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MOON MOODS
By Vanda Voisine

For most, if not all, of human existence, the Moon has been regarded as a mysterious and powerful entity. It has been worshipped₄ feared₄ and consulted.

Moon worship was once the major belief throughout the European area~ Nearly all mythology has a Moon goddess and they range from chaste and good such as Diana of Creek mythology to hideous and vile such as Lelate, also of Creek mythology.

Belief in the Moon's powers has been existent since the beginning of man. Did these beliefs stem from ignorance and fear or the unknown? We are about to explore some alternative possibilities.

We are all aware of some superstition or 'Old Wives Tale' linked to lunar phases₃ usually a full moon", People tend to go crazy during a full moon', "More babies are born during the full moon", and don't omit the ever popular werewolf theory.

Belief in the power of the Moon to influence human behavior is not a superstitious practice of silly people. Lunar culture smacks of superstition and is therefore not pleasing to the rationalist mind~ I-lo*ever₄ burying our head in the sands of prejudice will not make the Moon and its influence disappear.

Numerous₄ controlled Studies have been performed in various parts of the world over the last two₄ centuries concerning lunar influence. Facts, have been gathered and statistical analysis completed, correlated₄ mapped, graphed and surmised~ A great deal of time and energy has been expended only to prove over and over again there is a pattern₄ Some facts can't be denied.

- doctors hate heavier case loads during a full moon
- telephone callers are more rude during a full moon
- More spontaneous marriages occur during a full moon
- New York city arson increases during a full moon
- More babies ARE born during a full moon
- bleeding is more profuse during a full moon
- Epileptic seizures are more prevalent during a full moon
- Psychic phenomena seems to be enhanced during full and new moon phases,
- Fatal traffic accidents are highest just before a full moon
- Violent crime rates soar during full and new moon phases
- Self destructive behavior and outward aggression increases during onset of full and new moon phases
- The number of in-the-home accidents increase during the full moon
- incidents of progressed mental illness attacks and erratic behavior are decidedly more frequent during a full moon (did you ever consider the origins of the word luna-tic?).

All this and more can't be ignored or attributed to mere coincidence. Even the skeptical worlds of science, medicine, and law have begun to acknowledge the lunar influence.

Published Moon-oriented schedules for planting and harvesting of crops are no longer just an amusing interest of a casual farmer but are now actual tools of agronomists. Hospitals in larger cities plan in advance for Increased Emergency Room workloads during full Moon phases. Law enforcement officials expect the unexpected during certain phases of the moon.

In doing research for this topic I happened upon a wonderful book, The Lunar Effect by Arnold Lieber, M.D. In his book, Dr. Lieber does a thorough job of explaining the effects of lunar influence on the human body. Sorry, there is nothing mystical about it. Moon moods exist and are based in physical reactions and evidence.

I won't attempt to explain all the physical reasons why we are affected by the Moon (some of them were beyond my comprehension) but I will give you the basics.

We learned early in General Science class about the Moon's correlation to high and low tides. Consider this, the human body much like the earth itself is comprised of approximately 75% water, is it impossible to believe the Moon's gravitational pull can affect the water in our bodies as it affects the water on the earth's surface? -

This is partially the basis for Dr. Lieber's theories. The other is attributed to the electromagnetic influence produced by the Moon. These two, separately or combined, are not normally of immense importance. High and low tides occur daily, are predictable, and in the overall scheme of things hardly noticeable. The same is true with the rhythmic influence of the Moon on the human body. However, occasional alignment of Sun, Moon, and Earth can cause great oceanic storms and tidal waves. A somewhat similar occurrence can happen within the body. When you sometimes feel "it just isn't my day" it may very well not be and there may be a logical, physical reason.

The electromagnetic portion gets very complicated but can be surmised in that it enhances a current state. The Moon's electromagnetic influence, like its gravitational pull, is at its peak when the Moon is closest to the earth during full moon phase. If you are calm at the onset of this phase you will become calmer and may actually feel the full moon has a calming effect. Conversely, if you are agitated, you will become more agitated.

One of the more interesting theories is that of rise in the rate of childbirth during a full moon. This can be attributed to the moon's gravitational pull on body water, namely embryonic fluid, and the fact that gestation in humans is exactly nine lunar months, or 265.8 days. That means more babies are conceived during full moon phases. Ever feel romantic during a full moon?

There are some startling facts coincided with full moon phases:

- Charles Hyde (the real life basis for Stevenson's Dr. Jekyll and

Mr. Hyde) created his crimes only during new and full moon phases

- --New York's Son of Sam killed on eight nights. Five of those were full moon nights.
- The Boston strangler's pattern matched a lunar pattern and there is even some speculation that Jack the Ripper was adversely affected by the moon.

This all may sound a bit scary, but the bottom line is reassuring. Normal healthy stable people will feel few affects, if any from lunar influence. Still it is a force to be reckoned with. After doing this research I would never, if given the choice, allow surgery on myself during a full moon.

Incidentally, do you know when the next moon phase is?