

Prone to Paranormal Belief

In nearly 10 plus years of research I have developed a standard in agreement with modern medical science that explains personality traits and/or physical characteristics of individuals who are more likely to believe in a supernatural explanation versus a non-supernatural explanation.

- left handed
- suffered a major trauma - especially in childhood
- history of Mental illness in family (especially schizophrenia and Bipolar I Disorder)
- Creative personality type
- Artistic
- Imaginative
- Spiritual personality type
- Suffer from Schizophrenia yourself
- Suffer from Temporal Lobe Epilepsy
- Suffer from any other form of Epilepsy

What do these traits have to do with the paranormal?

Medical science has long been fascinated by the connection between people who suffer from schizophrenia and their belief in the paranormal. A study conducted by the Psychology Department of the University of Adelaide in South Australia reported those subjects whose scores indicated higher belief in the paranormal tended to score significantly higher on the Magical Ideation Scale, the Perceptual Aberration Scale, and the combined Perceptual Aberration-Magical Ideation (Per-Mag) Scale.

There is also research demonstrating a correlation between a reduction in hemispheric asymmetry (as seen in TLE and schizophrenia) and the prevalence of paranormal experience. This would also explain why patient histories encouraging right hemispheric use (ex. Left handedness, transcendental meditation, etc.) experience more paranormal occurrences than the average person.

In a survey of the correlates of belief in (and alleged experience of) the paranormal, Thalbourne and Delin (1994) examined, among other variables, the clinical status of their subjects. In addition to a comparison group of 241 university students, there were 86 persons with manic-depression and 38 with schizophrenia. The correlations between the Australian Sheep-Goat Scale (Thalbourne & Delin, 1993) and the Manic-Depressiveness Scale (Thalbourne, Delin, & Bassett, 1994) as well as the Magical Ideation Scale (Eckblad & Chapman, 1983, measuring proneness to psychosis) were positive and, for the most part, significant in all three groups. It was therefore expected, given that manic-depressives score higher on Manic-Depressiveness and schizophrenics score higher on Magical Ideation (Thalbourne & Delin, 1994, Table 1, p. 13), that the mean scores for the Sheep-Goat Scale

would be higher in the clinical groups. But, as was evident (Thalbourne & Delin, 1994, Table 2, p. 14), this proved not to be the case: students scored (nonsignificantly) the highest of the three groups on the sheep-goat variable. This was something of an anomaly.

Conclusion:

Due to recent studies conducted in Australia and with my own work with CPRI I conclude that the list of "symptoms" are an accurate predictor of paranormal belief. I have conducted numerous investigations within the mid-atlantic area of the United States and found Bipolar Disorder to be the chief component of many "haunted" individuals and families.