

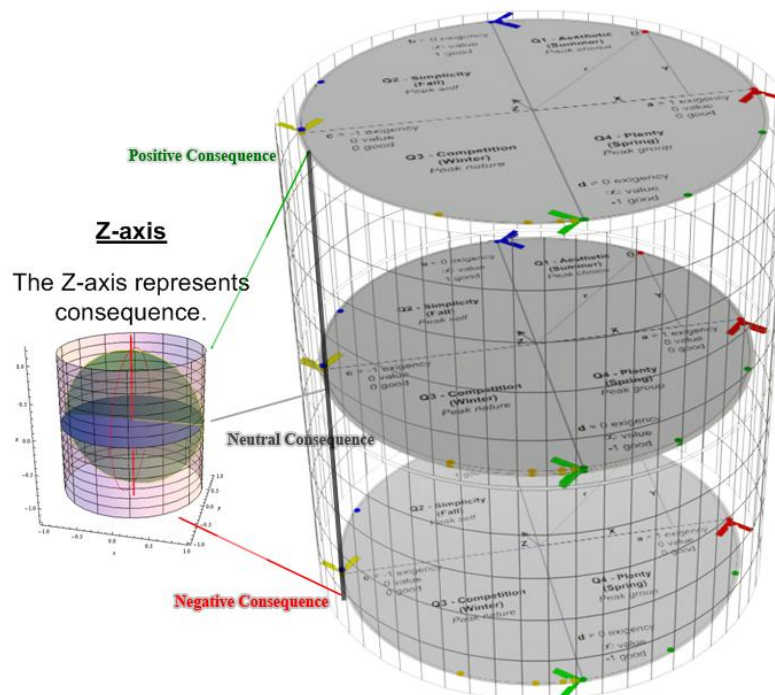
Fear, Consequence, and Scarcity

By D. Darcy (Dec. 14th 2010, revised: Sept. 11th 2011)

A year ago there was an interesting topic on a popular metaphysical forum, where the subject read, "What would you say is man's greatest fear?"¹ Since the *scarcity hypothesis* [S.H.]² would appear to encompass many if not all human imperatives, it seemed possible that it might encapsulate the psychological component that drives fear. This begged the question, however, "What *is* fear and why does it exist?"

Early on in exploring SH I realized there were both positive (as in a good outcome), neutral, and negative interpretations for each of the points on *fig. 1*³ and *3*⁴. For instance, "end natural exigency" in *fig. 2*³ can be somewhat depressing if we envision this to mean the universe comes to an end through a 'big rip' as suggested by current WMAP data and hinted at in *fig. 5*⁵.

On the flip-side the ideal or good outcome for "end natural exigency" is the notion that nature's rules no longer apply and therefore its ability to act as a source for exigency is extinguished. It was through this line of reasoning I realized the Z-axis in *fig. 1* represents "consequence" as visually depicted below – discussed elsewhere⁶ in more detail – behaving something like a ticker-tape,



¹ Conclusion (2009-10-21). "What would you say is man's greatest fear?" ATS. <http://tinyurl.com/ats-sh-fear>

² Darcy, D. (2010). "The Scarcity Hypothesis." <http://www.scribd.com/doc/33829028/The-Scarcity-Hypothesis-v2-1-2>

³ Primary Graph, v1.8.9 [Fig. 1]. <http://img710.imageshack.us/img710/5674/fourseasonsofscarcityan.png>

⁴ Addendum, v2.0.8 [Fig 2 & 3]. <http://img210.imageshack.us/img210/5674/fourseasonsofscarcityan.png>

⁵ Density Plot, v2.0.8 [Fig.5]. <http://img246.imageshack.us/img246/6535/fourseasonsofscarcityanq.png>

⁶ Personal notes (2010-2-27). "Understanding End Self & the Q3/Q4 crossover." <http://tinyurl.com/Q3-Q4-crossover2>

Reflecting on this, while reading through the replies in the thread “*What would you say is man’s greatest fear?*” and simultaneously skimming through Dr. Josiah Morse's book “*The Psychology and Neurology of Fear*,”⁷ it became apparent that those who argued man's greatest fear is “the unknown” or “change” were in a roundabout way saying “consequence.”

To illustrate this, consider, would people fear the unknown if all consequence were positive? Obviously not, since the result would be beneficial. So when people say they fear the unknown what they're really saying is that they fear new things because it might bring with it negative consequence.

This is tautological in nature.

What do people fear – bad things. What causes bad things? Things I can't prepare against. So fear of the unknown is a composite. It's a fear of some unknown negative consequence (which is implied by fear) and it's primarily a fear of the inability to employ choice or self-given direction to avert that negative consequence.

Thus “aversion to negative consequence” seems to provide some small glimmer of an ontology of what “fear” is in the abstract. Through this lens man’s greatest apprehensions when laid out end-to-end (*predators; dangerous and viscerally horrifying creatures; loss of hope; lack of control/powerlessness; wrath of men; violation/rape; 1984-esque governmental control; losing one's mind or senses; loss of wealth/position/stature; the revelation of unpleasant truths; failure/inadequacy; being wrong on something socially or personally important; loss of loved ones; being forgotten; death; drowning; natural devastation through earthquakes/tornados/etc; the existence of hell after death; nuclear holocaust; internment camps; our own power;*⁸ *separation/abandonment/disconnection from all things; finding ourselves utterly alone in the universe – no life elsewhere; that this is all there is; never being loved; and many others*) seem to fit in to four broad areas of categorization. These archetypal fears appear to center on absolutes as represented by:

1. choice (without consequence or the lack of it)
2. group (the collapse of all cooperation leading to global destruction, or a group-mind with no individuality)
3. self (suffering a prolonged torturous experience, or more broadly discovering *cogito ergo sum* is the only real truth)
and,
4. nature (that reality should necessarily be cruel leading to the destruction of all things, or that a time will come when there's simply nothing left for man to see or do)

⁷ Morse, Josiah (1907). “*The Psychology and Neurology of Fear*” Clark University Press. ISBN N.A.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=y6ARAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover>

⁸ Allin, Bill (2007-1-9). “*Quote: Our Greatest Fear Is Our Own Power.*” Scribd. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/1116/Quote-Our-Greatest-Fear-Is-Our-Own-Power>

To check the strength of this insight, several examples hovering on the edge of plausibility had to be put to the test. The first to go under the microscope was “fear of never being loved.” The value presumably being that “love” is the one thing no person can buy, demand, or expect provided to them by virtue of simply being alive. So “love” is perhaps one of the most tenuous and valuable qualities a person can possess in the sense that nothing a person does can affect the outcome should the object of affection not reciprocate.

Mulling over how this might relate to these quadrilateral levels of categorization it became apparent this anxiety reflects an individual’s concern that no one will ever select them (i.e. a combination of *choice* and *self* not being picked by another from the *group*). So the expectation is that being chosen by someone else from the group evinces a positive consequence.

Next I considered the assertion, “man’s greatest fear is all that we can’t control.” This sounds reasonable at first, but consider, if we *could* control all things would anything have meaning? Imagine walking up to a person and declaring, “Love me!” and witnessing it happen. Now envision this was true of anything and everything you decreed. All words you say happen.

After a time there would be a sort of horror and loneliness in knowing all things are simply puppets that dance at your whim, knowing that nothing in reality can care or independently love you for who you are or what you create. Imagine the emptiness of such an existence. In this scenario unbounded *choice* seems to become a horror, or fear, unto itself.

Now if we were to visualize giving others independent control and the capacity to choose of their own volition. If you are still all powerful and could affect any outcome, with no consequence, would any of your actions have meaning to that individual other than fear of you? This hints to experience something as “good” all things must be separated into a minimum of two constituent pieces. Where all choices must have a consequence (good, bad or something in between), otherwise there is no way to appreciate the outcome or for anything to implicitly have meaning.

So if it is conceivable that man can eventually overcome all things. Then it would appear man’s fears change over time with his environment. Implying if there can be an era of “universal plenty” (*Q4*) then the fears of this period would differ from those experienced in “competition” (*Q3*)³. Thus these four categories of “fear,” as related to cultural evolution and environmental transformation, more broadly represent,

1. choice (having no capability to affect the world around us, or choice without consequence)
2. concepts of self and group,
 - a. a borg-like society developing
 - b. the possibility that nothing exists outside of yourself – you’re it – alone for all of time and space

- c. the notion of "every man for himself" where group cooperation completely breaks down and we all kill each other
 - d. or a world where we realize we have no true identity we're just the sum of the parts of information that our brains have absorbed (metaphysical nihilism)
3. and nature (that the universe will destroy all things through entropy, or that if nature can be overcome man will eventually have nothing left to see or to do).

What this almost seems to suggest is that creation's greatest fear is that all existence should be anything less than moving for all things. Perhaps this is why we have a third law of thermodynamics – you can never reach absolute zero. Otherwise the game would stop.