

Possible Cognitive Risk Elements in Panic Disorder

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Author Notes

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Background

- ◆ Evidence suggests that Panic Disorder may be maintained by a fear of the sensations of physiological arousal
- ◆ Persons with Panic Disorder report
 - more fear of body sensations than normals and other anxiety disorder populations
 - experiencing little control over panic experiences and negative life events

- ◆ Persons with PD have a more externally oriented locus of control compared to normals and individuals with other anxiety disorders (DO YOU USE THIS IN YOUR STUDY?)

Rationale

- ◆ Variables like fear of bodily sensations could be factors that either
 - predispose people to panic disorder, or
 - develop as the result of panic disorder
- ◆ Comparing a population known to be at risk for panic disorder with a control population can provide evidence relevant to the above question

Research Questions

- ◆ Do first-degree relatives of Panic Patients have elevated scores on measures of
 - a fear of bodily sensations
 - a belief they have little control over somatic events
- ◆ Is there a relationship between elevated scores on these measures and panic experiences?

Method

- ◆ 1600+ undergraduates screened for family history of Panic Disorder
 - First-degree relatives of panic patients considered an at-risk population
 - Compared to a control sample with no family history
- ◆ Data Gathered Included:
 - Personal panic history, sex, age, educational level, Body Sensations Questionnaire, Health Hardiness Index, and Symptom Checklist 90-R

Screening Data

- ◆ 1600+ undergraduates screened
 - 3% (55) reported a first-degree with Panic Disorder
 - 11% (177) reported a first-degree relative who had experienced a panic attack
 - .4% (7) reported a Panic Disorder
 - 9% (154) reported experiencing a panic attack

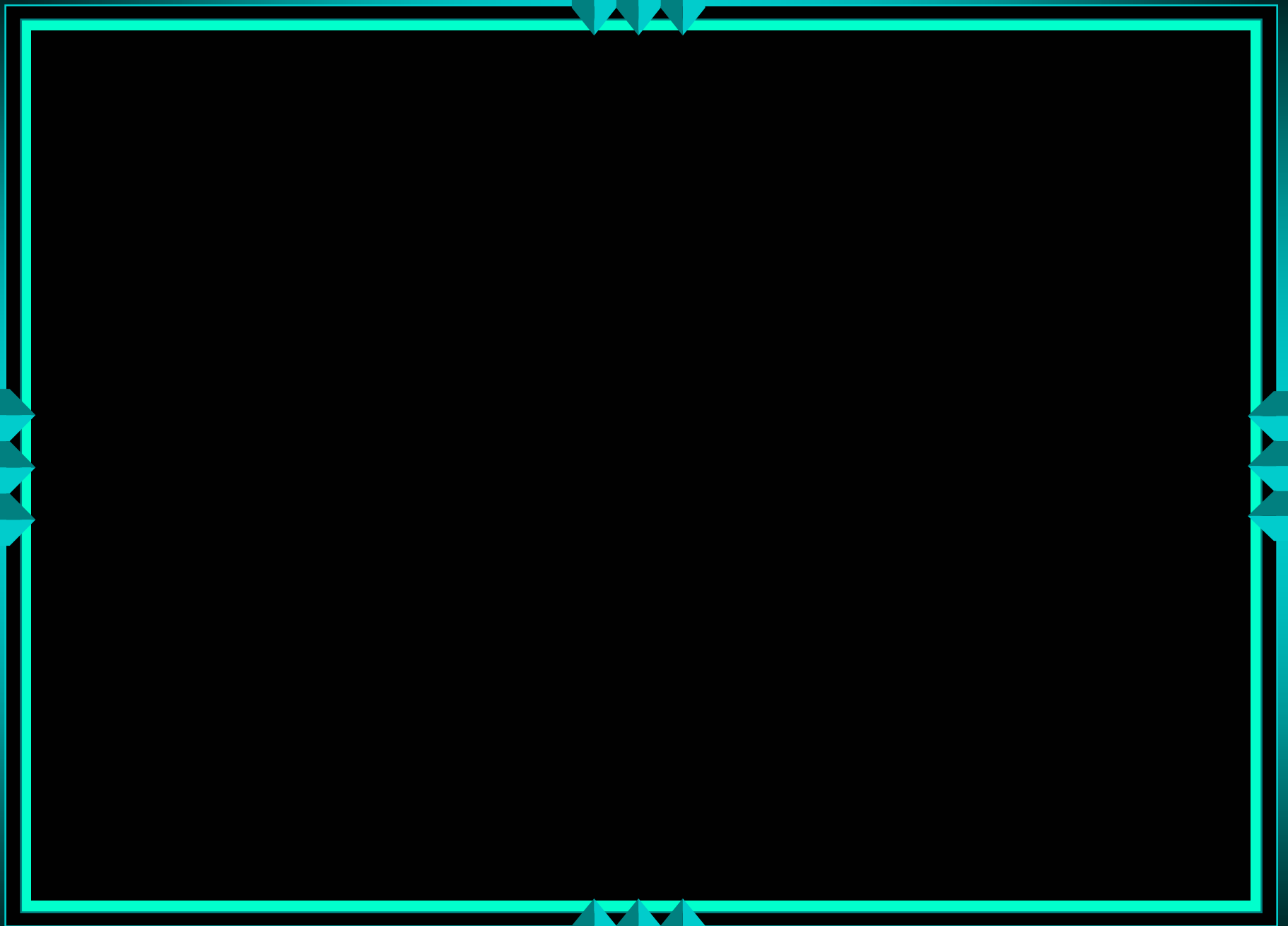
Participant Characteristics

◆ At-Risk Group

- N = 31
- Sex: 23 females;
8 males
- Mean Age: 18.6
- Mean Education: 13.1
- Reports experiencing
at least on panic attack:
N = 8

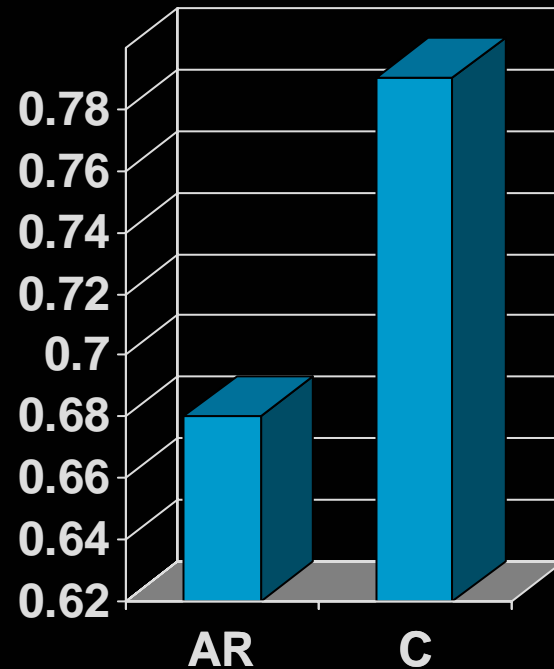
◆ Comparison Group

- N = 40
- Sex: 30 females;
10 males
- Mean Age: 19.25
- Mean Education: 13.2
- Reports experiencing
at least on panic attack:
N = 2

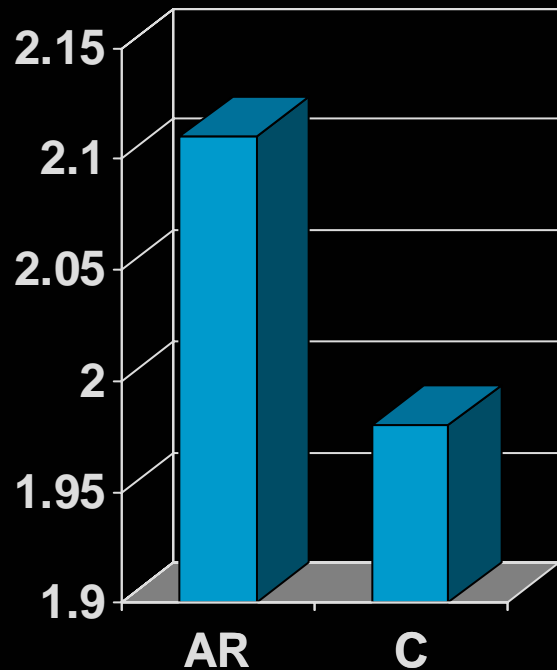


HHI- Control

- ◆ Health Hardiness Index Control Scale
- ◆ Measures ADD
- ◆ DESCRIPTION
- ◆ $P < .001$
- ◆ KEY: AR=At Risk; C= Control



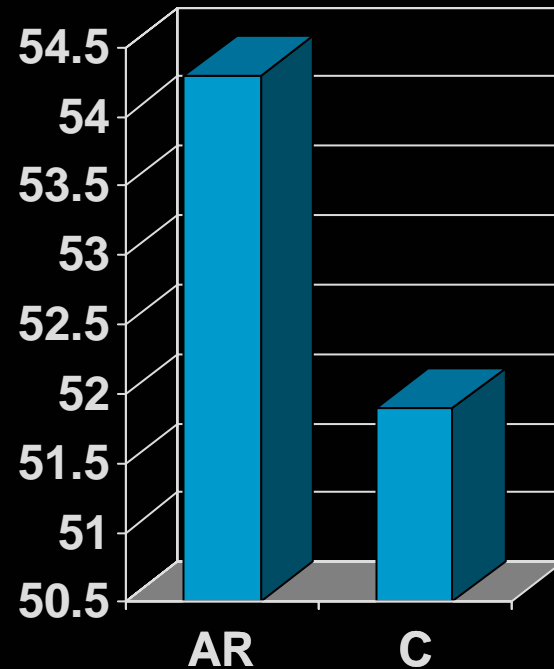
Body Sensations Questionnaire



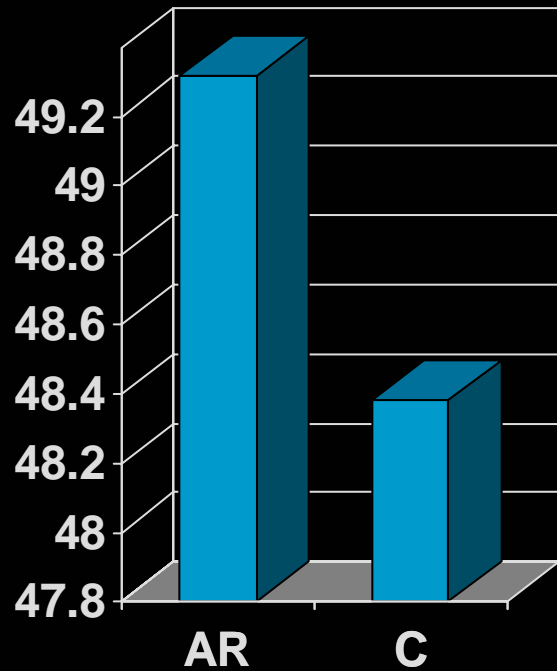
- ◆ Body Sensations Questionnaire
- ◆ Measures ADD THIS
- ◆ $P = .09$
- ◆ KEY: AR=At Risk; C= Control

Depression

- ◆ From the SCL-90-R
- ◆ Measures ADD THIS
- ◆ $p = .28$
- ◆ KEY: AR=At Risk;
C= Control



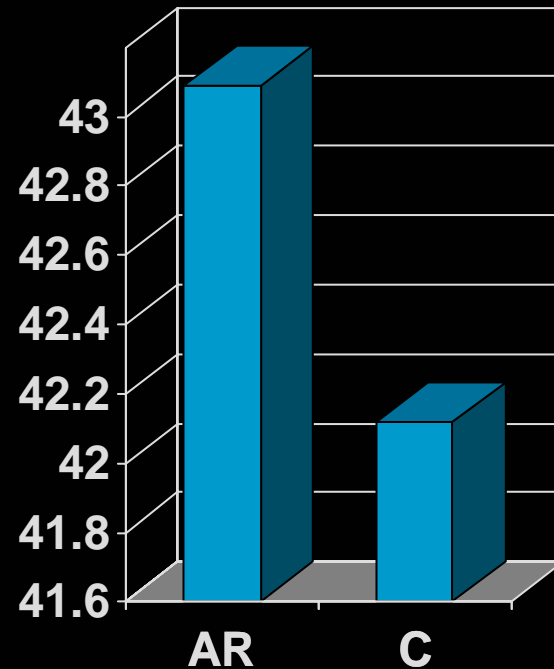
Anxiety



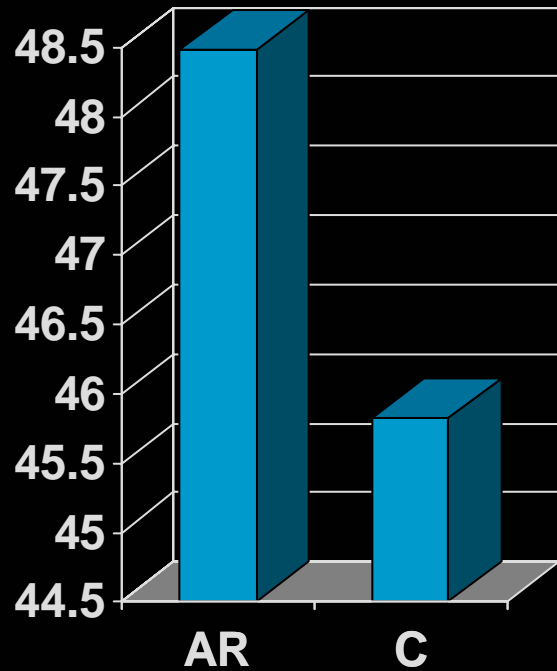
- ◆ From the SCL-90-R
- ◆ Measures ADD THIS
- ◆ $p = .68$
- ◆ KEY: AR=At Risk;
C= Control

Phobic Anxiety

- ◆ From the SCL-90-R
- ◆ Measures ADD THIS
- ◆ $p = .58$
- ◆ KEY: AR=At Risk;
C= Control



Somatization



- ◆ From the SCL-90-R
- ◆ Measures ADD THIS
- ◆ $p = .34$
- ◆ KEY: AR=At Risk;
C= Control

HHI-Control

	Panic	No Panic
At Risk	.59 (.15) (N=8)	.72 (.19) (N=23)
Control	ADD (N=2)	.79 (.13) (N=38)

Body Sensations Questionnaire

	Panic	No Panic
At Risk	2.30 (.59) (N=8)	2.21 (.47) (N=23)
Control	ADD (N=2)	1.98 (.51) (N=38)

Summary of Findings

Conclusions

Directions for Further Research