

Genomic Psychiatry

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Cover Art

Cover Image: Albrecht Dürer's "Melencolia I" (1514), a landmark of Renaissance engraving, reflects the complex inner world of melancholia through its symbolic landscape. The central, winged figure, often interpreted as the personification of melancholy, sits among the unused instruments of geometry and craft, visually echoing the theme of creative inertia and the psychological paralysis later described by Roubinovitch and Toulouse in their 1897 monograph (featured in this issue, pp. 21–29). Elements like the magic square, polyhedron, and scattered tools evoke the intact yet idle intellectual abilities typical of melancholic states, paralleling contemporary psychiatric views of preserved cognition amidst motivational impairment.

Dürer's composition, combining the body's languor, the intellect's stasis, and existential uncertainty (seen in the apocalyptic background), presages modern conceptions of depression as a multi-layered biopsychosocial phenomenon, connecting historical phenomenology to genomic research such as Serretti et al.'s study of C-reactive protein polygenic scores (pp. 30–35). Early impressions of this engraving, pulled from Dürer's original copper plate, are held by major museums worldwide, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), the British Museum (London), the Albertina (Vienna), the National Gallery of Art (Washington, D.C.), and the Museum of Fine Arts (Budapest). Image source: Public domain.

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