

Suicide, Murder, and Death in the Occult – Part 1

by John Ankerberg and John Weldon

Nine associates of channeler Terri Hoffman have committed suicide or died in accidents since 1977. —AP Newswire, Dallas

Suicide seems to be a recurring theme in the world of the occult, especially in the case of those who attempt to leave their former practices. Dr. Kurt Koch observes that “suicides are a familiar phenomenon in the realm of the occult,”¹ and he provides numerous examples throughout his books. He points out that in his own country the province of Schleswig-Holstein has the highest suicide figures of all West Germany and is also one of two provinces having the largest number of magic charmers.²

Many times there is a deliberate attempt by the spirits to induce suicide in an unwary person. If people are trying to leave the occult, they are told they will never be able to and that the only escape is to take their own life. Or they may become enamored with blissful descriptions of the wonders of the “next-life” and be lovingly urged to “come join us.”

Former witch-turned-Christian Doreen Irvine was subjected to repeated pressures to take her own life in her attempt to escape from witchcraft.³ Another individual noted that “many attempts have been made to lead me astray and to cause me great physical and mental harm.... On numerous occasions these spirits sought verbally to convince me that suicide was the only answer.”⁴

The authors have talked with half a dozen people who felt strangely compelled to take their own life after beginning occult practice. In *The Christian and the Supernatural*, liberal theologian and occult supporter Morton Kelsey reveals:

Two researchers working with the problem of suicide in Los Angeles were amazed at how often, in the course of their interviews, people who showed suicidal tendencies referred to contact with the dead.⁵

John D. Pearce-Higgins, vice chairman of a Christian psychic society, mentions a case of two girls engaging in automatic writing:

At first it went fine; the student appeared to contact her dead father, who appeared to know all about her, and gave good evidence. Then a friend of her father came through and claimed to have been her “guardian

angel” for many years. Presently, having got her hooked by what appeared to be good evidence, the messages came “Life does not hold much for you really, dear, it is such a lovely world over here, you had better come over and join us.” So the girl threw herself under a bus. Mercifully, she wasn’t killed; she was taken to a hospital and after a year, although she was well enough to come home, she was not free of the compulsion to write of obsessive ideas. The other girl got roughly the same advice from her “father”— but now she took fright and consulted the curate, who brought me in.⁶

In “Psychosis in the Séance Room,” parapsychologist Hans Bender mentions four cases of people who were told to commit suicide by the spirits they contacted. The first case involved a husband and wife who joined a psychic development class:

The instructions of the “spirit doctors” regarding the treatment of her sick child, she thought quite foolish, but her husband, who believed unswervingly in the reality of these experiences, wished to carry them out in every detail. Things came to a head when the leader of the circle expelled the young woman, thus sharpening the conflict in her marriage. The young wife, thoroughly confused, divided between faith and doubt, attempted to apply the mediumistic practices she had learned during the séance. She began to write automatically and suddenly heard voices demanding that she take her own life. She was barely prevented from throwing herself from a balcony while saying “it was a force that I had to obey.”⁷

In the second and third incidents, two married sisters attempted suicide as a result of séance practices and automatic writing. Both were hospitalized at the psychiatric clinic at Freiburg. In both cases “schizophrenic tendencies seemed to be apparent.” In the case of one of the sisters, “eventually she heard spirit voices, not only while engaged in automatic writing, but everywhere all the time. These voices grew louder and more emphatic. They commented upon her behavior; gave her meaningless orders that she tried to resist; and alternated between quiet or vulgar and destructive tones.

When she entered the hospital, the patient at first refused to provide any information whatsoever. She maintained that the spirits had ordered her to remain silent. Also, at the behest of one spirit, the patient once tried to cut her wrist with a piece of glass.

In the fourth case, that of a 25-year-old teacher, mediumistic psychoses developed after automatic writing. She was eventually urged to sacrifice her life, threw herself into a river, and was “rescued much against her will.” Bender notes that oftentimes even mediums “find themselves led astray by the suggestions of allegedly high level discarnate entities.”⁸

Former medium Victor Ernest refers to two women Satanists who had attempted unsuccessfully to disrupt his church service by physically attacking him.

He reports:

Ten days later I received a telephone call from a woman who claimed that she and a friend had turned on satanic power in the Sunday service. She told me they had left the service frightened by the Bible text and message.

After the service, she said, Satan had come to their homes to induce them to commit suicide. Mrs. S., the woman calling me, overcame an impulse to leap into the Mississippi River, but she succumbed to the next temptation and took an overdose of sleeping pills. She had been near death for several days.

When she recovered, Mrs. S. learned that her friend had been committed to a mental hospital. That news so frightened her that she was prompted to call me. We set up a counseling appointment for the next morning.

I saw immediately that she was demon-indwelt. The only way she could say the name of Jesus was in blasphemy. She told me the demons had caused her to steal casually, sell her body for extra income, and disturb gospel services for entertainment. She and her friend—she told me later—regularly met on the banks of the Mississippi to worship Satan. They would prostrate themselves before their altar and pray to Satan that they might be chosen to bear the anti-christ into the world.⁹

The woman was later exorcised and became a follower of Christ. How many modern suicides are the result of occult practices no one can say. There are many other reports, new and old, of spirits attempting to manipulate a person to suicide.¹⁰

(to be continued)

Notes:

¹ Kurt Koch, *Occult ABC* (West Germany: Literature Mission Aglasterhausen, Inc., 1980), p. 278.

² Ibid.

³ Doreen Irvine, *Freed From Witchcraft* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1973), p. 121

⁴ Merrill Unger, *What Demons Can Do to Saints* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1977), p. 54

⁵ Morton Kelsey, *The Christian and the Supernatural* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1976), p. 41.

⁶ J. D. Pearce-Higgins, "Dangers of Automatism," *Spiritual Frontiers*, Autumn 1970, P. 216.

⁷ Hans Bender, "Psychosis in the Séance Room," in Martin Ebon, ed., *The Satan Trap* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976), pp. 232-236.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Victor H. Ernest, *I Talked With Spirits* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1971), p. 60.

¹⁰ E.g., cf. Ramond Van Over, "Vampire and Demon Lover, in Ebon, *The Satan Trap*, p. 109; Leslie Shepard, *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*, Vol. 2 (Detroit, MI: Yale Research, 1979), p. 63; Elliot O'Donnell, *The Menace of Spiritualism* (New York: F. A. Stokes Co., 1920), pp. XII, 105-106.

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