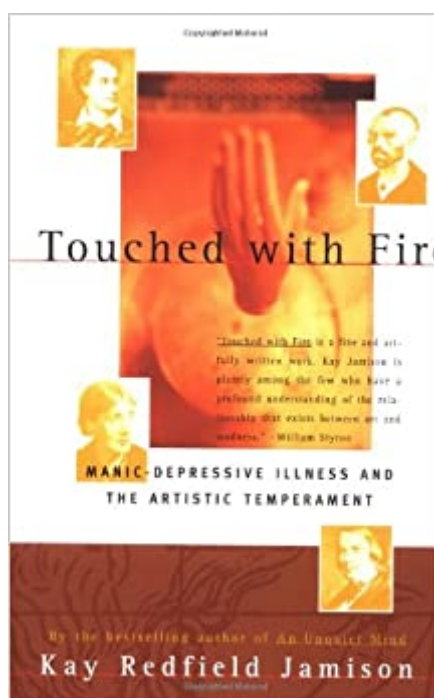


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# Touched With Fire: Manic-Depressive Illness And The Artistic Temperament



## Synopsis

The definitive work on the profound and surprising links between manic-depression and creativity, from the bestselling psychologist of bipolar disorders who wrote >.One of the foremost psychologists in America, â œKay Jamison is plainly among the few who have a profound understanding of the relationship that exists between art and madnessâ • (William Styron). The anguished and volatile intensity associated with the artistic temperament was once thought to be a symptom of genius or eccentricity peculiar to artists, writers, and musicians. Her work, based on her study as a clinical psychologist and researcher in mood disorders, reveals that many artists subject to exalted highs and despairing lows were in fact engaged in a struggle with clinically identifiable manic-depressive illness. Jamison presents proof of the biological foundations of this disease and applies what is known about the illness to the lives and works of some of the world's greatest artists including Lord Byron, Vincent Van Gogh, and Virginia Woolf.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The march of science in explaining human nature continues. In *Touched With Fire*, Jamison marshals a tremendous amount of evidence for the proposition that most artistic geniuses were (and are) manic depressives. This is a book of interest to scientists, psychologists, and artists struggling with the age-old question of whether psychological suffering is an essential component of artistic creativity. Anyone reading this book closely will be forced to conclude that it is. Very Highly Recommended. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Drawing from the lives of artists such as Van Gogh, Byron and Virginia Woolf, Jamison examines the links between manic-depression and creativity. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This is a great read expressing reference to the great artist and genius minds of people with manic-depressive illness. The expression of the arts allows the person with manic-depression to express and create. The mind is constant in suffering, understanding, and finding a need to be creative with expression. Manic-depression is greatly misunderstood. The mind may be lacking in certain chemicals, but in intelligence and talent the gifts are profound. I enjoy realizing some of the greatest artist and world famous people suffered from the same illness I have. I have had the pleasure of meeting the late Patty Duke an advocate for mental health, and Mariel Hemingway. I seek out books expressing mental health, and the positive influences of people. Also, the real struggles and stories of people and the family who try to hard to understand mental health. Thank you for bringing a positive light to the greatness of this disease. I would recommend this book.

Kay Redfield Jamison explores the connection between creative genius and mental illness by examining the lives, works, and families of historic writers, artists and musicians. Her quotes from their works will sing to the soul of other creative people. This is not a book for people who want things "dumbed down" to a magazine quiz. Truly creative people will not be afraid to expand their horizons, or their vocabulary, if necessary.

In an amazingly thorough and critical exploration, Jamison reveals the relationship between mood disorders and artistic expression. The book leaves out the textbook-like jargon but is assembled like an intelligent albeit lengthy essay. She uses several concrete examples to share her findings such as excerpts from biographies, letters, and most importantly poems. She often quotes famous poets and authors in portraying their affect and how it shapes their work. Definitely a book to read for someone interesting in mood disorders and poetry... Very moving, informative, and connected; Jamison knows her stuff. Also check out *An Unquiet Mind*

Okay book though very technical, medical rather. Gives good insights!

For anyone who wrestles with Bi-polar disease or mood disorders, this is a wonderful source that shares research about some of our most creative writers, composers, creative geniuses and the

"down side" of that genius. They wrestled with deep depression and mania which led many into asylums during and at the end of life. It confirms the struggles of mood instabilities. The gifts that are born in a space where most persons do not go and the deep cavernous black holes where no one wants to go.

Demonstrates that a diagnosis of bipolar disorder is not all negative. Many well-known exceptionally creative and influential people throughout history were/are members of the same "club", so it doesn't feel so bad to be associated with them. Doesn't make false promises that all bipolar people are brilliant and creative, but shows some possible advantages of the condition. Great book for people who are recently diagnosed or their families, as well as for the general public.

Another amazing book by Kay Redfield. The fine line between genius and insanity. Is it biological? Kay Renfield shows evidence of family trees of multiple "mad genius". But is there a deeper explanation that we are now ready and understand enough to accept the findings?

An informative yet compassionate description of the experience of being bipolar. The literary and artistic geniuses' experiences especially helped me appreciate the value of experiencing the highs and lows without medicinal tempering. And yet, losing such geniuses to suicide is so tragic. I know some persons who have struggled with being bipolar. No matter what their choices, I now better respect their challenges.

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