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The screenshot shows the Gale Virtual Reference Library search results for 'Phobias'. The main article is 'Living with a Phobia' by Jenny Mackay, published in 2009. The interface includes search filters, a table of contents, and a list of illustrations. A preview of the article text is visible, discussing the biological basis of phobias and the fight-or-flight response.



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Phobic Peter Slip knows exactly when his fear began. “As a nine-year-old I can remember collecting earwigs in matchboxes, like kids do,” he says. “They didn’t worry me at all.” Then one day, as a teenager, he says he picked up a broken flagstone and came face to face with a squirming nest of earwigs. “I dropped



... phobias are a common fear. A phobia is a persistent, excessive fear of an object or situation that is completely out of proportion to the danger, and the memory of the panic is what ends up feeding the phobia. “Once you panic,” says Stevens, “your physical reaction is etched into memory so you’ll be ready for a similar threat in the future.” This memory of fear is a problem for people with phobias, she says, because it primes them to respond excessively to harmless situations.”

One thing most phobics agree on is that panicking is no picnic. The racing heartbeat, the tight chest, and the struggle to breathe are terrifying in themselves. Some phobics faint or throw up. Others think they are having a heart attack or are choking to death. When the panic attack is over, they start to fear that it will all happen again, so they go to great lengths to avoid whatever they believe sets off their panic attacks.

“I can’t even sit down in my living room until I’ve taken out an insecticide spray and covered the whole room,” says Slip.

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“I keep a spray in every room and hold a stock of extra cans just in case. It’s no fun having to plan your life to avoid a tiny insect.”

Phobias are considered a psychological problem, one that begins somewhere deep in the mind. Some scientists think that

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people with phobias are naturally more sensitive to fear because these people are naturally more sensitive to fear

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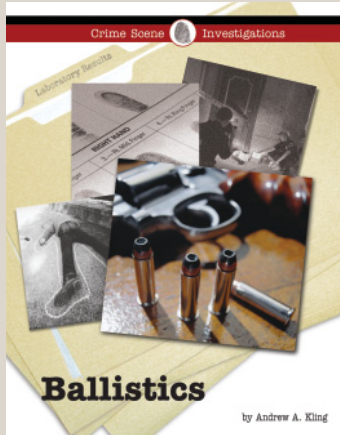
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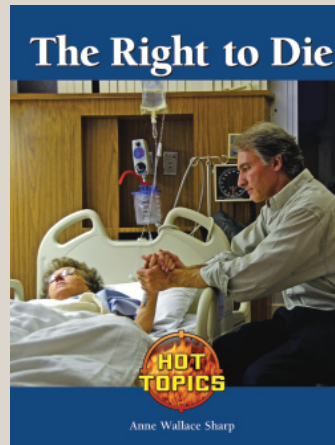
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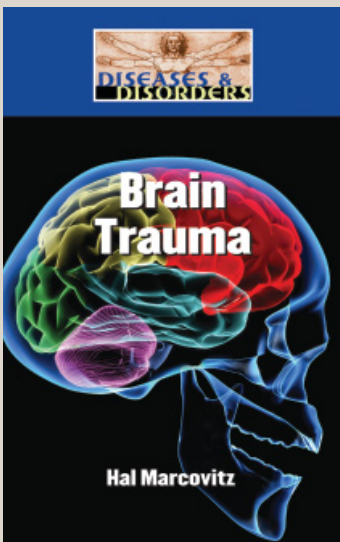
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