

# USC memory scientist Richard Thompson dies at 84

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Richard F. Thompson, the University of Southern California neuroscientist whose experiments with rabbits led to breakthrough discoveries on how memories are physically stored in the brain, has died. He was 84.

His daughter, Virginia Thompson-DeWinter, told the Los Angeles Times that Thompson died Sept. 16 at his home in Nipomo, California. He had been suffering from [congestive heart failure](#) and had a recent fall.

In the 1980s Thompson expanded on work done by Ivan Pavlov a century earlier and cracked the mystery of how memories are "hard-wired" into the brain.

He taught at Harvard and Stanford before arriving in 1987 at USC, where he developed the neuroscience research program.

He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Judith Thompson, three daughters and seven grandchildren.

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