

Occult practices feed both depression and psychopathy

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As occult practices are on the rise, contemporary theologians become increasingly interested in psychology, with many Christian authors wrestling with the question of how demons can influence mental disorders.

It is only fair to say, people with psychological problems should receive psychological treatment: and indeed the majority of therapists will point blank refuse to link depression with virtually any form of witchcraft, magic or occult involvement. But an increasing number of theologians appear less inclined to accept occultism as an innocuous pastime.

So, the question is: Can we screen episodes of mental illness from, literally, the devil's work?

While many forms of depression result from a chemical imbalance, it is usually a combination of events and a variety of long-term or personal factors, rather than one immediate issue that breed anxiety and depression. And as any mental disorder goes, it will be medical practitioners and therapists who administer treatments upon tracing the root cause of the problem.

But whereas it may be difficult to tell whether certain patterns of depressive behaviour are innate or inherited, the article published last week in *Open Theology* suggests, a contact with the satanic and occult rituals may trigger off psychopathological reactions. Psychopaths are generally less likely to suffer from typical depressive disorders, but

drawing upon an extensive research, Dr. Zlatko Šram from Croatian Center for Applied Social Research argues, that people who practice black magic or have otherwise occult bondage in their history are particularly susceptible to comorbidity of depression and psychopathy.

The author conducted a survey on over one thousand participants and found strong evidence that people suffering from depression and psychopathy simultaneously are attracted to satanic practices as a means of obtaining magical power and control over their destiny—regardless of their sex or ethnic origin. The research categorized different esoteric practices that spanned from psychic séances, through black magic, to engaging with an occult society or reading books and magazines dealing with esoteric and occult issues. Psychopathy and depression were significantly predictive of "satanic syndrome" in individuals who had been subjected to the occult involvement, suffering bouts of depression and [mental disorders](#) nearly twice as often compared to the rest of society. Given the nature of the satanic syndrome, namely the fact that it is measured by specific occult practices, the author suggests to verify the scale of the problem in psychiatric hospitals and clinics.

This key correlation yields new perspective on the early-onset [depression](#) . "This is an important study in that it takes ontological claims seriously and supports the real possibility that demonic forms of bondage may be linked to psychopathology as [...] evil forces can interfere in human behavior." comments Prof. Ralph W. Hood from University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

More information: Zlatko Šram, Psychopathy and Depression as Predictors of the Satanic Syndrome, *Open Theology* (2017). [DOI: 10.1515/opth-2017-0007](#)

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