A significantly greater proportion of subjects ascribed highly-feared and moderately-feared situations or things to direct conditioning. In addition, differential anxiety response patterns were not present for different levels of fear. However, results supported the prediction that direct-conditioning ascriptions would be endorsed with greater certainty. The findings suggest that direct-conditioning experiences may be more memorable than indirect-conditioning events. The theoretical and methodological implications of the findings are discussed. It is suggested that future research either employ methodologies more suited to investigating causal relationships or that Rachman's (1977) theory be blended with an attributional account of fear acquisition.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank my supervisor, **Dr Frank Deane**, for helping me develop this thesis. His approachableness, enthusiasm, guidance and clarity of thought have enabled me to turn a somewhat daunting assortment of ideas into a viable project.

My thanks to my parents, **Alfred ("Ben")** and **Betty**, whose love and faith in me over this time have been crucial to my 'getting there'. To my brothers, **Kevan** and **Erin**, and my sisters, **Colleen** and **Janeen**: Your support has been - and is - invaluable. May the circle remain unbroken.

And, special thanks to my partner, **Ivan**, whose quiet encouragement and steadfastness have helped me more than I can say.

*"Meet me on the highway,
Meet me on the road.
As long as you've got to travel,
Don't you want someone
To help you carry your load?"*

(Carole King, 1971)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vii
INTRODUCTION	
AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE CONCEPTS OF FEAR AND ANXIETY	1
The State-Trait Distinction	3
The Three Components Conception of Fear	4
Phobias	4
BEHAVIOURAL THEORIES ON THE ETIOLOGY OF FEAR	5
Mowrer's Two-Stage Theory of Fear	5
The Evidence for Direct Conditioning	6
Non-Associative Theories of Fear Conditioning	7
Rachman's Three Pathways Theory of Fear Acquisition	7
Fear Conditioning and Strength of Fear	8
Fear Conditioning and Its Symptomatology	8
The Basis for the Two Indirect Pathways	9
Clinical Support for Observational Acquisition	9
Experimental Support for Observational Acquisition	9
The Plausibility of Instructional Acquisition	10
Limitations of Behavioural Theories of Fear	11
REVIEW OF THE FEAR ACQUISITION RESEARCH	12
Clinical Research	12
Nonclinical Research	14
THEORETICAL, DEFINITIONAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES	15
The Assumptions Underlying Rachman's Theory	15
Definitional Inconsistencies in Prior Research	18
The Assumptions Underlying the Questionnaire Methodology	19
Concerns about the Questionnaire Methodology	22
THE PRESENT STUDY	25
The Impetus for the Present Research	25
Rachman's Predictions Tested on a Nonclinical Sample	25
An Exploration of the Validity of the Questionnaire Methodology	26
Summary of the Research Goals	26
The Hypotheses	28
METHOD	
SAMPLE AND PROCEDURE	29

	Page
INSTRUMENT	31
List of Common Fears	31
Criteria for Inclusion of Fear Items in the Fear List	32
The Reactions To Common Fears Questionnaire	34
Fear Scales Used in the Reactions Questionnaire	35
Rationale for the Pathway of Onset Items	37
 RESULTS	
OVERVIEW OF THE ANALYSIS	40
HYPOTHESES 1 TO 5 ON ALL RESPONDENTS	43
Ascribed Pathway and Strength of Fear	43
Ascribed Pathway and Certainty of Ascription	45
Ascribed Pathway and Anxiety Responses	45
Memory Status, Ascribed Pathway and Strength of Fear	46
Memory Status, Ascribed Pathway and Certainty of Ascription	49
HYPOTHESES 1 TO 3 ON MEMORIES RESPONDENTS	50
Ascribed Pathway and Strength of Fear	50
Ascribed Pathway and Certainty of Ascription	51
Post Hoc Analysis: No-memories Respondents' Pathway-Certainty	51
Ascribed Pathway and Anxiety Responses	52
 DISCUSSION	
THE HYPOTHESES	54
Ascribed Pathway and Strength of Fear	54
Memory Status Comparisons of Pathway Ascriptions	56
Ascribed Pathway and Anxiety Responses	57
Certainty of Ascribed Pathway	62
Memory Status and Pathway-Related Certainty	63
CONCLUSIONS	64
Limitations of the Present Study	64
Summary of the Findings	66
Future Directions	68
Attributional Research	68
Disaster Research	68
Research on the Memorability of the Different Pathways	69
 REFERENCES	70
 APPENDIX A: THE RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE	81
 APPENDIX B: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FEAR LIST	90
 APPENDIX C: THE MOST FREQUENTLY SELECTED FEARS IN THE PRESENT STUDY	99

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Overview of the fear acquisition research: Percentages of subjects assigned to the various categories	13
2	Sample characteristics, comparing internal and extramural students	30
3	The "Fear List" from which subjects selected their fears	32
4	Item-level fear-survey studies used in the development of the Fear List	34
5	Correlations among the Bodily Reactions (BR), the Negative Thoughts (NT) and the STAI scales	41
6	Item means, SDs and t-values for the Bodily Reactions (BR), the Negative Thoughts (NT) and the State-Trait Inventory scales	42
7	The ten most frequently chosen fear items in the present study	43
8	Percent of respondents in the two ascribed pathways	44
9	Mean certainty ratings, SDs and t-values, according to ascribed pathways	45
10	Mean item ratings, SDs and t-values for Bodily Reactions (BR) and Negative Thoughts (NT), according to ascribed pathway	46
11	Percent of respondents in the two ascribed pathways reporting memories of fear-onset events	48
12	Mean certainty ratings, SDs and t-values, according to memory status	49
13	Percent of Memories respondents in the two ascribed pathways	50
14	Memories respondents' mean certainty ratings, SDs and t-values, according to ascribed pathway	51
15	No-memories respondents' mean certainty ratings, SDs and t-values, according to ascribed pathway	52
16	Memories respondents' mean Bodily Reactions (BR) and Negative Thoughts (NT) ratings, SDs and t-values, according to ascribed pathway	53
17	Comparison of three clinical studies and the present nonclinical study: Mean item ratings and SDs for the Bodily Reactions (BR) and the Negative Thoughts (NT) scales	60