

# Reluctant Sleep Researcher Finds Evidence for Astrology

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CHICAGO, IL, US, August 5, 2013 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A reluctant college professor who feared his discovery might cause peers to regard him as a "lunatic" inadvertently stumbled onto an important research finding that flies in the face of conventional scientific explanations for the way people experience reality on planet earth.

Curiously, all of the test subjects in Professor Christian Cajochen's laboratory at the University of Basel in Switzerland were asleep when study data was collected - some more soundly than others. London Times science correspondent Tom Whipple provides this account:

Prof. Cajochen, a psychiatrist who studies circadian rhythms, was having cocktails with colleagues at a local pub. The full moon had risen and was flooding their table with light.

When the conversation turned to shop talk some of the professor's colleagues complained they slept less well when the moon was full. After years of studying sleep patterns, Prof. Cajochen realized he had enough data to check out these claims and made a decision to do so the next day.

It was the researcher's intention to prove his friends wrong by disproving their hypothesis: sleep patterns are influenced by the full moon. "To my surprise I couldn't," he reportedly said.

What the psychiatrist found was a result he knew conventional scientists would be inclined to heckle. Most scientists believe they have the physical universe pretty well figured out and moon beams don't figure in their calculations.

Also, almost certainly, Prof. Cajochen must have realized that his findings would provide aid and comfort for astrologers and support for the ancient cosmological worldview that embraces organic connectedness between the heavens and earth.

For his test, Prof. Cajochen used data collected 10 years earlier for another study. Only this time, 33 participants between the ages of 12 and 75 were grouped based on whether the moon was new or full when they entered the laboratory for extended testing.

Results of the test are described in the journal *Current Biology*. The researchers found that those who came into the sleep laboratory during a full moon took five minutes longer to fall

asleep and had 20 minutes less sleep on average. Even more significantly, test subjects spent 30 percent less time in restful deep sleep than those who entered the lab under a different lunar phase.

"It was a quite considerable effect," Prof. Cajochen told the London Times.

But it took him more than four years to publish the results because he worried what peers in the scientific community might think.

One expert who might sympathize with the researcher's reticence to tell his story is biologist and author Rupert Sheldrake. His newest book, *Science Set Free*, presents the idea that science is being held back by centuries-old assumptions that have hardened into dogma.

"The biggest scientific delusion of all is that science already knows the answers. The details still need working out but, in principle, the fundamental questions are settled," he said.

British astrologer, writer and lecturer Robert Currey commented on the study's credibility. What adds weight to Cajochen's study is the fact that data used by the research team was collected 10 years earlier for a different study, he says.

"By being retrospective, critics will find it hard to claim any experimental or selection bias of subjects or data. A simple mechanism such as increased moonlight can also be ruled out as the subjects slept in a dark room in the sleep laboratory," he added.

The full moon is a major aspect or angle astrologers call an opposition. From our vantage point on earth, this angle or aspect occurs when the sun and moon - or other planetary bodies - line up 180 degrees apart in opposing astrological signs.

Among other things, the full moon opposition may coincide with a period of increased stress or tension. The individual's vitality (represented by the sun) and personal or emotional needs (the moon) may be conflicted in some way, Currey says.

"Perhaps the urge to be active and creative takes away from satisfying bodily needs like sleep. Conceivably, this lack of sleep might even account for the unusual behavior that tends to occur around the full moon according to lunar lore," he noted.

British astrologer and Editor Pat Harris, PhD, says spiritually-oriented Tibetan monks would probably agree with this assessment, at least in part.

Harris is editor of *Correlation*, a journal published by the Astrological Association of Great Britain (AA). She says the monks are very much attuned to the moon's phases, using them to regulate sleep patterns among other things.

"The scientific experiment at the University of Basel seems to confirm the monks' experiences" she says. "It could be argued that the monks have conscious expectations regarding how the lunar phase will affect their behavior. However, this confounding factor doesn't apply to the Switzerland sleep study.

"From secondary reports and the researcher's summary we learn that neither the 33 volunteers nor the scientists conducting the tests were aware of the lunar phase at any time," she said.

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