

Solly Zuckerman and his influences on
the development of the Feldenkrais system

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Moshe Feldenkrais wrote an acknowledgment in *Body and Mature Behavior: A Study of Anxiety, Sex, Gravitation & Learning*. He wrote:

“The substance of this book was presented before the Association of Scientific Workers at Fairlie, Scotland series of lectures given in 1943—44.

I wish to thank Professor J. D. Bernal, F.R.S., Professor Solly Zuckerman, F.R.S., and his colleague, specialist in posture and growth, for reading the manuscript and for valuable suggestions.”

Solly Zuckerman was a pioneer in the study of primate behavior and made significant strides in understanding fear and anxiety, especially during the Second World War. His work on civilian nerve and fear helped shape public policy and scientific approaches to anxiety.

From a Feldenkrais perspective, he is a person worth remembering, and his contributions to the theoretical framework of the Feldenkrais Model of inquiry worth recognizing. We know that apes are our ancestors, and their biology predates cultural expressions. We attribute an influence on the definition of biological posture as used by MF to Jakob Bronowski. For survival, the ability to escape in 6 directions without preparation, self-preservation, maintenance and reproduction is needed according to this definition.

Where are the traces of Solly Zuckerman? How significant is his influence in defining the Body Pattern of Anxiety and how the Method handles fear and the need for acceptance and pleasantness in the learning situation?

I quote MF: "However, even if we accept for the moment the above classification, we observe a remarkable thing that only one of the instincts inhibits motion, namely fear or escape" (B&MB page 83).

Of course, research and knowledge in brain science about the human and her existence as a biological being have made significant advancements and evolved since the forties in the last century. However, I consider that this represents a development rather than a radical change or rethink in the understanding of physiological processes and neural activity. I maintain that MF's discoveries and theoretical framework remain valid, even though the explanatory models have been modified over the years.

Read the rest of the article in the PDF: <https://bit.ly/SZandMF>