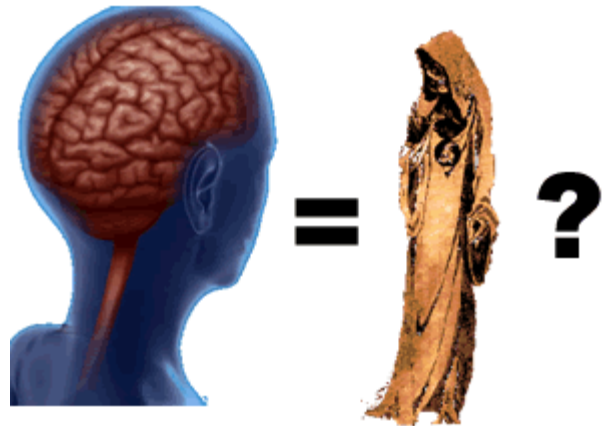


Why Depressed People See Ghosts

Depressed people are more likely to see ghosts according to a study of 85 female college students participated in recently. Each participant completed a psychokinesis (PK) task and completed the magical ideation scale. Consistent with research reported by Thalbourne and others (e.g., Thalbourne & Delin, 1994), participants who had a higher level of depression also showed higher illusory control scores.

In a second study of 105 participants completed a preconition task and a PK task as well as a judgement of contingency task used by Alloy and Abramson (1979) to test to the so-called "depressive realism" hypothesis. This study replicated the findings of the first study. Both studies show that there is a relation between magical thinking and psychopathology.

There is much research that suggests people who experience paranormal phenomena such as Ghosts and UFO experiences suffer from certain forms of psychopathology. It has been well documented that people who suffer from schizophrenia were high in magical ideation which Meehl (cited in Echblad and CHapman, 1983) defined as "belief, quasi-belief, or semi-serious entertainment of the possibility that events which, according to causal concepts of this culture, cannot have a causal relation to each other, might somehow nevertheless doso" (quote from Eckblad & CHapman, 1983, p. 215).



Magical Ideation Scale

In 1983 scientists Edkblad and Chapman developed a self-report scale to measure "magical ideation". Items assessed belief in the following:

- thought transmission
- psychokinesis
- precognition
- astrology
- other dimensions

A group of students attending a large university here in the US were given the test. The students who scored high on the Magical Ideation scale were studied furthre. IT was discovered that most of these students reported more psychotic and psychotic-like symptoms, schizotypal experiences and mood symptoms (depressed and manic) than those who scored low on magical ideation.

In Australia, a scientist named Thalbourne and his colleagues found a number of intriguing relations among the levels of magical ideation, paranormal belief and symptoms of pschopathology (e.g. Thalbourne, Bartemucci, Delin, Fox, & Nofi, 1997;Thalbourne and

French, 1995). For example, Thalbourne and Delin found that the level of magical ideation and paranormal belief were positively correlated with the extent of the manic experience, depressive experience, manic depressive experience, and hypo-mania.

In conclusion, it easy to suggest that there is a vast amount of research that points to the positive relation between the extent of people's belief in magical causes (including paranormal phenomena) and the level of certain symptoms associated with psychopathology. People who experience higher levels of psychopathology are more likely to believe in the reality of causal connections between events that are not, according to generally accepted concepts, casually connected.

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