Startling stories: anxiety disorder and the motivational physiology of fear *Lang PJ*, McTeague LM, Laplante MC, Strauss CC, Bradley MM NIMH Center for the Study of Emotion and Attention, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, USA

An animal model of fear is described, defining its reflex physiology and mediating neural circuitry. Some research applications of the model in clinical experiments are then presented, evaluating distinctions and communalities among the anxiety disorders: Results consistent with the model (e.g, pronounced fear-potentiated startle) are shown for specific phobia, for "avoidant" socially anxious patients, and for a subset of PTSD patients. However, these expected, reflex patterns are not found for many of the most severely distressed anxiety patients-- for whom vigorous defense system reactivity might well be anticipated. Factors that may compromise the defense system are considered (multiple anxiety disorders, co-morbid depression), emphasizing their implications for the direction of future research.

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