
CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	000
<i>Table of cases</i>	000
<i>Table of legislation</i>	000
1: Psychiatric Harm, Emotional Suffering and Legal Redress	1
Categorising Personal Harm	1
Introduction	1
Mental and Emotional Harm	4
Some Problems of Classification	4
<i>Medical</i>	5
<i>Legal</i>	7
Underlying Hostility: Disparaging Intangible Harm and its Redress	10
Mind and Body	10
The Stigmatisation of Mental Illness	12
The ‘Blame and Claim’ Culture	18
Embracing Liability for Mental and Emotional Harm	20
Some Modern Statutory Developments	20
The Special Case of Psychiatric Illness Caused by Stress at Work	22
The Scope for Liability at Common Law	26
<i>Mental Distress resulting from Breach of Contract</i>	26
<i>Damages in Tort for Mental Distress</i>	28
Some Criminal Law Comparisons	31
Caveat and Conclusion	33
2: The Development of Redress for Emotional Harm and Nervous Shock	37
‘Harm’ at Common Law	37
Minimum Actionable Harm at Common Law	37
Early Legal Views on Intangible Harm	40
The Victorian Era and ‘Railway Spine’	41
Development of Liability for ‘Mental And Nervous Shock’: The ‘First Hundred Years’	43
Recoverable Harm: a ‘recognisable psychiatric illness’	52

An Overview of the Period	54
Conclusion	56
3: Contemporary Provision for ‘Accident-Based’ Psychiatric Illness	59
<i>McLoughlin v O’brian: Policy or Principle?</i>	59
The 1990s: From <i>Alcock</i> to <i>Page</i> To <i>White</i> —‘Thus Far and No Further’?	65
<i>Alcock v Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police</i>	66
<i>Alcock</i> on Appeal	67
Proximity of Relationship	68
The ‘Immediate’ Aftermath	69
The Mode of Communication	69
Sudden and Gradual Assaults on the Nervous System	70
<i>Page v Smith and White v Chief Constable Of South Yorkshire:</i>	
The ‘Patchwork Quilt’ Embedded	74
Primary/Secondary/Both/Neither?	75
The Mixed Messages of <i>Page v Smith</i>	77
Confused Legal Doctrine	77
The Unfulfilled Promise of ‘Law Marching with Medicine’	82
Hillsborough Revisited	83
A Misconceived Public Relations Exercise in the Name of Distributive Justice?	91
<i>White v Chief Constable of South Yorkshire</i> : Weary Resignation?	93
4: Liability for Psychiatric Harm ‘Beyond the Mainstream’	97
Introduction	97
Negligent Provision of Services	99
Communicating Bad News	103
Negligent Communication of Information	103
Fear for the Future	109
Medical Negligence: The Declining Significance of the ‘Sudden Shock’ of a ‘Horrifying Event’	113
Introduction	113
Lord Ackner’s Conception of Shock	115
The Event	115
Suddenness	116
Horror, Violently Agitating the Mind	117
Claims resulting from Medical Negligence	117
Negligence Causing Psychological Detriment	122
The Doctrinal Basis for Exceptions to the Special Rule Structure	125

'Assumption of Responsibility'	126
A Reversion to First Principles	128
An Australian Exemplar: <i>Tame v New South Wales; Annetts v Australian Stations Pty Ltd</i>	130
Legislative Developments	135
Conclusions	137
5: Policy Concerns	141
Some Common Policy Justifications for Special Controls	141
Diagnostic Uncertainty	143
Litigation and Rehabilitation	145
Liability Disproportionate to Culpability	148
The Potential for Proliferating Claims	149
<i>The Potency of the 'Floodgates Fear'</i>	149
<i>Disincentives To Claiming</i>	151
<i>The Claims-handling Process</i>	153
The Frequency of Claims	155
<i>Personal Injury Claims in General</i>	155
<i>The Incidence of Claims for Psychiatric Harm</i>	158
<i>The Impact of Employees' Claims for Stress-Induced Psychiatric Illness</i>	161
<i>Conclusion on the Floodgates Fear as regards Psychiatric Harm</i>	165
Broader Policy Considerations	166
<i>Chilling Effects: The 'Perils' of a Risk-Averse Society</i>	166
<i>Risk Aversion and Mental Harm</i>	169
6: A Proposal For Reform	171
A New Test for Remediable Suffering	171
The Substantive Basis of Liability	171
The Case for a Monetary Threshold	177
Is a Monetary Threshold a Step Too Far?	179
Conclusion	183
The Proposed Framework in Outline	185
Remaining Barriers to Reform	186
A Legally Undervalued Core Value	186
Lingering Doubts Specific to the English Law Context	188
Concluding Remarks	189
<i>Bibliography</i>	191
<i>Index</i>	201