Dear members and readers,

We sincerely hope you are weathering the corona virus global crisis gracefully and that you remain safe health-wise and financially. Sometimes we as astrologers wish to be wrong, especially when in this case anticipating 2020 to be so challenging. Yet, I don’t think that the best of us would have predicted that the North Node in Cancer would have the whole world grounded home with “imposed” family time! No matter how much we may resist, Cancer North Node will have its needs met!

The collective “slow down” has given nature such an unexpected breather, with pollution plummeting, shut down of wildlife markets, and animals reengaging where human are receding. Must it really be us or them? Will we finally see ourselves as part of nature and not above it? Perhaps this is a Saturnian moment of accountability and a Neptunian moment of surrender with grace. I personally hope we overcome this challenge promptly, and that we gain a new perspective on our consumerism.

Sending everyone blessings for safety, support, and health.
Maurice Fernandez
President, OPA

OPA GOES AQUARIUS
You likely know by now that our 2020 ASTROLOGY RETREAT is migrating online. This was a difficult but inevitable decision. We are happy that the new format will make the retreat more affordable and accessible to many of you, and most importantly, that those of you who signed up will not miss on the quality content. These are Jupiter/Pluto times, prompting us to transform crisis into opportunity.

For information about the program, see this edition on PAGE 20, or visit the OPA website for full details.

OPA BOARD ELECTIONS - MAY 23
A new 2-year term for the OPA board will begin on May 23. We are glad that many of the current board members are committed to continue serving the cause, but important changes are underway! If you wish to volunteer as a board member, we will provide guidelines on how to submit your candidacy. Stay tuned.

The Dramatic Transits of the Season: March-June 2020

MARCH 20 – MARS/JUPITER at 20 Capricorn

MARCH 23 – SATURN INGRESS INTO Aquarius + MARS/PLUTO at 23 Capricorn

MARCH 30 – MARS/SATURN at 0 Aquarius

APRIL 4 – JUPITER/PLUTO at 24 Capricorn

MAY 5 – True NODES shift to Gemini/Sagittarius

MAY 13 – VENUS RETROGRADE at 21 Gemini
The JUPITER-PLUTO conjunction in CAPRICORN
by Maurice Fernandez

The giant and the dwarf, Jupiter and Pluto, come together again after 13 years for three meetings on April 4, June 30, and November 12, 2020, around the 22-24 degrees of Capricorn.

AGENTS of GROWTH
Jupiter and Pluto both represents an obsession with growth – Jupiter goes for “bigger is better” and visible expansion, while Pluto’s amplitude is internal and less obvious on the surface, deceiving in its petite appearance. Merging these qualities, people born under Jupiter/Pluto cycles are commonly extremely resourceful and able to turn crises into opportunities—there must be a gain in every situation. In some cases, this configuration can engender great wealth, materially and spiritually.

AGENTS of TRUTH
Jupiter and Pluto are both truth seekers and this fusion of forces enhances powerful investigative capacities. Those born under these influences know deception and cannot take things at face value—they search for the hidden, inconvenient truths and can reveal conspiracies.

BURSTING BUBBLES
Jupiter and Pluto both represent the potential to go BIG, from material wealth (Hello Bill Gates and Warrant Buffet), to iconic influence (Gandhi and Mandela anyone?), but just as much as they reflect stock market surges, this combination can also instigate massive crashes if there was excess. They inflate and deflate vigorously.

IDEOLOGICAL AGRESSION and THE PLIGHT of RACISM
Jupiter relates to ethnicity, belief systems, and the search for higher meaning in life. With Pluto involved, this can be weaponized and intensified. Those born under this cycle can be on either side of the spectrum, the perpetrators or the victims. Both Gandhi and Mandela born under previous conjunctions had to confront systematic racial injustice and prevailed against it. The 1994 Jupiter/Pluto conjunction in Scorpio saw the Rwanda/Burundi genocide fury with members of Hutu and Tutsi tribes clashing with outmost brutality, fueled by racial ideologies.

IN THE TIMES OF CORONA VIRUS
As Jupiter and Pluto meet in Capricorn, governments are gearing up to bail out industries in free-fall, particularly those related to the travel and entertainment services—this is expected to balloon national debts of countries to unprecedented proportions.

Born with a Jupiter/Pluto Conjunction
Bill Gates
Warren Buffet
Gandhi
Mandela
Bank of England
Vladimir Lenin
Cult Leader Jim Jones
Rupert Murdoch
Johannes Kepler
Christine Lagarde
Mick Jagger

Photo credits on p. 39.

SARATURN IN AQUARIUS 2020 to 2023
by Maurice Fernandez

Saturn is already sending its clear message to Aquarius ahead of its official move on March 22:

- Social Distancing
- Airline Industry crisis
- Massive migration to the internet
- A return to rely on Scientific references
- Social support

We can hope and anticipate that this transit will bring scientific development in the light of the Corona Virus crisis. However, the ETHICS revolving around the use and application of SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY and RESEARCH (Phone surveillance, 5G controv-

versies?) may certainly be part of our future conversations.

Will science reclaim its authority during Saturn in Aquarius, or will it be under further scrutiny if science is being used as a weapon for political agendas?

With imposed Corona related confinement prompting a massive migration online, we can expect the INTERNET INFRASTRUCTURE to become overloaded. Will we be RATIONED for our time online for the system to be able to cope?

Saturn in Aquarius will very likely expose the limitations and the vulnerabilities of the internet in the course of these three years.

We risk experiencing an internet crisis, and if all our goods are in that bag, this can lead to further destabilization and chaos. The good news – this is a time for governments to transcend polarizing political agendas and support social justice. The expected bailouts and individual payments (USA) will cross the partisan lines of Capitalists versus Social Democrats.

Stay tuned for future updates!
The Jupiter-Pluto Conjunction

by Alex Trenoweth

The Jupiter-Pluto conjunction is an interesting cycle simply because astronomically, the two planets couldn’t be more different. In Jupiter, we have the largest planet, a gas giant with huge storms on its surface seeming to govern a huge range of various sizes of satellites. In Pluto, we have a binary system (along with its Moon Charon) that deceived scientists into thinking it was bigger than it actually is. Pluto and Charon are two big rocks rotating around a central barycentre (very unlike our Earth-Moon barycentre which is in the middle of the earth). Personally, I’ve always liked the idea that the most important point of the Pluto-Charon system is invisible.

Mythologically, Jupiter and Pluto are polar opposites. Jupiter is a sky god whose position in the heavens gave him the ability to be omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. He was in charge of laws and higher-order. Pluto was the god of the Underworld, powerful and wealthy in his own right. Together, it would make sense that they could create something big out of something small. Before I started the research into the current and previous cycles, I expected mundane events like nuclear explosions, advances in microbiology and secret investigations that unearthed powerful secrets. I seemed to have found something different from what I expected.

Methodology: I wanted to try to avoid cherry-picking but it is rather difficult to do for such a short article. I chose people and events based on close Jupiter-Pluto conjunctions. The ones here are just a small sample but I would like to investigate a broader base of information. I’d be interested in seeing some other ideas as to how this can be done.

To find the entire span of Jupiter-Pluto conjunctions and to make sure I wasn’t missing out on those tricky retrograde periods, I tracked the conjunctions week by week using Solar Fire. I found it rather remarkable that these two very different planets had such a tandem of movement that prolonged their periods of conjunctions. Quite simply, I had never thought of looking at the conjunctions in this way. The Jupiter-Pluto conjunctions (I personally keep to an orb of no more than 8 degrees) pretty much extend throughout the whole of 2020.

So how do the Jupiter-Pluto conjunctions manifest? I’ve broken the conjunctions into sections by date and I’ve chosen events and people who have the conjunction with a very tight orb of only one or two degrees. Without too much cherry-picking, I was surprised the events of the conjunction seemed to match the themes of Jupiter-Pluto and the signs they are in.

1930

Pluto was discovered on 18 February 1930 with Pluto at 17 degrees Cancer and Jupiter at 6 degrees Gemini. By the end of August 1930, Jupiter was within an eight-degree orb conjunction of Pluto in Cancer, and by the end of October, they were at the same degree (20 Cancer). Pluto stationed that week, then turned retrograde, and a few weeks later Jupiter also turned retrograde. The planets stayed within an eight-degree orb and by May 1931, were exactly conjunct again and finally moved out of orb by mid-July 1931.

I found it rather remarkable that these two very different planets had such a tandem of movement that prolonged their periods of conjunctions.
Eighteen months is a long time for a conjunction, and is the longest term for these conjunctions.

During this time, the US was in the grips of the Great Depression which of course had a knock-on effect for the whole world. It is estimated the GDP fell by 15% and many people took their own lives after losing everything.

On 15 November 1930, when both Jupiter and Pluto were in exact conjunction, the film “Hell’s Angels” starring Jean Harlow, was released. It made Harlow a household name. The title of the film is a literal example of the conjunction! Although the film is celebrated as being the first talking action film, it also has a notorious reputation for the deaths of several pilots who died during filming as well as its enormous budget.

In medicine during the conjunction, penicillin was first used to cure an eye infection and the vaccine to prevent diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus (DPT) was developed. This is a great example of the small, microscopic world of antibodies being used to prevent major diseases. As the ruler of the conjunction is associated with children and childhood, these advances were greatly beneficial to children who are susceptible to these diseases.

1943

Jupiter in Cancer and Pluto in Leo were in orb of conjunction again in mid-June 1943. By the end of July, they were on the same degree in Leo and conjunct the Sun and by mid-September, they were out of orb.

World War Two was raging during this time, with men suffering the intense anguish of battle. With their men and sons in the trenches, women were effectively left to do the day to day jobs the men usually did — and for the first time, began earning their own money. This severely disturbed the balance of power as women began to experience the joys of being in control of their own finances. When the men returned, of course the women were reluctant to go back to the kitchen to work for free.

During the exact conjunction at the end of July, the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini was arrested. Essentially, Italy had been led to defeat. Just before his arrest, he was quoted as saying: “Seven years ago, I was an interesting person. Now I am little more than a corpse... [Yes Madam, I am finished. My star has fallen.”

The famous photo of his corpse a few years later, along with his mistress’ and key players of his regime, hanging upside down to be posthumously abused by mobs is an enduring image of complete defeat.

Mick Jagger (26 July 1943, 2:30 am, Dartford UK, A: Rodden) is a very famous embodiment of the Jupiter-Pluto conjunction in Leo. He is known for his energy and vitality on stage and in the bedroom (he has had numerous alliances with beautiful women and is the father of eight children with five women). His band The Rolling Stones is one of the most influential and longest-lasting acts in music.

1955

Pluto and Jupiter met in conjunction again at the end of the summer in 1955, in the sign of Leo and both were at 28 Leo by the end of October. Jupiter moved on into Virgo but the first week in December, Pluto was retrograde, followed by Jupiter a couple of weeks later. They were on the same degree again (27 Leo) at the beginning of February and again in June 1956 (26 Leo). They remained within 8 degrees until August. This conjunction, like the one in 1930, coincided with both planets in retrograde motion. However, the length of the conjunction was considerably shorter.

On the day the conjunction was exact, the Vietnam War started. This was a brutal, costly war and, many would say, an unnecessary war on foreign soil that lasted for nearly 20 years and effectively tore the US apart with large public protests and families being split apart as conscientious objectors to the draft abandoned their homes to escape being forced to battle.

On a more positive note, Elvis Presley entered the charts with his song “Heartbreak Hotel” which was released in January 1956. The song would become a major influence on other musical performers and Elvis would become known as the King of Rock-n-Roll. He would also inherit all the trappings of accumulating such vast amounts of money at such a young age.

Bill Gates (28 October 1955, 21:15, Seattle Washington, B: Rodden) was born with Jupiter-Pluto in Leo. One of the richest people on the planet, he made his fortune with computer software. It is interesting that his contributions have helped us eliminate the clutter on our desks: we have computer programs that have replaced the need for physical items such as paper files, dictionaries and tools such as cameras and tape recorders.

1968

The next time Jupiter and Pluto were in conjunction was at the end of the summer in 1968, in the sign of Virgo. They were at the same degree (23 Virgo) in October of that same year and remained in orb until mid-December. However, in March 1969 owing to retrograde motion, they were within orb of conjunction and remained in orb until mid-July.

On 1 October 1968, the film “Night of the Living Dead” was released with Jupiter and Pluto within two degrees of each other in Virgo. The film was released before there were ratings to help guide parents on whether or not films were suitable for their young offspring before dropping them off at the cinema on a Saturday morning. The film scared the living daylights out of...
TRENOWETH

unsuspecting children and it is now one of the main reasons films have become rated. Just imagine being a child and expecting one of the semi-comical horror movies only to be inflected with ghouls biting humans and turning them into the undead. The film is regarded as one of the finest examples of the “splatter” technique too. Blood, guts, and plenty of the undead coming for you. Yes, that sounds like Jupiter-Pluto to me.

1981

In September 1981, Jupiter and Pluto were again in conjunction, reaching the same degree in Libra at the beginning of November. By December, they had moved out of orb for conjunction. In May-August 1982, they were again within eight degrees of orb but did not reach exact conjunction.

The big events in this year of Jupiter-Pluto conjunction in Libra? How about two record-breaking weddings? On 16 November 1981, Laura and Luke tied the knot in General Hospital. This television event was watched by more people than any other televised event save for Charles and Diana’s wedding which took place in July that year. Around the time of the General Hospital wedding was when it was announced that Diana was pregnant with the future king of England.

1994

Jupiter and Pluto were again in conjunction mid-October 1994, reaching the same degree in Scorpio by the end of November and moving out of an eight-degree orb by mid-January 1995. Owing to retrograde motion, they became within eight degrees of each other in July 1995 but did not come closer than that.

As children are taught by year group, planetary conjunctions to Jupiter have always been an interest to me. In fact, I was responsible for an entire year group of students who all pretty much had this Jupiter-Pluto conjunction. I taught them for seven years and was greatly enriched by the experience. I pushed them to travel and I wore out the foreign language department with my requests for extra lessons and field trips. In exam results, theirs were the highest marks our school had ever received.

Jupiter and Pluto (and Mercury) in Scorpio were within one degree of conjunction when serial killer, necrophile and cannibal Jeffrey Dahmer was murdered in prison. Dahmer’s crimes were so horrific that they are hardly suitable for mention in a respect-

able periodical. Suffice to say it suits the theme of sky god meets underworld god. Natally, Dahmer had Jupiter in Capricorn trine by an orb of one degree to Pluto in Virgo. Although this is hardly the astrological signature of a serial killer, it is noteworthy his death occurred at their conjunction.

2007

In October 2007, Jupiter and Pluto met up in Sagittarius, reaching exact conjunction at 28 degrees in mid-December. They were out of orb of conjunction a few weeks later.

On the 20 December 2007, Queen Elizabeth II became Britain’s longest-serving monarch beating the record of 63 years and seven months that had been held by Queen Victoria. What is striking about this is that this is a dissociate conjunction with Pluto at 28 Sagittarius and Jupiter at 0 Capricorn with the Sun sandwiched between them at 29 Sagittarius. The current Queen of England is often noted for her sense of responsibility and devotion to duty.

As my primary interest is astrology and education, I’d like to point out that many children born in 2007 have the natal Jupiter-Pluto conjunction. They, of course, are now going through adolescence and an understanding of their learning styles would greatly help to support them through this very tricky time of their lives.

2020

At the beginning of February 2020, Jupiter and Pluto were within an eight-degree orb in the sign of Capricorn. They will be on the same degree (24 Capricorn) at the beginning of April and owing to retrograde motion, will return to the same degree (24 Capricorn) in late June. They will be exactly conjunct again at 22 Capricorn in November and remain in orb until the end of the year. Note that this is an orb of a four-degree opposition to its exact conjunction in 1930 after the discovery of Pluto.

Her Majesty, the Queen of England is going through a very rough time and it isn’t over yet. On 21 June 2020, not only will Pluto and Jupiter be conjunct in Capricorn, it will be within three degrees of her ascendant which also affects the ascendant of the Duchess of Sussex. Prince William was born during a dissociate Jupiter-Pluto conjunction and the eclipse of 21 June 2020 will be conjunct his Sun and Moon.

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Alex Trenoweth, MA (CAA), DF Astro1S, CIA Agent 144 is an astrological researcher and professional schoolteacher in London UK. In 2015, she was awarded “International Astrologer of the Year” by the Krishnamurti Institute of Astrology (KIA) for her ground-breaking and innovative research on Astrology and Education based on her book “Growing Pains” (The Wessex Astrologer). Since then she has spoken at astrology conferences around the world and has contributed to major magazines and publications such as Dell Horoscope, The Career Astrologer (OPA), The ISAR Journal, The Journal of Research for AFA (Grant Trust), Kindred Spirit and Astrodienst. https://alex-trenoweth.co.uk/
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The first observation commanding our attention is that, in both charts, all seven visible planets lie on one side of the nodal axis, i.e., between Ketu in the 3rd house and Rahu in the 9th house. In Vedic astrology, this pattern is called Kala Sarpa, “the black serpent of time.” Within the context of western astrology, I’ve dubbed this pattern a Draconic Bowl (and written a book on the subject). Rahu and Ketu, the head and tail of the dragon, respectively, define the rim of this Bowl pattern, one of the archetypal chart shapes popularized by Marc Edmund Jones.

Draconic Bowl patterns appear and disappear with some regularity in the sky. The basic setup requires first that both Jupiter and Saturn occupy the same side of the nodal axis. This lasts at most five years, the time for Jupiter to enter the sign of one node, and transit the intervening signs to meet the opposite backward-moving node before crossing to the other side of the nodal axis. During that period of possibility, however, the other planets must also be on the same side of the nodal axis as Jupiter and Saturn. Seasonal transits of the Sun and the inner planets, long spells of retrograde Mars, and monthly revolutions of the Moon break that pattern, at a minimum, every two weeks and often much longer.

For this reason, they’re regarded as having the potential to wield significant and complex power, in addition to their role as enablers of eclipses.

Shown above right are two charts for the 2020 Vernal Equinox – the first in the tropical zodiac, the second in the sidereal zodiac. For the record, the current ayanamsa (the variation in zodiacs) is 24 degrees 08 minutes, the value to be subtracted from every salient factor in a tropical chart in order to convert to sidereal.

By using whole sign houses, a feature of Vedic astrology that’s recently gained currency in Western astrology via the introduction of Hellenistic astrology, we see the charts are very similar. The primary differences are the rising signs and their subsequent houses, and which planets occupy those signs. Note that, in converting from the tropical to the sidereal zodiac, every planet but one has moved backwards a sign. The only exception is Saturn in Capricorn. That’s because Saturn was the only planet in the tropical chart whose degree position exceeded the value of the ayanamsha. So once 24:08 is subtracted from every tropical position, only Saturn is left unchanged by sign. But as a consequence of not changing its sign, Saturn has shifted houses (in the whole-sign house system).

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Given the Draconic Bowl signature of this equinoctial chart, we can say that the period will primarily manifest qualities of Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. That’s because Mercury and Jupiter are the dispositors...
of the nodes, while Mars and Jupiter occupy the same sign as Ketu. In this regard, Jupiter is clearly dominant, since it also occupies its own sign in sidereal Sagittarius.

In traditional Vedic astrology, the planetary aspects are different from the Ptolemaic aspects of western astrology, so we don’t recognize the Sun’s squares to the nodal axis, nor the trine sextile that Mercury makes, respectively, to Rahu and Ketu.

A salient factor in this chart is the Mars/ Jupiter partial conjunction, separated by a mere 10 minutes of arc. Although such a pairing of planetary friends might be appreciated in western astrology, in Vedic astrology it constitutes a flaw. In Vedic astrology, graha yuddha, or “planetary war,” arises when any two true planets (Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn) conjoin within one degree of arc, typically within a single sign, but also across adjacent signs.

When two planets crowd each other within one degree of 360-degree zodiac, we can anthropomorphize their reactions by suggesting they resent the other invading their space. It’s the planetary equivalent of two people alone in a large elevator, but one of them insists on standing on the other’s toes. The result is likely to be a simmering resentment, a shoving match, or both.

Technically there are ways (eg, brightness, latitude, longitude) to determine the winner of a planetary war, but in practice it’s something like a heavyweight fight that goes a full 15 rounds. At the end of the match, both fighters are feeling bruised and battered, if not indeed beaten.

To interpret this current scenario, we can approach it in two ways – generically and/or specifically. In the generic approach, we consider the broad themes associated with either planet. So in this case, we can choose to regard Mars as symbolic of engineering, heat, medicine, military, and sports, while Jupiter symbolizes expansion, higher education, justice, and religion, etc. Combine these two in a war of principles and you get notions of expense over-runs in infrastructure programs, global warming, judicial disputes, legal action involving sports figures or events, military adventurism, religious fanaticism, violence in schools, and so on.

Recall that Rahu and Ketu act as proxies for planets who dispossess, associate with, or aspect them. As such, the nodes act as “amplifiers” for other planets with which they are linked. Since the planetary war of Mars/Jupiter occurs in the same sign as Ketu, this means the nodal axis as a whole becomes “excited” by the Mars/Jupiter conflict, Ketu by association and disposition, Rahu by aspect. And since the nodes are themselves malefic by nature, carrying the qualities of Saturn and Mars, via Rahu and Ketu respectively, the entire 3rd/9th house axis becomes the zone of collateral damage.

This leads one to speculate that the planetary war will spill into related departments of life, potentially sparking incidents of airline accidents, fratricide, martial law, road rage, sports scandals, violence on university campuses, xenophobia, etc. Because the nodes are also associated with disease and vermin, this can suggest plague-like surges of pestilence, the swift expansion of viral outbreaks like the Coronavirus, and the imposition of martial law as a last-ditch effort to control populations at risk.

Because the nodes are also associated with high technology, we could similarly anticipate large-scale system crashes, whether via natural causes like extreme weather or geomagnetic storms, or by politically-motivated hackers of electoral systems, legal institutions, news publications, and social media.

The graph below is a rudimentary measure of “nodal power” during the period between Vernal Equinox and Summer Solstice 2020. Note the high level in the week following the equinox when both Mars and Jupiter are in the same sign as Ketu. After they move out of sidereal Sagittarius, the collective nodal power level drops dramatically. The power “blips” every fortnight are due to the Moon crossing the nodal axis. In the last week of May, Mercury enters sidereal Gemini to make contact with the nodal axis, with a consequent increase in nodal power. To keep all this in perspective, however, the average power level for this 3-month period is only 6 points, whereas, in Q4/2019, it was 17. So, all things considered, this is still a relatively quiet time as far as the nodes go.

Bottom line, however, the signature chart for the Vernal Equinox remains especially potent. It forms a near-perfect Draconic Bowl, and features a planetary war between Mars and Jupiter, a combination that is itself greatly amplified by their presence on the nodal axis.

Bottom line, however, the signature chart for the Vernal Equinox remains especially potent. It forms a near-perfect Draconic Bowl, and features a planetary war between Mars and Jupiter, a combination that is itself greatly amplified by their presence on the nodal axis.
Because the nodes transit only in regressive mode, moving backward through the zodiac, they won’t make direct contact with any other planets other than the Moon until Mercury enters Gemini on May 24, followed by the exact conjunction of Mercury/Rahu on May 28. Within that week, since Mercury will be strong in its own sign, we might expect some sort of breakthrough on the political front, for instance, news or polls relevant to the selection of a Presidential nominee at the Democrat National Convention in July.

On June 5-6, there will be a penumbral lunar eclipse visible in India, Europe, and some parts of Africa, Asia and Australia. This could represent the peak period or high-water mark for Coronavirus cases in that part of the world.

The following week, June 14, the Sun enters Gemini, followed by the exact conjunction of Sun/Rahu on June 19, just the day before the Summer Solstice. That week could spell trouble on an international level, for instance, widespread travel bans, or the cancellation/postponement of the Tokyo Summer Olympics due to the Coronavirus.

The nature of the nodes, ultimately, is to provoke something radical and largely unanticipated. That prospect, along with their complex nature, makes the nodes the bane of predictions. Therefore, we’d be wise to expect the unexpected.

Alan Annand is a graduate of the American College of Vedic Astrology, and former tutor for the British Faculty of Astrological Studies. He’s written books in both western astrology (Mutual Reception, The Draconic Bowl) and Vedic astrology (Kala Sarpa, Parivartana Yoga, and Stellar Astrology Volumes 1 & 2). His New Age Noir mystery trilogy features an astrologer protagonist, whom one reviewer has dubbed “Sherlock Holmes with a horoscope.” www.navamsa.com

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Book Review

Review by Arlan Wise

THE ART OF HORARY ASTROLOGY

BY ONER DOSER

Horary astrology, the system in astrology that answers immediate yes or no questions, is steeped in the Arabic tradition. In 1600 William Lilly brought this knowledge to western astrologers. Oner Doser combines these two traditional methods in his book. He uses his notes from a decade of teaching Horary astrology to students in his school in Istanbul to create this wonderful teaching manual.

Oner gives a thorough explanation of the factors needed to read a Horary chart. He explains how to ask the questions, how to calculate the chart for the moment the question is asked, how to tell if the question can be answered, and how to read that chart. He explains the significators for the one asking the question and for the questions that are asked. He describes how the signs and houses differ in Horary astrology from the way one reads them in a natal chart. The reader learns which countries, places, and directions are associated with each sign. Oner answers the questions of how to tell the time frame in which the answer reveals itself, or the lost object or person is found.

He gives practical advice on answering Horary questions and shows his techniques in a variety of case studies. These case studies cover a wide range of questions, such as “Is getting divorced the right decision?”, “Where is the car key?”, “Will my dog recover?”, “Will this project be a success?” and shows us his process of answering such questions. He includes a table of dignities for those who are not sure of them. There is a complete glossary explaining the terms he uses. These tools make the book user-friendly for those who have not studied traditional astrology.

Oner’s teaching skills are evident as one reads the book. He first gives the traditional thoughts on the techniques, then he tells us how he does it, what he uses and what he discards. He says “from my point of view” and “I personally think” instead of saying this is the way to do it.

The book is edited by Benjamin Dykes who adds excellent explanations and information where needed. He has provided his own translations of the original Greek and Arabic source material. His comments in the footnotes, noted with his initials, give an extra explanation to the topic being discussed. Benjamin Dykes is the editor and publisher of Oner’s series of nine books on traditional astrology.

This book will be the one that teaches you the art of Horary. It is a 5***** book!
THEMES FOR
March Equinox - June Solstice 2020

SATURN IN AQUARIUS (March 22)
Saturn moves into Aquarius in March this year. Just to give us a 2020 glimpse of things to come. He jumps back into Capricorn in June to complete a task he didn’t finish.

He will then move fully into Aquarius in December just in time to start 2021. We all have to wake up and get to work. It’s time to use technology to transform our planet. The last time Saturn was in Aquarius in 1991 the World Wide Web was born and computers became portable. The Hubble Telescope showed us space in all its beauty. We haven’t been very responsible with these internet breakthroughs. We have forgotten about our INNER net: Our need for contemplation in nature. Our need to turn off. Uranus the modern ruler of Aquarius is now in Taurus and wants us to pay attention to our bodies and our nervous system, to look at our values and really see what is important right now. There is only now.

Saturn likes control but what sort? Control over humanity, our minds (Aquarius), our privacy, our lives? Are we all just prisoners of our own device? (Eagles. Hotel California) or are we becoming devices?

The ancients knew that our planet was alive and as sacred as we are. Humanity needs to wake up and use these phenomenal technologies to clean our home. Renew Re-cycle Re-invent and...
sustain a new ecology that comes from a transformed economy.
Can we? Do we have time? If anyone can Saturn in Aquarius can. He has the possibility of awakening humanity and innovating his way to move mountains from space.

MARS SATURN IN AQUARIUS (April 1)
It’s April Fool’s day! Who is on the fool’s journey?
Mars and Saturn conjunct in Aquarius are in a business meeting arguing about a new plan for humanity. They think they are detached enough to make grand decisions on behalf of everyone. Individuality isn’t taken into consideration and the fall out is not contemplated.
Stubborn Uranus in Taurus has other ideas! He comes to square them and challenge their fixed way of being. Freedom is very important to Uranus and he can see that this isn’t fair. In the sign of Taurus the earth, the environment, and the value of our planet are far more important. It cannot be controlled like humanity. Earth’s people are waking up from the shock of the past months of upheaval. Virus knows no boundary. Wildfires cannot be contained. Floods take their own path. Ghia cracks at will.

Our job is to see that the most valuable thing we can do is to change the way we do everything that is killing our planet. How can we negotiate this aspect? The big picture (Uranus) of humanity (Aquarius) in harmony with the earth (Taurus). We have to get to work (Saturn) fast (Mars).

NEW MOON IN TAURUS (April 23)
New moon in Taurus conjunct Uranus. How safe and secure do we feel in our changing environment? The New Taurus moon needs to feel nurtured and looked after, held and comforted.
The truth is, it is butting up next to Uranus. This is like a baby calf taken from its mother and meeting an electric fence for the first time. What would normally be a nurturing time of safety and growth is now not! How do we navigate this time of emotional uncertainty and insecurity? Feeling safe while being confronted by the unknown is daunting. Our only way forward is to find a place of peace within ourselves. Hold ourselves as whole and complete.
Plant a magical seed this month on the new moon in Taurus. Expect the unexpected with this Uranian energy. We could end up on a beanstalk with a pot of gold or finding a glass slipper.

Hey diddle diddle the cat and the fiddle
The cow jumped over the moon
The little dog laughed to see such joy and
The dish ran away with the spoon

As the new moon cuddles up with Uranus in Taurus anything can happen. The safety of a nursery rhyme is just a story to explain the unexplainable. Venturing into the unknown emotional space our inner child requires some guidance. We can find it within and without, above and below.

How safe and secure do we feel in our changing environment? The New Taurus moon needs to feel nurtured and looked after, held and comforted. The truth is, it is butting up next to Uranus.

The last time Saturn was in Aquarius in 1991 the World Wide Web was born and computers became portable.

NODAL AXIS SHIFT TO GEMINI – SAGITTARIUS (True Node on May 5, 2020)
May the 4th be with you!
The Moon's Nodes are shifting from Cancer - Capricorn to Gemini - Sagittarius. What have we learned while these karmic points have been in water and earth properties?
Hopefully that nature is more important than money and emotions are valued more than power – It taught us to slow down. What we call family has changed and continues to on a daily basis. Work hours need to be balanced with family time and personal space.
Moving to Air and Fire who are we Now? How do we begin to communicate and get
Transits of the Season

The Career Astrologer

Our message out there? Gemini North Node indicates that we have a lot to learn about how to get our thoughts and ideas across to everyone. As the ruler Mercury is a messenger and scribe it’s important to listen and take time to gather all the information before telling stories about what may or may not be the truth.

Sagittarius South Node has us believing we know everything, and encourages us to share that information to anyone with the sense that we are always right. Lessons in sincerity will be prevalent during this transit. How do we see the exaggeration versus the reality of any situation?

How do we get these two to meet in the middle? Big picture versus Detail. Research versus Gossip. Time will tell.

VENUS RETROGRADE IN GEMINI
(May 14 to June 25)

Rethinking, re-evaluating, and re-working our INNER NET. She is in two minds about how she is interacting with the world, especially the social media internet world. It might be time to take a break from this over-stimulation that can overwhelm her nervous system. There are way too many things to think about, be part of, and be seen to be doing.

In the retrograde phase she moves into the underworld close to the sun. We can’t see her. She needs to see herself. She needs to expand her bandwidth band to accommodate all the new information coming in faster and faster. This can only be done by integrating her Libra side and balancing her downtime. Turning the devices off and rebooting in the natural world, her true Taurus nature. Intuition is very strong at this time and needs space to download. It’s like an email from your soul. These messages need to be flagged, not go to junk mail as they are the gold of this retrograde period.

MARS IN PISCES (May 14 to June 28)

Mars has gone fishing. He enters Pisces on the 13th of May 2020. What is he fishing for? Will he sit on the edge of the pier with a beer and wait for the fish to come to his bait and bliss out in peace, mesmerized by the reflecting clear water? Maybe he will notice that it’s not about the fishing: it’s about the moment. Or will he go to battle the big fish? Competitive, ambitious Mars is all fire and finds difficulty immersed in water, especially the vast ocean of Pisces. The big fish is elusive; the battle is an inner one with the self.

Emotions are exaggerated and somewhat optimistic with the full moon eclipse in Sagittarius and Gemini. We are all in two minds as to what to do and how to be. These lights are making an exact square to Mars which is approaching Neptune in the fourth house of the home. Do we really know what’s going on? What are we being told? What do we believe?

Emotions are exaggerated and somewhat optimistic with the full moon eclipse in Sagittarius and Gemini.

This is a time to do some intense manifesting. We need to turn the mayhem into the Mystical. Let’s use this time to transform the collective FEAR into a new value for the Breath of Life. The Egyptian ankh symbolised this as the Alchemy of Resurrection. We must collectively create a new reality to live into.

With Pluto, Jupiter and Pallas all retrograde in Capricorn in the second house, Saturn newly in Aquarius but heading back...
to Capricorn. Have we got the time to re-do and re-evaluate our wants, our needs and policies to wake humanity to what is really important?

Will the powerful people in authority realise that our home is our most important asset and we can no longer take it for granted? The earth is now getting our attention. We can no longer be detached from this reality. We are all in this together. AS ABOVE SO BELOW.

Look toward Uranus in Taurus. The earth has changed her electrical vibration and we are being reprogrammed. We are birthing the age of Aquarius and this requires soul work, body work and mind work. AS WITHIN SO WITHOUT.

Deborah James lives in Melbourne Australia. Intrepid traveler to sacred sites and astrologer for over 30 years, she is Agent 29 of the Cosmic Intelligence Agency – she teaches beginners in astrology for get smart CIA classes and facilitates deep memory processing and past life regression, as taught by Patricia Walsh. She is currently working on divination cards drawing on messages from plant medicine.
Following the Corona Virus circumstances shutting down travel routes and discouraging gathering, the 2020 OPA ASTROLOGY RETREAT is migrating ONLINE!

OPA RETREAT 2020
ONLINE

ASTROLOGY
Bridging Science and Spirituality

PART I APRIL 23-28
PART II Astronomy for Astrologers MAY 8-31

While we are heartbroken over not being able to meet you all in person at the magnificent red rocks of Zion, we wish to turn this crisis into an opportunity and provide a truly memorable learning experience. THE GOOD NEWS: PRICES ARE REDUCED (meals, shuttles, and price difference to be refunded for those who are already signed up).

SCHEDULE PART I

Tuesday, APRIL 23 (from 9am to 2pm Pacific)
Recording available if you miss a session
ASTROLOGY BRIDGING SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY
• Anne Ortelee: The Draconic Chart
• Roy Gillett: The Liberating Science of Astrology, Karma, and Reincarnation
• Maurice Fernandez: Research Astrology: Truth Seekers Come Forth
• Oner Doser: A Rational Approach to to Determining Spirituality in the Chart
• Franco Soulbody: You’re an Engineer?! How Can You be Into Astrology?! NEW!

Friday - Sunday, APRIL 24-25-26
TRACK IMMERSION (4 hours a day, with a break)
Times for each track listed on the OPA website
1. ONER DOSER – Horary Astrology, (the Astrology of Questions).
2. ARLAN WISE – Writing Workshop for Astrologers
3. ANNE ORTELEE – Predictive Astrology - Techniques and Analysis
4. CHRISTOPHER RENSTROM – Jupiter and Saturn: The Two Faces of Fortune (Natal and Transit)
5. DONNA YOUNG – The Foundations of Astrology: Integrating Signs, Planets, and Houses
6. MAURICE FERNANDEZ – Physical and Mental Health in the Chart
8. KAY TAYLOR – Astrology of Relationships: Gifts, Challenges, and Integration
9. LAURA NALBANDIAN – Uranus: Karmic Trauma and Individuation

Monday, APRIL 27
(9am to 2pm Pacific)
Recording available if you miss a session
ASTROLOGY in DIVERSITY
• Boaz Fyler: The Secret History of Astrology
• Timon Harewood: Declinations, the Missing dimension.
• Suzy Holbrook: Medical Astrology from a scientific and spiritual perspective.
• Theo Naicker: Almakaraka – The mover of the Soul (Vedic perspective) NEW!

KEYNOTE — Kay Taylor: What’s Happening on Tuesday? —Disaster or Awakening?

Tuesday, APRIL 28
(9am to 2pm Pacific)
Recording available if you miss a session
ADDRESSING ARGUMENTS AGAINST ASTROLOGY
• Christopher Renstrom: Religious Aversions and Condemnation of Astrology
• Gemini Brett: What in the Heavens is the Zodiac?
• Moon Zlotnick: Twins, Same Chart, Different Lives
• Russell Ohlhausen: The Codex of the Cosmos – When Consciousness and Matter Meet

Full details at
OPAastrology.org

“You are a ghost driving a meat-coated skeleton made from stardust, riding a rock, hurtling through space – FEAR NOTHING!”
Kay Taylor

What’s Happening on Tuesday? — Disaster or Awakening?

Research Astrology Truth Seekers Come Forth

Science of Astrology, Karma and Reincarnation

The Draconic Chart

Determining Spirituality in a Chart

You’re an Engineer! How can you be into Astrology?!

Maurice Fernandez

Roy Gillett

Anne Ortell 

Omer Doser

Franco Soulbody

DAY ONE

ASTROLOGY: Bridging Science and Spirituality

INTRODUCTION – LIVE SESSION (2h)
- Friday, May 8 (4pm Pacific – 11am NZ)
- Saturday, May 9 (9am Pacific – 7pm Istanbul)

Videos of Sessions 1-6 Released

Q&A 1 – LIVE SESSION (2h)
- Saturday, May 9 (4pm Pacific – 11am NZ)
- Sunday, May 10 (9am Pacific – 7pm Istanbul)

Q&A 2 – LIVE SESSION (2h)
- Friday, May 15 (4pm Pacific – 11am NZ)
- Saturday, May 16 (9am Pacific – 7pm Istanbul)

Videos of Sessions 7-12 Released

Q&A 3 – LIVE SESSION (2h)
- Saturday, May 16 (4pm Pacific – 11am NZ)
- Sunday, May 17 (9am Pacific – 7pm Istanbul)

Test to apply contents – Optional for those who wish to be OPA certified.

LIVE SESSION (3h)
- Saturday, May 30 (4pm Pacific)
- Sunday, May 31 (9am Pacific)

Videos of Sessions 13-18 Released

Stay tuned for Consulting Skills and Peer Group!

We will soon offer options.

“We are in SPACE, no one knows what’s going on. We love you!”

PART II ASTRONOMY FOR ASTROLOGERS

MAY 8 to 31, 2020

Gemini Brett will generously offer two sessions to accommodate the different time zone!

INTRODUCTION – LIVE SESSION (2h)
- Friday, May 8 (4pm Pacific – 11am NZ)
- Saturday, May 9 (9am Pacific – 7pm Istanbul)

Videos of Sessions 1-6 Released

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PART II

Astronomy for Astrologers

$295
ANNE ORTELEE

What on earth made you choose (or end up with) Astrology as a profession?
It chose me. I had an amazing reading from John Marchesella, an astrologer in NYC on June 17, 1994 at 11:30 am! After the reading, wanting to know how he DID that with a book of NUMBERS ~ the ephemeris, I signed up for a beginner class. Sat on his couch for 2 1/2 years every Monday night. The rest unfolded as these things do!

Was it challenging for you to come out of the Astrology closet?
Not at all. I was incredibly passionate about it right from the start. I still believe we should all learn our chart basics at age 5 like reading and math!

Tell us your Moon sign, and how you experience it.
My Moon is in Pisces, in the 12th house in a complex aspect pattern with Nodes, Mars, MC, Saturn, Venus and Mercury. Let me sing you a song, I'm an astrologer (to the tune of Piano Man)

A tip or two about what it takes to succeed as a practicing astrologer.
Commitment to your vision. A love of astrology and the desire to share that love with others.

What do you think is the future of Astrology as a profession?
What on earth made you choose (or end up with) Astrology as a profession?
I feel astrology will continue to develop as a profession and the general population will continue to be educated about all the ways astrology can help them in life.

What makes your track at the 2020 Astrology Retreat compelling?
I feel astrology will continue to develop as a profession and the general population will continue to be educated about all the ways astrology can help them in life.

KAY TAYLOR

What on earth made you choose (or end up with) Astrology as a profession?
When I left the corporate world I planned to be a clairvoyant massage therapist, helping people with herbs and nutrition through medical intuitive work. Back then (early 80’s) I didn’t think people would pay for psychic nutritional advice but would pay for a massage, so I’d give the advice for free while healing and nurturing them. Spirit started saying things like “they are in a Pluto transit” or “it’s about Venus” so I

Have to catch up and learn more astrology. I knew the basics through the interest I’d had since I was very young.

Tell us your Moon sign, and how you experience it.
My Moon is in Pisces, in the 12th house conjunct Mercury. So yes, being ultra-sensitive, psychic, intuitive, compassionate and spiritual define my emotional nature. I am conflict avoidant and when young didn’t understand or define my feelings other than to feel overwhelmed. Therapy and spiritual practice have been essential for me.

A tip or two about what it takes to succeed as a practicing astrologer.
To be successful as a practicing astrologer requires patience and integrity, and a deep commitment to endless learning. How you deliver the information is as important as your analysis. If you are client-centered, compassionate, clear and accurate, you will build your business via referrals and repeat business.

What do you think is the future of Astrology? What would be the next step for our field?
I feel astrology will continue to develop as a profession and the general population will continue to be educated about all the ways astrology can help them in life.

What makes your track at the 2020 Astrology Retreat compelling?
My track at Zion is about RELATIONSHIP ASTROLOGY. Who doesn’t need to know that? We are relational creatures. Knowing our strengths and weaknesses and understanding those around us leads to healthier, more satisfying relationships.

In this time of Astrology Day, who would you like to honor, acknowledge, and why?
For IAD I’d like to acknowledge all the amazing astrologers who have passed to Spirit world over the last century. I imagine...
them teaching us in our dreams, widening the perspective.

ROY GILLETT

What on earth made you choose (or end up with) Astrology as a profession?
My chart not only understood me better than anyone (thing) I had met before, but also showed me, as I learned to read it for myself, that I was ideally suited to being an astrologer (0230 GMT February 10 1938, London UK).

Was it challenging for you to come out of the Astrology closet?
I had to choose between astrology and a career in school teaching.

Tell us your Moon sign, and how you experienced it.
In Gemini trined by Sun/Venus in Aquarius, but square Neptune in Virgo. It is easy to convince anyone of anything, but the challenge is to find a way, by which they will hold on to and apply it afterward. Being in my seventh house, I tend to be drawn toward and argue for misunderstood, or disadvantaged situations.

A tip or two about what it takes to succeed as a practicing astrologer.
As well as a good, efficient understanding of the ‘tools of the trade’, astrologers need self-belief, persistence and an honest wish to care for others. The work requires a skillful mix of idealism and realism, and the discriminating awareness not to allow the one to ruin the other. Be willing to rely on the flow, listen to others carefully, but do not let fear dominate your decisions.

What do you think is the future of Astrology? What would be the next step for our field?
A world where proper understanding of the astro-cycles in our individual lives and societies is seen as a vital tool that helps our relationships and social affairs. Realisation that it can give objective help for our relationships and social affairs.

What on earth made you choose (or end up with) Astrology as a profession?
As it is in my nature to do, I would have to refute this question entirely! It was nothing “on Earth” that made me choose Astrology as a professional endeavor and I still struggle with classifying myself as an “astrologer” or any specific title, for that matter. Uranus was exactly at midheaven when I was born with Pluto just behind it in the 9th house. For me, I don’t think there was any escaping the pull of those powerful planets and the information coming in from starlight which came with that. I was born to be cosmologically inclined, whether I wanted to or not. At a very early age I was overly curious about words, expanded ideas, histories, mythologies and probably most of all ‘space’. My grandmother and grandfather were my guardians when I was young, and though humble, they had a respectable grasp on what was important in the world. I was taught about astro-mythology when I inquired about the Mercury, Gemini and Apollo space missions which had captured the fascination of most families like mine in the late 60’s early 70’s. Around age 3, I learned about the concept of astrological signs when I asked my grandmother about her ring of five birthstones which represented each of her children’s birth months. I was probably one of the only 3 year olds who actually requested to go back to the planetarium multiple times to hear the stories of the stars told over and over again. I got a lesson from my grandfather & my uncle on differences of the midheavens around age 4, when I asked what “Zenith” meant on the Zenith television. These early “lessons” were intended for me, to light the ember for my Sagittarius Fire ascendant to dominate most of my childhood, which ultimately required me to accept that astrology is all around us. Since I couldn’t beat it, I joined it…

Was it challenging for you to come out of the Astrology closet?
When I was younger, I was always a bit of a weirdo with too much information and yet, not enough wisdom to make sense of it all. Even though I grew up open-minded, my experience within the dogma of the Christian religion turned me into a bit of a cynic. Around my second Saturn square, I went through a period of extreme skepticism towards mystical and spiritual ideas. Yet, the planets already had a plan for me. I was to quickly embark on a unique reawakening. To take on this 180° shift was essentially a life-changing experience, which by my Saturn Return entailed a spiritual journey to Tibet, a move from my hometown, a complete change of life, friends & ‘family’ and to fully embrace the most heretical ideas held by the person I had been just a few years before. Even though I had quickly become “the astrologer” among my new peers, I could not answer the most basic questions of a possible fundamental mechanism, which would allow for the psychological correspondence with the celestial bodies. I was also not satisfied with astrology’s general lack of rigor (nor vision for it) or professional cohesion, which, to this day, I feel is our widest chasm to cross; and to do this we must participate.
And I must admit that summing up myself under one title, “an astrologer” still is a challenge for me. I feel that ‘astrology’ should and eventually will entail much more than it currently implies, which will make ‘being in the closet’ about these beliefs, no longer an issue.

Tell us your Moon sign, and how you experience it.

I was born at 12° Taurus Moon in the 5th. I am admittedly a bit biased, but my Moon in Taurus, I feel, has been my saving grace through most of life. In the most dire of situations, I often do my best work or find my clearest strengths. Though, I know that at times it has kept me “stuck” in many affairs of the heart, I feel that given proper energy, Taurus Moon is the most reliable emotionally, especially when accompanied by a sympathetic and sensual disposition.

A tip or two about what it takes to succeed as a practicing astrologer.

Well, assuming ‘success as practicing astrologer’ may be a bit of a loaded question! For those who are generally horoscopically astute, success is usually measured by clients and dollars. I tend to gauge my successes on the faces of the people I am speaking to or the emails from those who have read something I wrote that revealed a new way to perceive or a deeper understanding of our celestial connection. Devotion and diligence to all that astrology is intended to be, is what it will take to succeed as an astrologer in the future.

What do you think is the future of Astrology? What would be the next step for our field?

Our recent pass of Uranus through Aries has ushered a new “Astrological Spring”, the seeds of which have blown across the globe and who’s shoots are now flourishing as the Earth energy is activated with Uranus in Taurus. As we move forward, ‘astrology’ of the later 21st & 22nd centuries will begin to look much different than it does today, in my opinion. In many places, you can already see that this germination and new shift towards reintegration has taken root. Astrology, as it has become today, was never intended as a stand alone practice or discipline. Astrologers will be required to expand their scope beyond the ego-directed natal readings and back to its ancient purposes of collective spiritual enlightenment. I believe that we will see something of a “Vulcan Synthesis” of spirituality and science. And by ‘Vulcan’, I am not referring to the rarely mentioned Roman God of Fire and Lava, instead I mean the Star Trek, Spock, Vulcanian salute, blend of mysticism, logic and technology of a more integrated species. I feel that astrologers must also become ‘scientists’ once again and contemporary physicists must re-embrace the spiritual dimension they can no longer afford to ignore. For what is a real scientist but one who reshapes their own presupposed hypothesis to better fit the facts as we understand them (however improbable those facts might seem to be), rather than the majority of ‘modern scientists’ who reshape or ignore historical or what may seem to be illogical facts to fit a personal hypothesis. The study of stars is the wisest of intellectual sciences, yet as Spock says in Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country, “Logic is not the end of wisdom, but the beginning.”

What makes your track at the 2020 Astrology Retreat compelling?

I imagine that every track facilitator will call the right people in and that is what matters! This track will probably be the most aligned track to the purposes of the theme of the retreat, Science and Spirituality. In this track EMBODYING DIVINE SCIENCE: ALCHEMY, ASTEROIDS & ASTROLOGY we will take a “head, heart & hands” approach. And now Shannon Gill and I have merged tracks in order to give those who attend the best of many points of view regarding asteroids, scientific associations to the astrological mechanisms, and their spiritual meanings, so we can better understand our connections from particles to planets …and beyond!

In this time of Astrology Day, who would you like to honor, acknowledge, and why?

I would like to acknowledge two astrologers, neither living and neither very often mentioned in the context of modern astrology. The first is Abū ‘Alī al-Husayn or Ibn Sīna (Avicenna) the Islamic Golden Age polymath from Persia sometimes referred to as “the most influential philosopher of the pre-modern era”. The post-history of the Ibn Sīna story is interesting in that many authorities claim that he attempted to refute astrology, while others openly accept that he was an outstanding astrologer in his own right. (Though I may sometimes voice my opinion regarding some practices or interpretations, I have a firm understanding of the natural philosophy and the celestial correspondences which underlie the cosmic fabric, which is how I feel the facts may have been skewed regarding Sīna’s treatises on astrology.) An acute and deep understanding of astrology is what distinguished his work in medicine and metaphysics. The second astrologer is his more widely-accepted Persian counterpart, Abū Rayḥān Bīrūnī or Al-Biruni, who substantially contributed to most all of the sciences of his day - including astronomy & astrology. Though he too began to draw early lines between mathematical astronomy and certain astrological techniques and divinations, he firmly endorsed astrology as science in its own right and merit. (Just as could be said for Isaac Newton, 700 years later, despite what modern scholars chose to ignore today.) I feel that these two contemporaries, held a light in the darkness of the ancient world and should be honored among the great contributors of the astrological traditions.

SHANNON GILL

What on earth made you choose (or end up with) Astrology as a profession?

The day I had my first ‘official’ astrology reading, I knew I was to become an astrologer. In that one hour period, this man reframed so much loss and intensity I had experienced in my life in an empowering manner, and reminded me that these experiences were ‘initiations’ into my deeper purpose and power. I have five planets in the 8th house, and historically anytime anyone looked at my chart they would gasp! It relayed an energy of ‘fear’ which I did not at the time understand. What I learned in this life changing reading was that I was here to understand the greatest mysteries of life, and that each ‘loss’ cracked me open to allow for higher energies and wisdom to pour through. I was already in the healing field, but I was astounded at how fast and deep this reading cut to the core meaning and mythical magic of my Soul. It put me on the path to re-membering many lifetimes of being a Soul-guide, through the darker times. And that in order for me to be able to hold the light for others, I must know the terrain.

Was it challenging for you to come out of the Astrology closet?

No. I have 0° Aquarius rising. I was happy to lead the charge! I have never really been bothered by any cynics, more, they inspired me to attempt to open their minds to the mystery.
Tell us your Moon sign, and how you experience it.
Libra Moon. Forever trying to keep the peace. Love hosting sensual and beautiful social events. I remember that state of ‘union’ and driven to return there through partnership. My Libra Moon is conjunct Pluto in the 8th house. I have had transformative relationships, many losses, and work with people/couples to do the deeper alchemical work that can bring about freedom from childhood woundedness and stories in order to experience immense depth, passion, and transcendent union.

A tip or two about what it takes to succeed as a practicing astrologer.
Write, speak, teach. Love what you do. Love people and seeing them blossom into self acceptance and empowerment. Be organized. Create real relationships with your clients, follow up with them. Share regular astrological tidbits to educate and guide people as to the ongoing planetary dance. Empower their own learning of the stars, and remind them this is their birthright to be in alignment with the cosmic flow of the Universe.

What do you think is the future of Astrology? What would be the next step for our field?
It is re-emerging quickly. As the polarization on the planet continues to become more extreme, people are hungry for meaning outside the daily grind. I feel supplementing an astrology education with counseling/coaching skills is important as we are working with people on the deepest psychological levels. This also helps to give credibility to our field. Be persistent to open doorways. Bring astrology into academic and business settings. Create bridges through clear translation in laymen terms making this wisdom accessible to the masses.

What makes your track at the 2020 Astrology Retreat compelling?
The theme of the conference is ‘Bridging Science & Spirituality’ and Russell Ohlhausen’s and my track- EMBODYING DIVINE SCIENCE: ALCHEMY, ASTEROIDS & ASTROLOGY is focused on doing just that! We operate a retreat center in Austin Texas where we create holistic events guided by the stars, but then translated into the personal through ritual, ceremony, contemplative practice and dance. We will be bringing this ‘head, heart, and hands’ approach to our track practice through embodiment, vibrational experiences, and hands-on astro-elixir creation!

In this time of Astrology Day, who would you like to honor, acknowledge, and why?
My three most significant teachers: The late Dr. Charles Bebeau and his wife, Nin Bebeau, founders of the Archetypal Academy in Boulder, CO. This dynamic Aquarian couple (born on the same day!) mentored my Soul awake into the mystical realms of myth, dreams, astrology, and alchemy. Maurice Fernandez then came as a guest teacher to the Archetypal Academy where we sat in a teepee and he spoke about the Nodes, and I knew that day he was my teacher. Maurice’s intense passion and commitment to Soul evolution and collective awakening is unmatched.

DONNA YOUNG

What on earth made you choose (or end up with) Astrology as a profession?
I didn’t choose astrology, it chose me. My appendix ruptured at my Uranus opposition, and when I came out of surgery it was with a compulsion to study astrology, a topic I’d previously had little interest in. My new obsession found me working towards a degree on the subject at Kepler College four years later. A decade after I began my studies I was laid off from my 30-year corporate career and decided to hang my shingle as an astrologer just a few years earlier than I’d planned.

Was it challenging for you to come out of the Astrology closet?
Not at all. It never occurred to me that it was something to hide. Everyone I worked with knew I was studying and I became the office astrologer. I’ve since moved to a rural area where few people even know what astrology is - they think I’m out here looking through my telescope. But I don’t care. I’m loud and proud of what I do. What was challenging for me was to stop saying I was a student of astrology and just call myself an astrologer. There’s such an endless amount to learn, and I suffered from thinking I couldn’t be a proper astrologer until I knew it all. I eventually realized that likely wouldn’t happen in my lifetime so I relaxed about the idea.

Tell us your Moon sign, and how you experience it.
My Libra moon finds me always wanting to consider the other side, so as a friend I’m a great person to talk to if you want perspective. If you want someone to agree that you’re wonderful no matter what you say or do, I’m not so much your gal.

A tip or two about what it takes to succeed as a practicing astrologer.
My business and local reputation grew by making myself visible. Initially, I signed up for every trade show and event I could think of. Through these events, I not only found clients but other astrologers who I was able to form a community with. With a corporate background and an education in marketing and small business development, I treated it like a business and outside of my consultations dedicated part of each day to marketing, planning, and education. To this day it remains important to me that I continue to sharpen my saw and learn from others.

What do you think is the future of Astrology? What would be the next step for our field?
I’m a little concerned about the free for all in the world of Astrology, so it might get messier before it gets tidier. It’s so easy for people to get internet fame without really earning their stripes and this isn’t helpful to the reputation of Astrology overall. But I’m excited about the popularity of Astrology right now, and I hope that this evolves into it being a more legitimate study. It would be wonderful to see some of the schools be able to get accreditation and have astrology recognized as a viable career option.

What makes your track at the 2020 Astrology Retreat compelling?
My track covers THE FOUNDATIONS OF ASTROLOGY. It’s absolutely the best track to take if you’re a beginner. I teach astrology to beginners 4-5 times a year through Kepler College and in my private practice, and I love getting people excited about astrology while ensuring a solid foundation.

In this time of Astrology Day, who would you like to honor, acknowledge, and why?
Oh my gosh. I’ve had the great privilege of studying with some truly phenomenal astrologers. But if I have to choose two I’ll choose Demetra George and Rob Hand. Both were on the faculty at Kepler College when I was there. In the days of the degree program, they used to have a live symposium each term. I was on a track where it wasn’t mandatory to attend the symposiums, but when I attended my first one I found Rob sitting in the stairwell trying to get wireless and my fate was sealed. I wanted to be a part of a world where this
LAURA NALBANDIAN

What on earth made you choose (or end up with) Astrology as a profession?

My journey to becoming a professional astrologer was not planned, at least not directly by me . . . . I had been working on and off at the family bookstore, Astrology et al, since its beginnings in 1975. I left the bookstore in 1979, when my father fired me, telling me – “you will never figure out what you want to do with your life, as long as you have the safety of this job.” I ended up working as a secretary at a local hospital and moved on to working at an accounting firm, eventually becoming a bookkeeper. Due to life circumstances – marriage and a baby, and not wanting to put my child into daycare, I went back to work at the bookstore as the manager; taking my baby to work with me every day. My plan was to just be the manager; run the bookstore and eventually inherit the business when mom retired. I realized that in order to sell books on the topic of astrology, I would need to know something about the subject. I started taking classes from Jeffrey Green in 1983, and found that my left-brain way of thinking wasn’t going to work. Frankly, it was a struggle, but some point along the way, my right-brain opened up and astrology became an obsession; multiple classes a week, stacks of astrology books by my bedside. I was truly blessed to have a store full of astrology books at my fingertips, and a number of highly gifted astrologers and teachers from whom to learn. Though I never envisioned myself as a professional astrologer, the universe apparently had other plans, and through a series of twists and turns, it is exactly where I ended up.

Was it challenging for you to come out of the Astrology closet?

Growing up with an astrologer for a mother, it wasn’t really in the closet to begin with . . . however, when I found myself in non-astrology situations – talking with parents of other children, I would often say I was a massage therapist . . . which was true, it just wasn’t the entire story. But that really didn’t last long, especially after letting go of the massage practice. I find that if I’m comfortable saying I’m an astrologer, most (if not all) people don’t seemed to be bothered. When filling out bank or other types of official forms, I always list Astrologer as my profession.

Tell us about your Moon sign, and how you experience it.

I have Moon in Taurus conjunct the MC in the 10th house. I’m focused and tenacious when it comes to completing a task or goal (personal as well as professional). I’m a minimalist when it comes to possessions and tend to live in one location or house for decades – I do love consistency! I tend to be even-keeled when it comes to emotion; I’d say that I’ve made friends with my emotions, and find it quite easy and natural to express them.

A tip or two about what it takes to succeed as a practicing astrologer.

Astrology is fun, but business is business, no matter what you are doing. And starting a business can be daunting; so you need a plan. To be honest, marketing a business is a whole different world than when I started, but the basics of running a business rarely change. Name recognition is vital and important – so find ways to get your name and your work before the public.

What makes your track at the 2020 Astrology Retreat compelling?

URANUS – KARMIC TRAUMA AND INDIVIDUATION. The manifestations and consequences of unresolved trauma are everywhere, and affect every human being. I think it is the “elephant in the room” of human interaction. Uranus in the birth chart is one of the indicators of unresolved karmic trauma - its house placement, and aspects to other planets. When trauma occurs, small or large, the human survival mechanism is to detach or disassociate, to mitigate the pain of the experience(s). In this intensive, students will learn how to identify the karmic trauma, and through the birth chart, explore the potential for healing and integration of the fragmented parts of the soul and psyche.

In this time of Astrology Day, who would you like to honor, acknowledge, and why?

Margaret (Maggie) Nalbandian – She started her astrological/metaphysical bookstore in 1975, becoming an icon in Seattle and throughout the astrological community. She had a vision for a college of astrological study, and pulled a group of astrologers together to make it happen. She started NORWAC – The Northwest Astrological Conference in 1984 – which is one of the most beloved conferences in the US. She was my business partner, my sounding board, and she is my mother.

Jeffrey Wolf Green – I was 17 years old when Jeffrey walked into our bookstore in 1976. He was looking for a place to do readings and teach classes. He made an instant connection with my mother, Maggie, and became part of our extended family. His ground-breaking work - Evolutionary Astrology – was developed in the late 70’s/early 80’s and he wrote his best-selling book, “Pluto: The Evolutionary Journey of the Soul.”
ARLAN WISE

What on earth made you choose (or end up with) Astrology as a profession?
I was born to it. I remembered it. I was fascinated with it and when I started reading charts the words flowed out.

Was it challenging for you to come out of the Astrology closet?
No. There were many years when I identified as a mother and then as an astrologer. It was when Pluto squared my Sun that I took on the identity of a professional astrologer. I was never embarrassed to say that I’m an astrologer.

Tell me your Moon sign, and how you experience it.
My Moon is 29 Aquarius in the 12th house so I feel like I have an honorary Pisces Moon some of the time. I do love my Aquarius Moon for its intellectual gifts, its detachment, and its ability to see above and beyond daily life. I know it helps me be a good astrologer.

A tip or two about what it takes to succeed as a practicing astrologer.
Practice and patience. Doing good work so that people want to come back and hear more. Total concentration on the client.

What do you think is the future of Astrology? What would be the next step for our field?
I love seeing astrology seep into the mainstream. I have seen this more and more and it makes me happy. I want to see astrology used in schools to help students learn in a way that makes their Mercury happy.

What makes your track at the 2020 Astrology Retreat compelling?
I teach a WRITING WORKSHOP FOR ASTROLOGERS. I emphasize that good writing is specific and concise, with no extra words. Because we translate our symbolic astrological knowledge into English, or our native language, it is very important to keep one’s writing clear. Many people tell me they can’t write or are afraid to write. My track helps you to overcome those feelings.

In this time of Astrology Day, who would you like to honor, acknowledge, and why?
Dane Rudhyar and Marc Edmund Jones for their breakthrough work. My first astrologer, Laurel Lowell (granddaughter of Percival) for her inspiration and guidance. I have great fondness in my heart for those friends and teachers who have passed on - Robert Blaschke, Jeff Jawer, Haloli Richter, Dennis Elwell, Richard Idemon, Eleanor Bach, Frances McEvoy, Bepin Behari.

GEMINI BRETT

What on earth made you choose (or end up with) Astrology as a profession?
A series of mystical synchronicities slowly swiss-cheesed my conditioned programs of cynicism enough to allow the astrology seed to land in my soil during my second nodal return in 2012.

Was it challenging for you to come out of the Astrology closet?
I am proud of being an astrologer, but I did create my pseudonym to protect the future potential of teaching astronomy or archeoastronomy in an academic setting. Interestingly, Facebook forced me to reclaim my birth name on a night when I was visiting my father in my grandfather’s house shortly after he had passed away.

Tell me your Moon sign, and how you experience it.
My Moon Sign is Gemini and it feels as if my very survival is dependent upon my need to wonder.

A tip or two about what it takes to succeed as a practicing astrologer.
To succeed as a practicing astrologer (or as anything) follow your passion even if it seems as if it is taking you away from what is popular.

What do you think is the future of Astrology? What would be the next step for our field?
If my dreams come true, the acceptance of Astrology will lead us to discover the subtle field of forces that make it real, and that knowledge will open wide windows to the reality of Earth-first energy systems.

What makes your track at the 2020 Astrology Retreat compelling?
I am teaching ASTRONOMY FOR ASTROLOGERS during part 2 of the retreat, and I invite as many people to attend so they can better learn to see the living sky in the chart and the chart in the living sky. When we re-nature Astrology, we re-member the roots of the rules and the proofs of the astrological equations we use.

CHRISTOPHER RENSTROM

What on earth made you choose (or end up with) Astrology as a profession?
I fell in love with the imagery and the symbolism of it all. It spoke to me more than my Catholic faith did and the acting classes I was taking at the Juilliard School at the time.

Was it challenging for you to come out of the Astrology closet?
Not at all. I have always been LOUD and PROUD!

Tell me your Moon sign, and how you experience it.
My Moon is in Pisces. It’s VERY imagistic! Thankfully it’s become less melancholic as I’ve grown older. It keeps my Capricorn Sun compassionate.

A tip or two about what it takes to succeed as a practicing astrologer.
Read the chart. Don’t assume you have the answers because you don’t. If you stay true to the chart - and the unfolding story of the client’s life - then you will give an astrology reading of the best quality. And listen! Always ALWAYS listen to the client. They’ll tell you everything you need to know.

What do you think is the future of Astrology? What would be the next step for our field?
I absolutely ADORE where Astrology is now and where it’s going in the future. There
are so many versions of it and so many ways to interpret the information - which is fitting considering the countless number of Stars in the sky.

What makes your track at the 2020 Astrology Retreat compelling?
What’s unique about my track is that it delves into the HISTORY, MYTHS, AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF JUPITER AND SATURN. How did these planets come to be interpreted in the way they are now? Planets are more than keywords. They’re entire worlds unto themselves. I especially look forward to unpacking Jupiter because it’s a planet that has so much more going for it than “good luck”. And, quite frankly, you can’t understand Jupiter without understanding Saturn and vice versa. They’re the flip sides of Fortune. One is the hand that giveth and the other is the hand that taketh away.

In this time of Astrology Day, who would you like to honor, acknowledge, and why?
Genevieve Kemble created the first daily horoscope column syndicated in newspapers here in the United States. It was called Tomorrow’s Horoscope and it debuted on February 20, 1917 - thirteen years before R.H. Naylor in Britain who is mistakenly credited with creating the first newspaper horoscope column. Kemble was 50 years old and widowed when she began being published and she never missed a day. I have found her columns in newspapers as geographically diverse as Florida, Utah, and Oregon. Tomorrow’s Horoscope ran until 1954.

Maurice Fernandez

What on earth made you choose (or end up with) Astrology as a profession?
My initial career direction was in art and music (sound engineering), but as I kept studying astrology, more people kept asking for readings. A lady approached me and asked me to teach her astrology. When I referred her to more experienced astrologers, she said it had to be me because I was the only one to speak French, which was her mother tongue. She had her Moon exactly on the degree of my Sun, her Sun exactly on the degree of my Ascendant, and her Ascendant exactly on the degree of my Moon. I was 21, and so it went.

Was it challenging for you to come out of the Astrology closet?
There was no closet. I was fortunate to have open minded parents and the more I spoke of my interest in astrology, the more work I got.

Tell us your Moon sign, and how you experience it.
Gemini Moon in the 12th house – I’m constantly observing people and animal behaviors, including my own, and analyzing emotional patterns to try to better understand how to live life. I love to migrate between worlds, whether that is on a cultural level, or between the mundane and the spiritual. I think this Moon makes me compulsively ask questions, sometimes completely out of context.

A tip or two about what it takes to succeed as a practicing astrologer.
True to my Gemini Moon, I found myself able to sustain myself by diversifying my services. Being able to consult one on one, teach larger groups, write, and speak at public events made it more interesting and financially sustainable.

Never compromising on quality - always learning from my mistakes with the aim to get better at what I offer. LISTEN.
Never refusing work - I’m here to serve those who hire my services, (barring exceptional circumstances).

What do you think is the future of Astrology? What would be the next step for our field?
I’m quite inspired by the consistent work that our mentors and our generation has produced, setting the stage for the next step of growth for our practice. Those who kept going without promised reward, but in loyalty to the study of Truth and in the spirit of service. Astrology is today gaining great recognition in our profession. That’s what I keep going with. I believe the Jupiter/Saturn in Aquarius will be a game changer for astrology, bringing both more opportunities and more scrutiny. The more popular we will get, the more attacks we can expect. We need to up our game. This brings me to strongly believe in the work we do with OPA - educate ourselves in Astronomy, History, Ethics and Consulting Skills - while improving Astrology education as a whole. There will be no way to truly progress without an increase in rigor. With that, I would want our field to become overly rigid by trying to meet higher standards of rigor. We need to make sure that creativity and diversity is encouraged and better supported in the field of astrology. This also entails ending the pretense of “my astrology is better than yours,” as long as results are proving reliable.

What makes your track at the 2020 Astrology Retreat compelling?
I will be presenting about PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH. While most astrologers are not doctors or psychiatrists, I believe it is critical for all of us to understand health and well-being. The chart provides many clues about our individual ways to lead healthy lives and the potential consequences of derailing. I’m happy the track was well received and sold out.

I will also present to the whole audience a research I’ve done in astrology and provide strategies to encourage research in our field.

In this time of Astrology Day, who would you like to honor, acknowledge, and why?
I cannot be more grateful for the prolific work of Dane Rudhyar who provided an incredible body of knowledge that inspired the modern movement in astrology. I only found out later in my education that many of the things I professed about the values and approaches to use astrology were already written by him. Interestingly, I also share a French heritage and moved for the first time to the US when I was 22 (Rudhyar was 21). My main teacher Jeffrey Green himself evolved from Rudhyar’s work and expanded on these concepts to identify the soul journey through the natal chart.

I would also like to acknowledge all of those whose lives were challenged and oppressed for their work with astrology and the pursuit of truth, including Alan Leo, Galileo Galilei, and the many more known and lesser known. This includes those of us today who still endure the consequences of prejudice and ignorance toward astrology, at times through violent ostracization. Your courage keeps us going!
What on earth made you choose (or end up with) Astrology as a profession?
I was interested in astrology since I was young. However, since I was involved in trade business, I did not have enough time for astrology. On one of my birthdays, my wife gave me a present of a natal chart report she bought from an internet site. After reading this report, I started studying it and tried to understand the system, and subsequently, booked a consultation from an actual astrologer. I did not initially plan to become a professional astrologer because we had a family business in Grand Bazaar (market), always buzzing with a high traffic. Eventually, after learning the dynamics of my own chart, I understood that astrology would be good for my soul, especially teaching it. I rented out our store in Grand Bazaar and started being involved in astrology on a full-time basis.

Was it challenging for you to come out of the Astrology closet?
It was not challenging. When I started being a full-time astrologer, I told everyone the details of my profession. I had a column in a newspaper and also appeared in TV shows, so I was distinguished in my profession. My previous colleagues at Grand Bazaar were not familiar with astrology. However, being supported with my books, articles and TV shows, they were impressed and appreciative.

Tell us your Moon sign, and how you experience it.
My Moon sign is Scorpio. My emotions are deep and intense. I am passionately connected to women figures in my life (mother, wife and sister). I am extremely loyal. I also expect the same from the other party. Although I am often coming across as a rationalist as my Sun and Mercury are in Aquarius, I can also be daring and courageous. I am emotionally resolute. I like challenges. My desire for success is strong, as the Moon rules the 10th house of my chart. I am highly intuitive and I do not have difficulty in understanding other people’s moods.

A tip or two about what it takes to succeed as a practicing astrologer.
For me, reliability is the main factor. I'm very focused in my consultations and classes, going deeper into the topics without being distracted.

Understanding the needs of the other party is also extremely important. I would advise to aim at being in command and remain confident during consultation sessions and during classes. Inspire confidence about your proficiency. Having a sound knowledge on your expertise is very important. At the same time, be honest about what you are not proficient in. Modesty is part of self-confidence.

What do you think is the future of Astrology? What would be the next step for our field?
I believe astrology will find a place in universities again in the future. Following Jupiter-Saturn conjunction in 2020, Pluto will enter Aquarius. Statistics and the formation of databanks will gain importance. We already do that at my Astrology School. Advanced level students compile statistics based on data collected from participants. I ask particular questions on social media and we then compile and organize the results. I am sure these statistics will be very helpful in the future.

Observing planetary positions is also important in terms of the changes in the magnetic field of the Earth, including the role of planets during Solar activities because these events are regulated by the planets and their changing positions. If we can understand this mathematical relationship, we may find out more about the astrological mechanisms.

What makes your track at the 2020 Astrology Retreat compelling?
My track is THE ART OF HORARY ASTROLOGY. In daily life, we ask many questions. Instead of getting detailed consultation sessions, people often prefer to get answers for their specific questions. Horary Astrology is the chart for the time the question is asked.

It is one of the best methods to provide answers for specific questions. Questions such as “Will I marry?” are common and can be answered through the natal chart. However, for specific questions like “Will I marry with Harry?” can be more precisely answered through the help of Horary techniques. It is a wonderful field that allows you to produce extremely reliable and detailed answers above expectations. For me, Horary is the heart of Traditional Astrology.

In this time of Astrology Day, who would you like to honor, acknowledge, and why?
I would like to honor Robert Zoller for his research and translations on Medieval Astrology and his overall contributions to Traditional Astrology. I would also like to honor Maurice Fernandez for his great contributions to the development of astrology. He is a very active person who continuously generates new projects and works for the growth of OPA tirelessly. He also makes great efforts for creating a community which works hard for and defends astrology.
and the two seemed to be supportive of each other. When I began seeing clients for therapy in the early 80’s and also doing some astrology charts — Ilana Rubenfeld whom I trained with in Gestalt therapy and body work— was my 1st paying client.

Was it challenging for you to come out of the Astrology closet?

It was challenging for me to come out of the closet and tell people that I was an astrologer as well as a psychotherapist. So many people seemed to have the reaction when told I was doing astrology charts, “you don’t really believe in that, do you?” That reaction seemed more prevalent in men than women.

Tell us your Moon sign, and how you experience it.

As mentioned above, my Moon sign is Aquarius and I do experience the rebel as a part of my personality. I have always been outside the mainstream. Also, friendships have always been important to me and belonging to some like-minded groups.

A tip or two about what it takes to succeed as a practicing astrologer.

I think to succeed as a practicing astrologer you have to really put yourself out there a lot and speak in front of groups and teach classes, etc. It helps to have a strong Leo on one’s chart which I don’t.

What do you think is the future of Astrology? What would be the next step for our field?

I think astrology has a bright future as Millennials seem to be interested in it, bringing in a younger generation, and I think people are taking it more seriously.

What makes your track at the 2020 Astrology Retreat compelling?

My tract at the 2020 Opa Retreat is a PEER SUPERVISION GROUP in PART II and I think it’s the best one to attend if you want to polish your professional skills and eventually get certified by OPA.

Since this takes place in Part II, you can still take another tract during Part I. Besides the certification, taking the Peer Group really helps you become a better counseling astrologer. We work on our challenges with our clients and learn about each other’s reading style by doing reading to each other. In addition, you get ideas on how to promote and expand your practice.

In this time of Astrology Day, who would you like to honor and acknowledge:

On Astrology Day I would like to honor several of my important teachers: Donna Cunningham, Liz Greene and Richard Idemon. All 3 of them gave me invaluable teachings.
Blast from the past.....
Match these vintage photos with OPA Retreat 2020 Faculty!
Precession of the Equinoxes, marking the gap between signs and constellations. (Earlier evidence of this discovery exists).

- 2nd Century – Tetrabiblos a four volume book by Claudius Ptolemy – One of the most important bodies of knowledge serving as a references for centuries, by the Hellenistic Astrologer who lived in Alexandria.

- 8th -15th Century – With the decline of the Roman empire and rise of Christianity in Europe, Astrology is met with skepticism by the church and goes in and out of favor. The deterministic quality of astrology is met with strong defiance from figures such as St Augustine. though it remains strongly used in Europe, where for instance, students in medicine are required by law to educate themselves in astrology. During this time, Astrology travels back to the Middle East and Arabic Spain during the Golden Age of Islam,

O n this March Equinox day, as the Sun enters the sign of Aries, we celebrate ASTROLOGY DAY! We take a moment to reflect on this amazing and ever-expanding body of knowledge that has touched all cultures and civilizations throughout time, and illuminated the minds of kings, priests, and commoners alike—or for that matter any person who bent their neck to look up and realize our life is part of a much larger organism.

Interpretation and transmission of star knowledge has gone through multiple incarnations as the torch passed on from generation to generation. Today we take the time to look back at our ancestors, those who kept astrology alive and whose shoulders we stand on. We dedicate this edition of the Career Astrologer magazine to explore some aspects of astrology’s history and acknowledge ourselves as well in this long journey.

This collection of articles is nowhere close to covering the wide range of development throughout time, and the many figures who are part of this cosmic tapestry, but we hope you will be inspired to keep exploring and learn new things about what made astrology what it is today. Thanks to all the contributors, and thank you all for making astrology stronger.

A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORICAL TIMELINE

- Archeo-astronomy sites: some containing astrological references that pre-date Mesopotamia: Adam’s Calendar, Metsamor, Egypt Pyramid of Giza (2550 BCE), Stonehenge (stone placements around 2550 BCE), Kukulcan in Chichen Itza (800 CE), Chaco canyon.

- Circa 1600 BCE - Enuma Anu Enlil – Mesopotamian tablets (Sumer and Babylon) representing some of the earliest records of Astrology. (Possibly at the time of biblical figure Abraham and Sara as astrology practitioners).

- 280 BCE – Astrologer Berossus, a priest from Babylon travels to the island of Kos in Greece where he began teaching astrology to the local culture, marking the transition from Mesopotamia to ancient Greece. This is around the time Alexander the Great was expanding his kingdom connecting the Middle East with Greece and Egypt.

- 2nd to 1st Century BCE marks the emergence of horoscopic astrology during the Hellenistic times, where now charts are drawn with reference to an Ascendant, reflecting specific moments or births.

- 127 BCE (circa) – astronomer Hipparchus officially identifies the
where astrologers such as Mashallah Ibn Athari, Ibn’ Arabi or Abu Ma’shar translate and expand on the earlier works of Greek Astrologers such as Ptolemy and Dorotheus. Astrology continues to thrive in India where it is said that Islamic scholars were also instructed.

- **15th – 16th Century – in 1543, Copernicus**, an astrologer and astronomer, reveals that planets revolve around the Sun, not the Earth. Because of the resistance from the church, it takes many years for this model to be accepted. Yet, as astronomy shifts from a geocentric to a heliocentric model, it often becomes an argument to discredit the validity of astrology.

- **Circa 1609 – Galileo Galilei** an astronomer and astrologer, borrows ideas to build the first telescope and makes new revelations about the nature of the Moon and Jupiter’s moons. He notices Venus has phases similar to the Moon and concludes that Venus orbits the Sun, confirming the Copernicus realization of heliocentrism. This leads him to be denounced by the church and be put under house arrest.

- **17th Century (Age of Reason) –** Astrology 101 trainings are removed from academic studies in medicine, and astrology as a whole is falling out of favor in Europe. Several reasons likely contributed to this loss of popularity: The Cartesian split purported by Descartes, separating spirit/mind from matter and further advancing an anthropocentric view and discouraging the value of symbolism.
  - Tense political climate led to associating astrologers with adverse parties, contributing to their denigration.
  - Copernicus heliocentric model of the planet is used by the scientific movement to discredited the geocentric model of astrology.

- **1781 Uranus discovered / 1846 Neptune discovered**

- **Late 19th Century: the Theosophical Society and other movements** imported Eastern concepts (many of which were originally part of ancient Greece), among them the understanding of reincarnation and the evolution of consciousness. This effort revived the practice of astrology and advocated for the use of astrology as a tool for self-awareness, moving away from rigid deterministic prediction. Important figures emerged from this movement, notably Alan Leo and Dane Rudhyar.

- **Alan Leo** revived astrology in England, making it accessible to the mainstream through popular magazines and book publications including the first personalized astrology reports. With his success came obstacles, and he was prosecuted for “fortune-telling” despite the fact that he was against firm predictions but probabilities. He was eventually fined and died from the stress of the trials.

- **Dane Rudhyar** French-born American astrologer merged Theosophical concepts with Jungian psychology and wrote dozens of books that became cornerstones in the emergence of modern astrology (Humanistic and Transpersonal).

- **1930 Pluto discovered**

- **Early 20th Century and Carl Jung** – psychoanalyst who explored the influence of astrology and psychoanalysis, reviving symbolism and advancing the concept of synchronicity linked to astrology. His body of knowledge influenced the work of contemporary astrologers Liz Greene, Stephen Arroyo, and many others.

- **1990’s – Project Hindsight / Arhat** initiated by Robert Schmidt, Ellen Back, Robert Hand, and Robert Zoller to translate and interpret surviving ancient texts of Western astrology from ancient Greek, Arabic, and Latin into modern English. This monumental effort instigated the revival and reintegration of Traditional techniques.

- **2003-2006 – Discovery of Sedna, Eris, Makemake and Haumea** trans-Neptunian bodies orbiting the Sun that prompted the new astronomy category of Dwarf Planets.
Astrology Day 2020
We celebrate the HISTORY OF ASTROLOGY

HOW MEDIEVAL EUROPE REDISCOVERED THE LOST ART OF ASTROLOGY

by Chris Mitchell

What is "history"? Many people assume it's something quite objective – a list of facts and dates about things that have happened in the past. History, however, is far from objective. The way it is presented, which aspects are included and excluded, how the information is slanted – these all depend on the culture Chris Mitchell and political system in which we are brought up. For those of us brought up in the West, the broad sweep of our history for the last 2,000 years is often portrayed along these lines: the Romans came along a couple of thousand years ago, civilised us all and gave us roads, baths, and aqueducts, then five hundred years later the Roman Empire collapsed and we were plunged into the Dark Ages for a thousand years, until people like Michelangelo came along in the fourteenth century and turned the lights back on and gave us the Renaissance. Not much happened in between. That was pretty much the outline I was taught at primary school, although, being British, they did at least have to give a passing mention to William the Conqueror invading England in 1066.

Admittedly, my primary school education was half a century ago and history teaching has improved since then, but there's still a perception, even amongst university history undergraduates at my university, that the interesting bits of history happened either before the decline of the Roman Empire in the West, or from the Renaissance onwards. The bit in the middle – loosely called the medieval period – is still quite dark and neglected. And yet this period saw two developments of immense importance to the modern world, and also to us as astrologers: the rise of Islam in the seventh century, and a twelfth-century renaissance that saw a blossoming of science and astrology in Western Europe. How are these two issues, five hundred years apart, related, and what has this got to do with astrology?

As astrologers, we’re used to being on the receiving end of scepticism and hostility about our subject on two fronts: from scientists who dismiss astrology as a “pseudoscience”, and from religious objections that our art is akin to sorcery. The Catechism of the Catholic Church issued by Pope John Paul II in 2012 lumps astrology in with summoning up Satan and his demons, condemning it completely. Contemporary Islamic clerics condemn astrology in similar terms, saying that astrology is akin to magic and therefore forbidden. However, it was not always so – and the fact that astrology is even known about in the West today, and that we have practising astrologers today, is thanks to a lot of groundwork done by Christian, Jewish, Persian, and Muslim scholars during this neglected medieval period. This article will take a look at how astrology almost died out in Western Europe in the early medieval period, who the key players were in keeping it alive, and how it was rediscovered and blossomed in the later medieval period.

ROMAN EMPIRE

Let us begin our story in the Roman Empire around 1,800 years ago, although the history of astrology dates back long before then. Astrology was alive and well. Greek astrologers had adapted earlier ideas from the Babylonians into a formalised system we now refer to as “Hellenistic astrology”, with features recognisable to any modern astrologer: twelve signs of the zodiac with familiar names, seven planets with attributes still used today, twelve houses, and five aspects. Claudius Ptolemy, a Greek living in Alexandria, wrote his astrological text Tetrabiblos in about 150 CE, and an astronomical work, Almagest, that detailed the necessary calculations needed to draw up astrological charts. The Roman Empire had conquered the Greek Empire in 146 BCE, but it had been happy to adopt Greek culture wholesale, including astrology. Ptolemy wrote in Greek, and is considered a “Hellenistic” astrologer; however, he was living under Roman rule, and his forename – Claudius – was a Roman name. Marcus Manilius, who wrote an astrological text called Astronomica in the form of a poem in the first half of the first century CE and is also considered a Hellenistic astrologer, was a Roman citizen and wrote in Latin, although we know little about his ethnicity. Hellenistic astrology, therefore, was the astrology practised in the Roman Empire, and flourished for several centuries until the Roman Empire became Christian. Many early Christians were suspicious of astrology, with its pagan roots. One well-known early objector was the fourth-century scholar St. Augustine of Hippo, who had studied and practised astrology in his youth, but objected to it after converting to Christianity for being blasphemous. By Augustine’s time, the Roman Empire had already split into a Latin-speaking Western empire and a Greek-speaking Eastern empire, so in the Western empire knowledge of Greek texts, which included many of the texts of Hellenistic astrology, was already being lost. An even more serious blow for astrology came in the year 529, when the Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian – a Christian emperor – issued a decree to stamp out heresy, primarily aimed at pagans, Jews, and heretics. However, various schools and institutions that taught philosophy, science, and astrology were affected too, and many astrologers fled east and found refuge in the court of King Chosrau in Jundishapur in Persia. The Persian empire’s religion was Zoroastrianism, which was sympathetic to astrology.

For this reason, the Hellenistic astrology that had been practised for centuries declined in the Roman Empire, and within a century those Greek astrological texts could no longer even be read by
most scholars in the Latin-speaking West. The sophisticated horoscopic astrology of ancient Rome, and the ability to draw up astrological charts, had withered to a small rump of vaguely astrological folklore about zodiac signs and planets.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Christian church could not afford to ignore astrology altogether, though, because of the defining theme of Christianity: the crucifixion of Christ. The Gospels tell conflicting stories regarding the date of the crucifixion, but all Gospel accounts agree that this was on a Friday either on the day of the Jewish festival of Passover, or the day before — early Christians assumed that the Friday in question was the eve of Passover, namely, the day before. The Jewish calendar is based on both the Sun and the Moon. The lunar aspect is that the first day of any Jewish month is when the tiniest sliver of the crescent New Moon is visible, which means the fifteenth of any Jewish month is a Full Moon. The solar aspect is that every festival must fall in the correct season, and since twelve lunar months fall short of a 365-day year by eleven days, every two or three years an extra lunar month is added to the year to keep the seasons lined up correctly. Passover always occurs on the fifteenth day of the first month of spring, and that month is called Nisan. Thus, Passover always happens at 15 Nisan, and the eve of Passover would be 14 Nisan. The early Christians argued about the correct date to commemorate Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection. Some felt it should be commemorated on the eve of Passover, others felt that Christians should celebrate the resurrection rather than commemorate the crucifixion, and that this celebration must be on a Sunday since the Gospel accounts state that Christ rose from the dead on the third day, which would have been a Sunday. The latter group won the argument, and it was agreed that Easter would be the first Sunday after the first Full Moon after the spring equinox, a formula that is still used today.

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the position of the Sun and the Moon in the zodiac, but warns his readers against dabbling in astrology itself which he said was ‘futile and alien to our faith’.

Bede wrote his work on computus in 725, and his attitude towards astrology appears to have been just as negative as St. Augustine and other early church fathers. Astrology in the West was truly suspect.

THE ISLAMIC WORLD

What of those astrologers who had fled east to Persia following Justinian’s edict in 529? They had moved to an empire whose main religion, Zoroastrianism, embraced astrology. Indeed, the Christian story of the Star of Bethlehem has ‘wise men’ coming from the east (that is, Persia) to pay homage to Christ, and the term used in the original Greek version of the Bible for ‘wise men’ is ‘magos’ (magi), whose meaning is usually translated as ‘astrologers’. Many of the texts the scholars fleeing the Roman Empire had brought with them were translated into Persian. Astrology continued to blossom, and incorporated new concepts of Christianity, and because it involved computation, it was called “computus”. Early computists included Dionysius Exiguus in the sixth century, who is mostly famous for being the inventor of the “Anno Domini” system of counting years used all over the world today (although he got his calculations wrong, so that 1 AD, which should have been the year of Christ’s birth, ended up being after the death of Herod, which was historically impossible – since Christ can’t have been born “before Christ”, that is why we use CE and BCE today, rather than AD and BC), and produced a table of Easter dates lasting for 95 years. Two centuries later, the Venerable Bede wrote a definitive work on computus, settling many arguments that had arisen, called The Reckoning of Time. Bede had an awareness of astrology, and provided methods for calculating that were Persian in origin, such as using cycles of Jupiter and Saturn to forecast long-term mundane events. However, about a century after Justinian’s edict, a new religion arose in Arabia – Islam. The armies of Islam conquered vast swathes of territory, and within twenty years of Muhammed’s death, had conquered the formerly mighty Persian Empire. One might expect that a new monotheistic religion like Islam would have been as hostile to astrology as Christianity was (as many Islamic scholars are today), and there were indeed arguments within Islam about the acceptability of astrology. The gateway may have been the works of Aristotle, which did not clash with Islam and whose philosophy was broadly accepted, but which also recognised the influence of planets. The utility of many of the ancient texts proved useful enough to embrace, despite their pagan origins, and by the eighth century there was an enthusiastic translation movement underway, translating scientific, medical, philosophical, and astrological texts from Greek and Persian into Arabic. However, despite this, the translators often needed to provide a preface defending astrology against religious arguments, and justifying why they had translated astrological texts. In addition, many of the translators were Persian scholars who had not come from an Islamic background, and they were an elite in the courts and often treated with distrust by Muslim clerics.

The Islamic Empire continued to grow, and at the time that Bede was writing, it was taking over much of Spain, and attacking areas of France. Bede was certainly aware of these Arab conquests, and (despite his suspicion of astrology) referred to the appearance of two comets in 729 as presaging a Muslim attack on Aquitaine, and their subsequent defeat at Tours in 732. Islamic Spain tolerated Christians and Jews, and in 724, John, the Bishop of Seville, had the Bible translated into Arabic. Islam continued to grow, and the eighth-century translation movement meant that works by Ptolemy, Aristotle, and Plato that had been lost in the West were now being made available to Islamic scholars. In the year 762, the caliph al-Mansur assembled a team of astrologers, including the Persian Jew Masha‘Allah, to help elect the most auspicious time to lay the foundation stone of his proposed new capital, Baghdad.

The invasion of Spain meant that there was a Western European border between
MITCHELL

the Christian world and the Muslim world, and so despite the obvious hostility between Christianity and Islam, there were contacts, too. Charlemagne, crowned Holy Roman Emperor in 800, visited a Muslim caliph and was delighted to receive a water clock from him, and Alcuin of York, who worked at Charlemagne’s court, describes a discussion between a Spanish bishop and a “Saracen” (Muslim), demonstrating an early interest in Islam from Christians. In Byzantium (the Eastern Roman Empire), knowledge of Greek had never been lost, and there were early contacts between Baghdad and Constantinople. Stephanus the Philosopher, a student of the caliph’s astrologer, moved to Constantinople, and Leo the Mathematician went to Baghdad from Byzantium to translate Greek texts.

Astrology in the West took a leap forward in the tenth century, when the brilliant Christian scholar Gerbert d’Auriol became Pope Sylvester II in 999. He was a keen scholar of astrological texts, and legend has it that he even studied in Muslim Córdoba. He apparently requested copies of astrological texts from Islamic Spain, and there were diplomatic contacts between the king of Leon in the Christian part of Spain and the caliph in Islamic Andalusia. The relationship between computus and astrology was reinforced by the fact that it was the same scholars working in both fields. In particular, Lotharingia – the area of Europe that now comprises Alsace and Lorraine on the French-German border – seemed to have a particular interest in astrological texts, and there were many links between this region and the West Country of England. Computus, then, opened the door to the permisibility of studying planetary cycles, and this led to a broader acceptance of astrological texts in general. The initial texts were on an Arabic astronomical instrument called an astrolabe, which was a portable device with numerous uses. The astrolabe was effectively a map of the sky, and could be used for navigation, astronomy, time-keeping, and drawing up houses on an astrological chart. A complex series of engraved rotating brass plates allowed the user to read off the Ascendant and house cusps, provided they knew the altitude of the Sun above the horizon (which could be done visually, by holding the astrolabe by one’s face and moving a metal arm on the instrument up to measure the angle of the Sun), and the position of the Sun in the zodiac (a table engraved on the back plate gave dates of the Sun’s ingress into each sign). (See images below.) By the eleventh century, two specifically astrological texts were available in Latin translation: the Mathesis of Firmicus Maternus, and the Alchandreana. Firmicus Maternus was a fourth-century Hellenistic astrologer, and the Latin translation of his text was copied widely – an eleventh-century copy is in the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris (BNF Lat 7311). Mathesis is a standard Hellenistic astrology primer, describing signs, houses, aspects, forecasting the length of life, planets, and numerous other techniques, and then gives interpretations for various placements. For example, it tells us that Mercury in the third house is a good placement for priests, magicians, healers, and astrologers. Crucially, though, it does not give the details on how to calculate planetary positions, presuming that the reader already knows how to do this. Alchandreana is a little more mysterious. It is a compilation of astrological and astronomical material of Arabic origin, and the Latin manuscript was only discovered in 1931 in Barcelona. This text does give some details on calculating planetary positions, but these are not based on astronomy, but on numerological procedures based on a person’s name – so, of course, yield results that have no relation to actual planetary positions. One section does give something akin to a real-life calculation, but still gives meaningless results; for example, to calculate the position of Saturn, one takes the number of years since the creation of the world, and divides by thirty since it takes thirty years for Saturn to make a complete circuit of the zodiac. This, of course, will not work since Saturn does not take exactly thirty years to make a revolution, and so the values will never be correct – even assuming one knew the position of the planets at the putative creation of the world.

ENGLAND

Let us review the state of astrology in the eleventh-century in the West, by pretending that we are English astrologers. We have access to some interesting astrological texts that have just arrived in Christian Europe, and the very latest equivalent of a smartphone – a shiny new astrolabe. Not only that, we have an event that has recently taken place that is probably going to be astrologically significant, and the sort of thing a budding astrologer would be itching to draw up a chart for; the end of the Saxon kingdoms in England with the coronation of William I, known as William the Conqueror. This took place at noon on Christmas Day in 1066.

Using the table engraved on our astrolabe, we, the English astrologers of the time, can see that the Sun moves into Capricorn on 16 December each year (these are old style dates in the Julian calendar), so on 25 December, the Sun is at about 9 degrees of Capricorn. The astrolabe would
then allow us to draw up all the house cusps of the chart. The astrolabe doesn’t tell us anything more than that, but since texts on computus have been available to us, we work out where the Moon would be in this chart: it’s actually the last degree of Pisces. We may have a rough idea where Saturn and Jupiter are too, simply by observation. Jupiter moves a sign a year, roughly, and Saturn takes two and a half years to go through a sign. We can’t work it out to the degree, but we can be fairly sure that Saturn and Jupiter would have been in Virgo, simply by looking in the night sky and seeing where they are right now, and working backwards a few weeks or months to the coronation. By the same visual method, we might be able to have a reasonable guess at the position of Venus too, especially if we’d made regular observations and noticed the regular repeating pattern – again, we get the sign, but probably not the degree. This, then, is the chart that we can draw up. (see chart, above right.)

We can’t delineate this very well. We have only a vague idea where Mercury may be, since he’s never that far from the Sun, so will be in Sagittarius, Capricorn or Aquarius. As for Mars, the ruler of this chart, that’s a lost cause unless someone happened to look up at the night sky on the evening of the coronation and was able to spot Mars to give at least a rough idea. This is incredibly frustrating for us early astrologers. We have a copy of Mathesis so we know that Mercury in the third house is a good placement for astrologers and healers, but to discover which house your Mercury is in, you need to be able to calculate both the Ascendant of your natal chart, and the position of Mercury – without this, the information is useless. Firmicus Maternus assumed his readers knew how to calculate planetary positions, because the knowledge was known to Hellenistic astrologers and is described in detail in Ptolemy’s Almagest; however, that information had now been lost.

However, all that was about to change. The astrolabe opened the door to the permissible study of Arabic science. From an astrologer’s point of view, this opened an entire treasure trove. The person depicted in a statue (below right) holding an astrolabe is al-Khwarizmi, a ninth-century Persian scholar and polymath. His great work on mathematics, Kitab al-Jabr solved quadratic equations, and is where we the word “algebra” derives. His name was transcribed into Latin as Algorismus, which is where we get the word “algorithm” from. One of his many achievements was the creation of planetary tables – that missing link that Western scholars needed to draw up astrology charts. The Arabic word for these planetary tables was “Zij”.

In the twelfth century, the prior of Malvern, a man by the name of Walcher, collaborated with a Jewish convert to Christianity, Petrus Alfonsi, on a translation of al-Khwarizmi’s astronomical tables. Alfonsi’s patron was none other than the English king Henry I, who took a keen interest in fostering the study of astronomy both in his court and at the Cathedral School in Hereford, on the English/Welsh border. A younger contemporary of Walcher and Alfonsi was Adelard of Bath. While Walcher needed the help of Alfonsi, who spoke Arabic (Arabic was the day to day language of Jews brought up the Islamic world, and Alfonsi was born in Islamic Spain), Adelard travelled widely, and learned Arabic himself. Having done this, he translated a number of Arabic astrological texts into Latin, including Abu Ma’shar’s Abbreviation to the Introduction. He also left to posterity a number of horoscopes, probably for king Henry II, whom Adelard had tutored in the king’s youth. The twelfth century saw an explosion in the amount of Arabic texts being translated. Partly this was down to the fact that Toledo, near modern-day Madrid, which had been a major centre of Islamic learning, returned to Christian hands in 1085 and became a major translation centre. As a result of this, Latin-speaking scholars travelled to places like Toledo, and numerous works were translated from Arabic into Latin – a blossoming of knowledge often referred to as the “twelfth-century renaissance”. These texts covered a range of subjects, such as medicine and philosophy, but also a large number were astronomical texts. We saw earlier that after Justinian’s edict, some scholars fled east into Persia, taking their
Hellenistic texts with them, and that after the rise of Islam, these texts were translated into Arabic. Some of these “Arabic” texts that the twelfth-century Christian scholars were translating into Latin were actually Hellenistic in origin – for example, John of Seville, a most prolific translator, translated works by Ptolemy, and Gerard of Cremona translated several works by Aristotle. Other astrological texts, although written originally by Arabic authors, nevertheless were works that drew heavily on the techniques of Hellenistic astrologers such as Vettius Valens and Dorotheus of Sidon – Abu Ma’shar’s masterpiece, Great Introduction to the Science of the Stars, and al-Qabisi’s Introduction to Astrology are replete with such examples. As a result of this huge twelfth-century translation movement, the Hellenistic techniques used and developed in Europe that had been lost were rediscovered, and found their way home. Horoscopic astrology, as practised in the Roman Empire and then later in the Islamic world, was now once again possible. The combination of “how to” astrology texts and methods of calculating planetary positions meant that astrologers could now cast accurate charts. At long last, they could work out whether Mercury was in their third house, or where Mars was when William the Conqueror was crowned.

These newly-translated astrological texts were not merely an intellectual curiosity used only by a handful of astrologers, however. The techniques were initially taught in schools, and then in universities when they came into existence a century later. In the twelfth century, the main centres of learning in the West were cathedral schools. Using English schools as an example, cathedral churches were divided into two categories: monastic, associated with an order of monks, and secular; the term “secular” did not have the connotations of atheism that it does today, but simply meant that the church was run by lay people rather than monks. The secular cathedrals in England developed schools that taught a broader range of topics than the monastic schools, which focused on purely religious teaching. These secular cathedral schools taught the “quadrivium” of arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy/astrology, although the emphasis in each school differed. Hereford Cathedral School, for example, specialised in astrology, probably because the Bishop of Hereford in the late eleventh century, Robert of Losinga, had an interest in computus and natural science, and a subsequent bishop, Gerard, had studied astrology. Gerard was promoted to archbishop of York in 1100, and apparently his interest in astrology, which was considered quite natural in Hereford, was a cause of scandal in the much more theology-oriented York. Indeed, on his death, the canons discovered an astrology book under his pillow, and refused him burial in York Minster.

This story shows the tensions that have always been present in Christianity regarding astrology. As we saw, studying the motion of planets was an important element of calculating Easter, and so essential to Christianity, but it also carried the suspicion of dabbling in magic, which the Church did not approve of. Whatever the official view of the Church may have said, the translation of numerous astrological works opened the floodgates, and made astrology accessible once more.

Despite the canons at York being suspicious of astrology, it was enthusiastically taught at the Cathedral School in Hereford, by the late twelfth century scholar Roger of Hereford. Roger was not, as far as we know, a translator of Arabic texts, but he had read the newly-translated texts and taught them to his students, and compiled them into an astrology textbook, claiming to be the first person to do so. This is not an outrageous claim – the texts themselves were new to the Christian world, and were very wordy. Abu Ma’shar’s Introduction, for example, is more a reference work for people already familiar with astrology. What Roger did was compile a textbook for teaching astrology to his students, drawing on various techniques from different Arabic sources. This textbook focused on what we would now call horary astrology. His teaching methods shine through in the book; the Arabic texts on which Roger drew, such as Sahl’s On Questions, are very repetitive. For example, if a horary question were asked about whether a planned journey would work out well, the astrologer might consult Sahl’s book, and find a suitable heading in the section on ninth house questions. This paragraph would tell you to look at the lord of the Ascendant and the Moon, and the lord of the ninth sign, and then gives a long list of possible conditions and outcomes. Roger, on the other hand, starts off very simply. He states that the person asking the question is the “querent”, and the thing being asked about is the “matter”, and any matter will be represented by a house. Rather than a long list of possible questions, he gives us the basic principle – the querent is represented by the planet ruling the Ascendant, and the Moon, and the matter is represented by the planet ruling the relevant house. If a planet representing the matter is making an aspect to the Moon or the ruler of the Ascendant, then it’s a good outcome. It’s a nice simple rule. Then he goes on to tell his students what to do if the planets aren’t making an aspect, and conditions that make a particular planet unusable, building up the rules slowly and gradually so the student isn’t overwhelmed. Roger’s book, then, gives us an insight into how astrology was received and taught immediately after Arabic astrological texts were made known in Christian Europe. His teaching methods don’t seem that different to the way astrology is taught today.

Unfortunately, we don’t know much about the way astrology was taught after...
the twelfth century. The cathedral schools were the precursors of universities, but we know little about the curricula of the earliest universities – we cannot reconstruct the curriculum for Oxford until the fourteenth century, so as universities started to replace cathedral schools as the main centres of learning just a few decades after Roger wrote his textbook, we don’t know what texts were being taught, although astrology certainly was certainly being taught at universities up until the seventeenth century. Roger’s textbook was certainly copied widely across England over the next three centuries, implying it was considered useful, but questions regarding who his students were, whether some of them went on to teach at the new universities, and whether they used his textbook to teach, remain unanswered.

What we do know is that students tended to start at Oxford University at the age of fourteen in the thirteenth century, and undertook a seven-year course of study – this is a much lower starting age than we have today, where students generally start university when they are eighteen. It is very likely, therefore, that the students in Hereford Cathedral School would have been boys in their early teens. I find it a delightful thought that astrology, which in Europe had floundered in the doldrums for centuries as a result of losing the art of chart calculation, suddenly blossomed again two centuries before the Renaissance, and the

NOTE

Much of the information in this article is condensed from my PhD thesis, which is available freely online at the Leicester Research Archive: https://doi.org/10.25392/leicester.data.11793636

Chris Mitchell has had a life-long interest in astrology, and has a PhD from the University of Leicester, analysing the first textbook on astrology ever written in England in the 1170s. He is a tutor on the Cultural Astronomy and Astrology course run by the Sophia Centre at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. Chris is a Board Member of the Astrological Association, and is a regular speaker at a number of astrology groups and conferences worldwide.
SUNDELL

Nordic text Eddan, we can also find a type of zodiac system. Eddan is a collection of texts that have been written in parts of Norway and Iceland between 800-1000. It might be as the Danish astrologer Claus Houlberg said, that the art we today call astrology came to the north with the Renaissance, and yet, there were already several practices and signs in the National epics and other old texts, pointing to an established knowledge and interest in the interpretation of star patterns.

Differences Between Countries
FINLAND and SWEDEN

Little is written about the astrological practices in Finland during the Middle Ages since it was a part of Sweden. Without its own written language far into the 18th century, all folklores were oral until written down as a part of the National Romantic era before the Russian revolution.

The Finnish ancient gods Ahti (water), Ilmarinen (air), Tapio (forest), Lohiatar (goddess of death) show similarities with the other Nordic god figures: Tor, Oden, Freja. The Finnish people lived the longest in relative isolation from the influence of Scandinavia due to their diverse language.

Mikael Agricola, a Finnish bishop and reformer who studied for Luther, wrote the first Finnish book in 1543. He showed interest in culture and collected it in texts that also contained astrological references. Even as a man of God his prayer book was illustrated with an astrological calendar. The oldest texts are only available in Swedish or Latin as Finland was a part of Sweden until 1809. Notwithstanding, Finland was known for having an important astronomer and astrologer named Forsius.

Sigrid Forsius had an extraordinary and turbulent life. While studying in Germany he published the first Almanac containing Prognosticum Astrologicum that led him into conflicts with both the Church and the contemporary researchers.

During his lifetime Forsius was two times granted a professorship at the University of Uppsala in Sweden. In between, he was jailed twice, went to Lappland on exploration trips, wrote many texts and books on physics, almanacs, and astrological forecasts. He was seen laying on the cold ground for hours and hours with a book on top, just staring at the sky... coming across as somewhat an odd character. His writings were highly recognized in several countries, and received many reactions.

After a dispute in Sweden in 1617 called Ethica Christiane, astrology was seen as Magica Illicita (forbidden magic) and the art found critics that were directly given to King Gustav II, changing the climate. Another professor, Stenius, simultaneously published The Tract Against Astrology and Forsius was no longer in the favour of the king. This led to a hunt on astrology, (even though Sweden was a relatively friendlier zone in this regard than Great Britain at that time). Accusations of devil-worship led to persecution, peaking in Sweden and Finland in the middle 1600s. This was a reaction to the book Hammer for Witches – Malefices Maleficarum (1487). Forsius was expelled from Uppsala University and went back to southern Finland where he spent the rest of his life as a priest. He has a small star named after him.

For a few hundred years, from the 18th to 19th century, astrology operated underground in Sweden. It was practiced in closed groups, in subcultures or secret orders. Sweden published its first book on astrology Stjernornas Profetier in the year 1872.

The Danish Astrologer Claus Houlberg dates the astrology coming to Denmark during the late 14th century (see source below), as a part of the beginning of the Renaissance. At the same time, he states that there wasn’t much information about this subject in history. A lot of knowledge naturally passed from Germany to Denmark.

Tycho Brahe was a world-known noble Danish astronomer and astrologer who had a significant influence through his establishment of the first observatory on the Island of Hven about 1576. It was called Uraniaborg and contained instruments

While studying in Germany, Finland’s Sigrid Forsius published the first Almanac containing Prognosticum Astrologicum that led him into conflicts with both the Church and the contemporary researchers.

Sweden had a publication called Eriksgatan that may compare to the Finnish National epic Kalevala. This was a story of King Magnus Eriksson’s life and adventures (1335), but it also contains other important information about people’s (kings) lives at that time, and their interest in the stars and especially the Moon’s position. An anonymous Swedish writer already commented on astrology in the early 14th century, long before astrological texts had arrived and been translated from German.

Another important book published in 1508 was influential in Swedish, a sort of almanac that was used by farmers. The book was called Bondepraktikan and was released in Germany and translated into Swedish, reaching the country by the 1600s. This book was widely used as a daily tool for living according to the sky and the planetary positions. This book is actually still in print and is one of the first books I read about astrology as a child.

Bondepraktikan, released in Germany and translated into Swedish, reached the country by the 1600s. This book was widely used as a daily tool for living according to the sky and the planetary positions.
The first full text defending astrology in Norway was published in 1583 by Jens Nilsson, Epideigma. In this book, he states that there are 1022 fixed stars and describes conjunctions between planets causing storms and climate changes.

Denmark, we know that there were astrological discussions going on already in the 13th century. The first full text defending astrology in Norway was published in 1583 by Jens Nilsson, Epideigma. In this book, he states that there are 1022 fixed stars and describes conjunctions between planets causing storms and climate changes.

Astrology was challenged in the North European countries, sometimes being venerated and other times banned. Today, all of the Nordic countries have their own astrological communities: 
- Finland has two astrological organizations (the oldest one in Scandinavia still active was founded 1962) and a newspaper Astrologos. Sweden has an actively growing community and their first community was founded in 1910! 
- Denmark has organizations as well as a newspaper and the world’s first astrological museum. And Norway has a state-funded fully operational astrological educational system!

So astrology made it through its rocky history, or maybe the Scandinavians just took their medieval Queen Christina’s advice: “You better know your astrology and medicine, so that they can’t fool you”.

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PICTURE SOURCES

Runes: The Elder Futhark was discovered in Gotland, Sweden, inscribed on the Kyver Stone, and dates back to 400 AD.
The chart of Tyko Brahe: Astro.com born 14.12.1546 10.47 Knutstorp, Denmark
Picture of Anne: by Elise Baumann

Anne Sundell is a Finnish astrologer. She holds a Masters Degree in Developmental Psychology and a Diploma from the Mercury Internet School of Psychological Astrology (MISPA). Right now she’s specializing in Relationship Astrology. She’s also a published author and lecturer. Anne Sundell is OPA’s Finland Satellite

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for observations that Brahe developed. Unfortunately, nothing remains of the building today. This began with him receiving a request from the emperor of Prag to list the most unlucky days of the year, so the emperor would be prepared. These were later included in the almanac for farmers “Bondepraktikan” to look out for. There were 33 unlucky days of the year, most of them usually being in January. In 1572 a new star was seen in the sky, and this made people very interested yet afraid of what it could mean. It engendered theories about the apocalypse or a terrible disease. Brahe also studied this star and published his first article on it, however, he did not have an explanation. Later, in his De Nova Stella, he followed Kepler’s supernova that was visible for almost a year 1604-05. Brahe is without a doubt the most famous astrologer in the history of the northern countries.

NORWAY

Norway was fortunate to be connected to the folklores of Iceland, adding a lot of interesting material through the national epos of Eddan as well as the Havamal, Heimskringla, or the Icelandic Sagas. During the 1300s Norway was also a part of Sweden, and with a large coast, the seafarers were usually familiar with the stars in the sky that were used as navigation tools. There’s no doubt that these influences also had an important impact on the Swedish historical development. Astrology is mentioned in folklore and can be seen through sagas and tales. Norway was the country to be the first exposed to the plague in 1349 to which the unfortunate star constellation was referred to. And as in the countries above, astrology was a means to help in times of sickness and crisis, with knowledge preceding the Renaissance. In the almanacs of this time, a picture called The astrology of the anatomic man showed which parts of the body were ruled by which star sign.

Author Gina Dahl states that there was definitely an interest in astrology in Norway in the Middle Ages, but due to a lack of an organized academic society, the traces of the oldest forms of astrological interest can only be found in literature concerning omens, predictions based on the art and the heavenly bodies effects on the people. There is evidence of a strong interest especially in the Moon’s travel through the zodiac. However, no calculated horoscopes are preserved from this time.
Can you introduce us - What is Astrolearn Astrology Library?

Astrolearn Astrology Library is an archival and reference library, now comprising some 7800 unique edition-volumes of discrete books and pamphlets, and additionally 12,000 issues of more than 340 magazine and almanac titles, all of which are either directly or indirectly connected with astrology and its history. The indirect ones would include sources on the history of astronomy that help to inform the history of astrology, biographies of astrologers who also had other strings to their bows, esoteric works and books on psychology that incorporate astrological ideas or have influenced astrologers, and cultural histories that include but are not limited to the place of astrology.

The library is currently located in the small city of Newport, South Wales. Its exact address is being kept secret for reasons of security because there is no budget for dedicated security provisions, but any bona fide astrologer or scholar of astrology may apply to visit it personally on condition of not divulging the address to others or posting it online or in print.

The library has been under intensive and concerted ongoing development since 2001, at which point in time it was nothing more than my personal collection of the sixty to seventy astrology books I'd gathered while studying astrology since the summer of 1995.

We often create things out of a vacuum, what motivated you to create this project? What are its purposes?

Getting involved in the online astrology community starting in the summer of 2001 was a significant motivator. For the first few years, that was chiefly on the Microsoft Network, where I was given a major role in the development of a community website called Horoscopeschat by its founding manager from Los Angeles, and therefore wanted to populate it with well-researched articles on the basics of astrology, which effectively required me to extend the range of astrological sources I had on hand. By the time I’d finished writing those articles in the Spring of 2004, the collection had increased in size to 300 books from 60 less than three years previously.

That same Spring, the parts of my extended article on the significations of the planets that dealt with Uranus, Neptune and Pluto were accepted by Deborah Houlding for parallel publication on her fledgling traditional community Skyscript. I became increasingly involved in the forums there over the rest of the decade and found myself heavily motivated to collect all sources on traditional astrology that could be obtained. But I also had a sense that astrology had lacked a decent, up-to-date bibliographical reference work covering the more than 90 years since the publication of F. Leigh Gardner’s Bibliotheca Astrologica in 1911, and that those online astrology booklists that were available at a small number of websites were patchy and incomplete. There seemed to be a case for a website that would catalogue the modern literature of astrology as exhaustively as possible, and the only way to ensure that this would be done accurately was to directly inspect copies.

During the summer of 2004, I had moved out to Sweden to be with my partner of the time (from whom I would eventually separate in 2010). At the risk of being accused of false generalization, I would venture to suggest that in my personal experience from living there for 12 years, Sweden is largely a country of practical people who are mostly somewhat skeptical about astrology or simply don’t regard it as normal enough to be a good fit for the prevailing Swedish cultural concept of ‘lagom’ (essentially meaning moderate in a way that is ‘just right’ or ‘just enough’). A few basic English-language astrological primers have been translated into Swedish, but there is very little in the way of native Swedish astrological publishing, and what little there is appears to be very elementary. Whatever the reasons may be, Sweden’s astrological community does seem to be one of the smallest among those of all European countries per head of population. There was no realistic chance of finding the resources I needed to undertake this bibliographical project in Swedish libraries. So I set about enlarging my own collection further with the required source material, at a time when I reasonably expected to spend the rest of my life there.

The establishment of a comprehensive, up-to-date bibliography of astrology is not the only end-goal, however. Every additional source acquired feels like a piece in an historical jigsaw-puzzle,
that it puts forward, adds to the understanding of how astrological practice has developed and been transmitted through the generations. This is fascinating to study, and it’s also always interesting to encounter unique perspectives along the way.

From collecting more sources, one also gets a sense for how astrological ideas have flowed between countries where different languages are spoken, including in the modern-day, where, for example, the popularity of astrology took off almost simultaneously in France, Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands in the early 20th century. And there was plenty of exchange of both ideas and texts between the astrologers in these countries and those in the United Kingdom and even the United States, facilitated by a combination of mail order, translation, the organization of international conferences, and personal correspondence and camaraderie among astrologers in different countries.

What did it take to create the project – in addition to a good amount of Virgo in your chart!

Astrologers have often surmised that Virgo must be prominent in my birth chart, and it’s an understandable guess, but in fact Virgo is one of three signs (alongside Leo and Scorpio) in which I have no luminaries, planets, lunar nodes or angles. I tend to think that my natal Mercury conjunct Jupiter in Pisces needs to be held to account, because it is ever-reaching for the expansion of knowledge, in an absorptive, boundless fashion. At the same time, my Moon in Taurus appreciates physical objects and steady, methodological approaches, and my Mars and Saturn in Gemini like words and variety but with a measure of discipline instilled to them!

Aside from the idiosyncrasies of my personality, I would have to acknowledge that it was very helpful to receive my modest share of a couple of inheritances from my respective grandmothers during the mid-late 2000s, since without those I would probably never have had the confidence to branch out far beyond the late 20th century and early 21st century books and reprints that were the lot of my collection until 2004, into the acquisition of originals from the 16th to 19th centuries and academic history books priced upwards of $100 each.

Although the inherited money invested in the collection had run out by the early 2010s, my motivation to develop it further had not dissipated with it, so I have lived an extremely frugal life since then in order to set aside as much as possible of my income for further acquisitions. My frugal ways have included opting out of alcoholic drinks, television, mobile phone contracts, vehicle ownership, going out to pubs and clubs, dating, attending astrological conferences, and even leading any kind of active social life except for online (which is free of charge). It is not a lifestyle I’d recommend to anyone, but it has allowed the continuing development of the library for the past ten years in spite of the absence of any bulk funding during that time. There may come a time when the library has reached a sufficient state of development that it feels appropriate to reduce expenditure on its development and lead a more normal life in other respects, but I don’t think it has reached that state quite yet.

Urban legend has it that it is one of the most complete archival projects in Astrology – can you list some of the items that you are particularly proud to have in the library?

It’s heartening to learn that the project is becoming the subject of urban legend in some quarters! I have strived for completeness in a number of respects: school of astrological thinking (both traditional and modern astrological sources are, by design, equally well-represented), language of origin (from Akkadian through ancient Greek, Latin, Arabic, Hebrew and Sanskrit through to English, French, German, Dutch, Spanish and Italian), and approach to the subject (with both works designed for the practising astrologer or student of astrology and academic works discussing astrology as an historical and cultural phenomenon equally included).

The items I’m most proud of are probably the scarcest primary sources. These would typically include astrological journals of the 19th and early-mid 20th centuries, whose survival rates are much lower than those of printed books. The library also includes a small number of exceedingly scarce typescripts by some astrologers, notably Alexander Ruperti, Maurice Privat and Catherine Thompson; some unique correspondence between leading German astrologers of the mid-20th century; and one unique manuscript book by an unsung early 20th century American author.

Can you give an idea of the scope – what is the most ancient, most recent piece in the library? Are all the items in English or multiple languages?

The most ancient piece is a 1553 printing of ‘De Diebus Decretorii Libri Tres’ (‘three books about the critical days’), a miniature vellum-bound book on medical astrology credited to the ancient physician Galen. The most recent (aside from subscription magazines) is Alexander Boxer’s ‘A Scheme of Heaven: Astrology and the Birth of Science’, published in early 2020.

The collection as a whole is strongest in the 20th century, but I’m currently undertaking a drive to bring it up to date with modern titles of the early 21st that were previously sidelined in favour of other collecting priorities. I don’t have up-to-date figures to hand for the quantities of earlier books, but in December 2012, when I last conducted an audit by date of publication, the library contained 11 volumes printed...
Interview with PHILIP GRAVES

in the 16th century, 35 in the 17th, 19 in the 18th, and 154 in the 19th, excluding journals, almanacs and all later reprints. The 19th century figure has probably increased significantly more than those for earlier centuries since then.

While English is by far the most prevalent language among all the printed sources in the library, there’s an entire bookcase filled with modern scholarly editions of sources in ancient and medieval languages (some of them also including English translations of the same texts), and there are seven bookcases filled with German works and almost even bookcases filled with French works. Additionally, there is a small number of original printings from the 16th and 17th centuries in Renaissance Latin.

How can astrology students make optimal use of the library?

What I would recommend is that students make a plan for which books they wish to consult before their visit and send me a list so I can find them before they arrive. The entire collection is catalogued, and the online catalogue is mirrored in an online one whose component parts are accessible from the links at www.astrolearn.com/astrology-bibliography. The whole website is also searchable, so for instance you can look up keywords of relevance to what you are trying to research in the search box. You can also let me know which topics in particular you want to research, since the chances are I’ll already have an idea of sources that might be useful. My aim as a librarian is to assist in the study process by providing access to relevant sources.

I welcome donations of books that are missing from the library and of funds for the purchase of others; and some astrologers have already shown considerable generosity in these respects, for which I’m extremely grateful. However, because there is no ongoing external funding for the library so far, and because I don’t have a professional astrological practice of my own since the personal astrological consultation process is not where my interest lies, the only way I can keep it going at the moment is by working in an external job, so visits to the library are currently only possible on weekends by prior appointment.

In the Future...

If in the future the international astrological community were to assess that the library was worth funding, I could potentially become a full-time librarian and historical researcher spending my days writing essays on different historical topics and supervising visits by others. In those circumstances, visits would become possible at virtually any time. I think for that stage to be reached, more senior astrologers will need to visit the library to see its potential for themselves, and there would need to be a collective sense that it was something worth funding for the wider benefit of the community. In the meantime, I’ll keep on working to fund its maintenance by myself.

However, in the long run I feel it’s imperative that I work with the British and international astrological communities to ensure the survival, maintenance and continuing productive use of the library beyond my lifetime, regardless of how much or how little financial support it may receive for the remainder of my working life. It would be to the detriment of future astrological research and scholarship if the library were to be allowed to die with me and its contents dissipated through a local auction-house.

Many of the English-language texts printed before 1895, as well as the whole run of ‘Modern Astrology’ magazine, have also been scanned and are available for sale on digital media on demand. A possible future project would be to additionally scan all other out-of-copyright texts in the library and make them remotely available via an online database accessible to subscribing institutions and individuals. It is worth bearing in mind, however, that the overwhelming majority of sources in the library remains copyright-protected, so such remotely-accessible digital resources, while useful, will be no substitute for a visit to the physical library for most research purposes.

Our current issue reflects on the History of Astrology as part of “Astrology Day” celebration on this Equinox – what do you feel was the most important period(s) in Astrology’s development?

I would like to think that the Hellenistic period was the most important period to date in the development of astrology because of its introduction of the horoscopic astrological system that nearly all western astrologers use to this day. This said, what we know of Hellenistic astrology from the texts that survive serves as little more than a rough foundation for the practice of most working astrologers of the early 21st century; many refinements of technique and subtleties of interpretation have been added by medieval, Renaissance and modern astrologers since ancient times; and the integration of the modern understanding of psychology into astrological interpretation during and since the 20th century has been a very significant development by itself, radically changing the focus of astrological practice for those who follow this path.

Though some purist traditional astrologers may balk at the very suggestion, I think it is fair to say that it is only reasonable to expect the interpretative side of astrology to adapt itself to the cultural mores of the day in which it is practised, especially

British astrologer W. J. Tucker’s many mimeographed books of the 1960s, on subjects as diverse as medical signatures in astrology and the physical basis for astrological influence, fill almost a complete shelf in the library.
logical researchers lately applying advanced methods to large data sets, I would suggest that there is a long way to go – probably centuries rather than decades – before the controversy over the scientific status of astrology in all its branches is consensually settled, indeed before most scientists and astrologers are even routinely talking to each other in a mutually comprehensible language.

Since the 1970s, many astrologers have shown relatively little interest in the question of whether or not astrology can be scientifically proven, perhaps because it is enough for them to know that it works in practice, and they are motivated by helping people through their profession, and not to idle away time on theoretical research.

The palpable current of opposition to astrology in the formal scientific and psychology communities, and the many ill-informed straw man attacks on astrology in the media continue to motivate a hard core of astrological researchers within the astrological community to challenge the received notion that astrology is without scientific foundation. If research can in time produce incontrovertibly strong statistical evidence for astrological correlations, and this research gets the publicity it deserves, I foresee that the entire social standing of astrology will eventually change for the better as its opponents will be unable to continue credibly to uphold their false arguments against it in the face of accurate facts and all the statistical evidence presented.

Futile debates based on ignorant preconceptions about astrological precepts and methods have been ongoing for centuries, and there is a great deal of this ignorance still to break through before most scientists and psychologists are likely even be open to studying the subject on its own terms and merits. Regardless, I think both traditional astrologers and modern psychological, karmic and evolutionary astrologers will continue to practise their respective arts for as long as there is public demand, and I see no sign of this waning in my lifetime or considerably beyond. In fact, there is plenty of anecdotal evidence of a resurgence of interest in astrology among younger generations within the past five years, which bodes well for the future of astrology even if much of the interest is initially at a relatively basic level of astrological understanding — the process of learning astrology has to start somewhere for all of us.

Because of its relatively abstract focus on personality and life events, and its detachment from the functional demands of modern economies, such as industrial vocational training and employment, astrology is not a subject that no-nonsense practical people tend to have much time for. And there will doubtless always be people who don’t care for it and consider it unnecessary for and irrelevant to their lives, which is fine — there is and should be no obligation to study or use astrology in a liberal society. But equally, those who have no time for astrology could in my opinion beneficially learn increased tolerance of, and less of a haughty, contemptuous attitude towards, the many of us who do. It’s a shame when astrology is a completely closed topic, even among our close relatives, simply because the minds of the disbelievers are so hardened and closed against it.

Your chart?

I was born on March 26th, 1974 in Oswestry, Shropshire, England, at about 1:05 p.m. according to the record kept by my father in his diary. For the UK, which is a country notorious among astrologers for its historical failure to have recorded times of birth on birth certificates at all, is about as good as it gets to an accurate time of birth! As such, I have a late degree of Cancer rising.
The acclaimed TimePassages™ Astrology Desktop App is an incredible tool for both beginners and professionals, alike. Whether you are studying and using the point and click interpretations to learn more, or you are a seasoned astrologer in need of all the bells and whistles, or anywhere in between, TimePassages has got you covered. Created by Henry Seltzer in 1995, and bringing the wisdom of the stars to your fingertips ever since!

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What is it that makes some people stand out as “highly gifted” is the central question addressed in Astrological Mavericks. In the introduction, Michael says, “Some of us are walking billboards for the planets. We wear their mark in a way that is simultaneously unseen, yet seen by all.” As a practicing astrologer this instantly caught my interest and made me want to read more. Astrological Mavericks is the first of two books (only the first is currently in print) discussing planets on angles, something that Michael defines as a unique and powerful astrological placement. These specific placements support freedom of expression or uniqueness in a natal chart. Most practicing astrologers know that a planet on an angle makes it important, but Michael takes this much further showing us detailed and specific examples of each planetary combination, using quotes, observations, statements and stories about the person’s actions. In total, he shares 336 combinations.

Put together in a cookbook style with a very helpful index, he starts with the Sun in Aries on the Ascendant, continuing and completing with Saturn in Pisces on the Midheaven. In between, he explains the specifics of each planet in all twelve signs on the four angles. The book does not address house systems but is structured so the information will apply to any house system used. The first book covers the Sun through Saturn in just over 500 pages, and there is another book coming out covering Chiron through Pluto. Based on the length alone, it is obvious that Michael says “When we find planets conjunct an angle, we see a person who has a sense of ‘knowing’ and belonging — of having the inside scoop on life.” He goes on to say that this gives them the ability to both make and break the rules, “...a person who has a planet on any of the angles is going to be a person who is under the tutelage, control, direction and mentorship of the planets involved.” This is the central premise of the book and it is exemplified again and again.

Beyond the standard explanations of planets in signs and their placements, Astrological Mavericks is full of multiple examples of famous people having each specific placement. Using fun and modern examples Michael chooses people, such as Oprah, Prince, Goldie Hawn, Burt Bacharach, Jamie Lee Curtis, Holly Near and other many contemporary performers along with politicians, astrologers and some members of the royal family. I particularly appreciated his inclusion of lesser-known but equally talented members of the LGBTQ community.

The only thing I wished for as I read this book was an index where I could see the charts for all of the individuals named. I understand the tremendous work and cost involved in printing so many charts, but having charts to reference would have deepened my understanding of the individuals used as examples. Michael has a great deal of information and research to share with the reader. Intended to be a resource for students and professionals alike, with easy to understand language and deep research into each astrological combination, this would be a great addition to every astrologer’s library and every teacher’s classroom.
The core of much of the discord about astrology can be ascribed to subtle differences in mindset and language, and that these are what may be keeping us from finding further common ground.

In the Western and Indian traditions, whether you are a Tropical or Sidereal astrologer, you still use twelve primary divisions, certain sets of subdivisions, polar pairs, corresponding planets, the significant aspects, certain sets of subdivisions, polar pairs, corresponding planets, the significant aspects, and most basic, yet least understood of all, the same numerical structure which underlies the foundation of the Zodiac as we know it. The outward symbols in astrology are actually representations for deeper symbolic combinations of mathematical functions used to describe the interacting divisions and angles of light — *zodiacal light* — without and within. These combinations are themselves the ‘letters,’ ‘words,’ and ‘syntax’ of a spiritually oriented alpha-numerical language, which describes the foundational ‘cosmological simplex’ pattern of nature.

In Eurasia, these concepts and components arose in archaic Central Asia, were refined in Vedic India, then integrated with Hellenistic Greek (and older Egyptian) symbolic natural philosophies and mythologies. These refinements allowed for the final assembly of *The Zodiac* which we primarily utilize today and also lead to the establishment of the fundamental principles of horoscopic natal astrology. While in Central and South America, a similar evolution took place. Arising at varying points in each of the major cultural epochs, roughly as those on the opposite side of the globe had done. It did so with expected similarity in humanity’s evolutionary terms. Yet, how all of this occurred globally or regionally, or even within interrelated periods and disciplines within the same cultures, is a highly convoluted and prejudiced affair. Since much has been written on the Babylonian and Greek contributions to the zodiac and astrology, I will not elaborate too much on their behalf.

‘While drinking water one (should) think about its source.’ *(yin shui si yuan 饮水思源)*

The primary driver for the discussion seems to boil down to which people, lineage, heritage or belief system gets the most credit for the symbols and syntax we use today. Is it the Hellenistic, Indian, or the Babylonian civilizations who should receive the prize in absentia for crossing one or more, or possibly all of these cultural milestones? Or going back further still perhaps some other culture of antiquity? Is there a key development or insight we may have missed or failed to consider? Does the independent establishment of planetary observations and rituals of the ancient Equatorial Americas, or later Mayan and Incan astrology, or even possibly the various verbal star traditions of indigenous and aboriginal cultures from around the world count at all within the discourse of what may have actually lead civilizations to the codify collective human archetypes in parallel with the development of symbolic star mapping systems?

Lisa: “Remember Dad, the handle of the Big Dipper points to the North Star”

Homer: “Heh, heh. That’s nice Lisa, but we’re not in astronomy class. We’re in the woods”

~The Simpsons

Rather than summoning the essence of what our ancient forefathers were attempting to describe regarding the mathematical patterned structure of nature and its elemental source, we have primarily been concerned with crediting one culture as the source, which is inevitably is not possible. We forget that we are in continuous communion with source and the archetypal energies. We too take on the imprint of the subtleties of starlight and strive to fulfill the patterns which desire to express...
from within us. Peeling back the words and looking beyond the skin of the symbols in order to grasp nature’s mathematics is really what the astrological sciences are about, what any science is truly about. In order for astrology to be understood and accepted again, we must look once more through the ancient eyes of the magi, and to how they perceived the natural world and our connection to it. Like the diminished wisdom of Phrygia, this Gordian Knot may require a mighty Alexandrian solution.

Shuxue- It’s not what you think it means

The word ‘mathematics’ once encompassed a whole lot more. Some academics still use the shortened plural form of the word – ‘maths’, short for the Greek - μάθημα mathema, meaning knowledge or study. For most people today, ‘mathematics’ is synonymous with arithmetic - ἀριθμός arithmos – numbers and their operations. Though interestingly enough, when you research the word ‘mathematics’ today you quickly find that it has “no generally accepted definition”. ‘Maths’ technically include fields of study which encompass quantity, structure, space and change; essentially these are the Quadrivium of the Seven Liberal Arts of antiquity. Circa the late 5th century in Rome, the writer Boethius defined mathematics as astronomy, arithmetic, geometry and music. In the mid 19th century China, there was no accepted term used solely for the concept of 'crunching numbers'. The existing word shuxue 数学, was brought into use as the technical term describing the concept of ‘mathematics’ in the Western sense.

In traditional Chinese thinking, however, the term shuxue referred to what we now call mathematics, natural philosophy, numerology, divination, astronomy, astrology, fengshui, and music. The mathematical aspect was regarded as the base rudiment or elementary function of shuxue. The writer Qin Jiushao in the mid 13th century classified two sides of the term, neisuan 内算 (esoteric mathematics) and waisuan 外算 (exoteric mathematics) - spiritual and physical math. So much of the quality of our language and important meanings of words have been forgotten in time and lost in translation. The purpose of math itself was not seen as separate from the development of astrology, in fact, mathematics implied knowledge of astrology. As a concept modern astrology has somehow been distilled down to mean ‘natal chart interpretations derived from within the Greek zodiacal framework’, when instead it has always referred to the ‘the study of the words, wisdoms, and knowledge of the stars’ – and all which that implies. The cosmological endeavour began long before we had devised the astro-mathematical language and linguistic capacity to best describe it and pass it on.

How It All Began

Our general perceptions vary widely regarding the history of the transmission of information from one people to another or from one time to another. Any real debate on how collective and composite intellectual endeavors have evolved is usually an exercise in futility and most likely involves a large degree of hubris. Let’s attempt to clarify and broaden a few attitudes about some of these perceptions which we individually may take for granted. There may never be any agreement on a historical source for the inception of the first truly astrological minds; maybe we should be looking for another kind of source.

Prehistoric Astrology (Science starts with the Primitives)

There are many examples in pre-history of the various facets of astrology, as a ‘study of the stars’ in one form or another. Mammoth bone artifacts have been discovered, from roughly 25,000 years ago, with markings which track the Moon through its phases and its positions on the horizon. The famous painted “Caves of Lascaux”, dated to around 15,000BCE, have been suggested, by some researchers, to be the earliest connection to the astrological constellations. Just as these primitive cultures may not have understood what we meant by uttering “astrology” to them, we would most likely not be able to grasp the utterances that implied their true intentions for mapping and studying the night skies. Was it solely to develop a calendar for knowing when to migrate or plant a crop? Or could they have been aware of this inner connection to the planets and their cycles, in ways we only ascribe to more organized spiritual cultures?

Another archaeological find, one that you have probably heard about, is the 12,000-year-old neolithic site at a Gobekli Tepe, which also features iconography that seems to represent much of the present-day astrological symbology. On the border of Syria and Anatolia, Gobekli is the largest complex of its kind anywhere. The discoveries in these pock-marked hills represent the most ancient echoes of civilization in the human origin story. Sections of the site are purposefully aligned North and South for observational purposes with the central pillar mound encircled by 12 sculpted pillars. What this discovery could actually mean for the history of astrology has barely even entered the dialogue, yet Gobekli Tepe is now regarded by some as an archaeological discovery of great importance, rivaling the Pyramids at Giza, since it could profoundly change our collective understanding of a crucial stage in the development of society and force a rewrite of human history. A few years ago, Stanford University professor Ian Hodder said,
The Enigma of Armenia

The majority of the astrological and astronomical communities still consider Mesopotamia, from the period around 2100-1500BCE, to be the birthplace of actual ‘mathematical astronomy’ and the genesis culture of first legitimate zodiacal and astrological schemes upon which the Hellenistic Greeks finalized ‘the zodiac’ and gave the world ‘astrology’ as we know it. I feel with some certainty that this is not entirely true for a variety of reasons. One of the tangible arguments is the excavation and decipherment of the early Bronze Age sites of the Trans-Caucasus region of Armenia, which are forcing us to take a more critical look at the timeline of ‘astrological’ development.

Studies of rock art in the territory of modern Armenia show that the ancient peoples of the region were very interested in heavenly bodies and celestial phenomena over a long span of time. The Earth, the Sun, the Moon, planets, comets, Milky Way stars, constellations are all reflected in the pictures drawn on rocks in mountains around Lake Sevan and elsewhere in Armenia. German astronomer and science historian William T. Olcott, as early as 1914 wrote regarding the areas around the Gegham Mountains, ‘…the signs of Zodiac contain such animals that lived many thousands years ago in the territory of Armenia and around: So over a century ago, it had been noted that a form of symbolic division of the sky represented by a divided circle and a variety of animal images, ‘a zodiac’, was present in Armenia. Olcott also said: “Astronomical facts correspond with historical and archaeological investigations and prove that people who have invented the ancient figures of constellations probably lived in the valley of the Euphrates, as well as in the region near the mountain Ararat (Armenia)... the only place where all the animals depicted in the Zodiac were located together, was prehistoric Armenia.”

For those who may not remember their Judeo-Christian mythological history, the ‘Mountains of Ararat’, in the Armenian Highlands is the location where Noah’s Ark came to rest with God’s collection of (zodiacal) animals and the ‘last’ human family, after the biblical flood in order to begin civilization anew. For those who have studied the esoteric mythology of the story of Noah and the Ark, you may or may not ascribe to the symbolic interpretations of the story. The structure and design of the vessel which Yaweh instructed Noah to build for holding the animals and the ‘last humans’ is an astrological container and story device. It is also implied and expounded on in other works, that all of the story wisdom and cultural knowledge of prediluvian culture was passed on and preserved through Noah in order to re-awaken civilization.

A report done in 1988, challenged previous thoughts about the origins of the Indo-European language and also called into question the origins of astronom/ astrological symbolism. As further excavations and studies have taken place, it is becoming more widely accepted that both the Indo-European people and the Zodiac did not fall under the domain of the Babylonians at the end of the 3rd millennium; they more likely fall under the domain of the peoples living several thousand years prior in the region of Anatolia and on the Armenian Plateau.

Karahunj – the Armenian Stonehenge

Located over an area of about 18 acres near the city of Sisian, the ancient site of Zorats Karer, also known as Carahunge, Karahunj, Karahunj is a site that is often called the “Armenian Stonehenge”. Dating at the site suggests it was in continuous use from about 7700 to 2200 BCE, with indications that the site is probably older; if you are doing the math, that is about 5500 years of human activity at this one place. It was all but abandoned in the 2nd millennium BCE, which corresponds to the emergence of higher culture in the area further south in Sumeria and Babylon. The site was periodically re-occupied on a small scale for a few centuries leading up to the Greek conquests of Central Asia. Rock carvings of symbolic representations of the Leo, Taurus, Capricorn, Sagittarius and Scorpio constellations, along with symbols of the Sun and the Moon and the planets, were discovered on various stone fragments. Unlike many ancient astronomical sites, which remained populated later in history and particularly those which were settled into the modern age, Karahunj is essentially preserved. The fact that the area remains relatively untouched since its prehistoric heyday is a miracle for researchers.

At the moment, many world sites which indicate that sky-watching or celestial observances took place are under extreme scrutiny from skeptical academics. For example, the Stonehenge of Britain has been reclassified as a burial mound in a system of networked prehistoric mausoleums. The site at Karahunj has been highly debated by various authorities with the government of Armenia choosing to issue a decree that Karahunj is an ancient observatory. Paris Herouni, the director of
the Radio Physics Measurement Institute and the designer of the first optical radio telescope in the world, believes that the pioneering work at Metsamor not only shatters previous conceptions about when ancestral Armenians developed their own culture but that it also points to another source of civilization itself, on the Armenian Plateau. Herouni organized four research expeditions to the site between 1994 and 1996, each during an equinox or solstice. Extensive research was done on-site with carbon-dating, excavations, celestial observations using chronometers, telescopes and other astronomical equipment. Herouni verified previous findings and conclusions about the purpose of the complex, primarily that the stones were indeed an astronomical instrument, and that it is still very accurate.

**Medzamor – something we cannot ignore**

The observatory at Medzamor (Metsamor) predates the Babylonian civilization itself by several millennia. There is evidence that the site was already settled around 7000 BCE. The observatory has been dated to around 5500 BCE, around 7500 years ago. The significance that has emerged from this particular ancient observatory is that the main rock carving representing the sky is shown as concentric circles and it has been divided into 12 primary parts, and subsequent divisions. As far as we know, this is the first occurrence of a symbolic representation of a twelve portioned sky anywhere in the world. These divisions have been shown to correspond with animal symbols, including a Lion, Scorpion, Bull, also a Goat-Fish and centaur-like figure. Some researchers have claimed that all of the modern zodiacal images (or symbols of comparative meanings) are present at the site. The area is covered with 1000’s of Bronze Age glyphs, which appear to primarily have celestial significance.

Interestingly, the Armenian and the Gobekli Tepe areas are approximately 500 miles apart, yet the cultures are separated by thousands of years. The region is a hotbed of archaeological activity, and because of the vast amount of the virtually undisturbed carvings and features which correspond to celestial observation, there is a growing interest in the important early contributions to the development of science and of astrology which may arise from here. I personally feel that even the most conservatively cautious chronicle of astrology should be revised to include what was happening in this region several millennia prior to the Babylonian rise and to progress our history forward from there. There is compelling evidence to suggest that the original sky divisions into constellations and into a 12 part zodiac originated in the Armenian Highland.

**PROTO-ASTROLOGICAL**

**Other Astrology and Astronomy to Consider**

I wanted to include some other food for thought regarding early cultures and what they were beginning to contribute to mathematical, astronomical, calendrical and subsequently astrological knowledge before or independent of Sumerian, Babylonia, India or Greece.

**Nabta Playa - Egyptian Astronomy**

By the 5th millennia BCE, 7,000 years ago, the astronomical station at Nabta Playa in Nubian Desert in Egypt had already been calculated and constructed. Depending on the source, generally accepted archeo-astronomical estimates for the constellational alignments represented there, roughly point to circa 6500-6200 BCE corresponding to the Belt of Orion at that time. Other claims have been put forth that the alignments correspond to the Milky Way as it was 17,000 years ago. While this may seem far fetched, the site rests on the now desert banks of what was once an inland lake during the Holocene glacial retreat (19,000-11,700 years ago). It had already been settled as an active trading area around 13,000 years. We do know that by the 4th millennia BCE (6000 years ago), a 365-day calendar was already in use by the ancient Egyptians and the construction of this site undoubtedly took a well-developed system of higher mathematics and astronomical calculation over centuries to conclude. Though this pre-dynastic desert observatory is of extreme importance to astronomy and most likely to Egyptian astrological understanding, it does not divide the sky into the portions we use today, nor are there any known ideograms or symbols which correlate to the signs or constellations. Though there is much evidence that this site’s primary function was both astronomical and calendrical, there is little to suggest that from this period a form of ‘astrology’ or ‘a zodiac’ emerged here in a form which we could identify today. We will come back to Egypt in a moment.
The Island nation of Malta has been inhabited since 5900BC (about 8000 years). In 1927, a broken shard of a limestone disk etched with radiating divisions, lunar phase symbol, and arranged asterisms, was uncovered at the megalithic temple site of Tal-Qadi. A researcher, Dr. Kai H. Wirth, professor and part of UNSECO world education along with many other titles, wrote extensively about his conclusions regarding the meaning and implications of the shard. Heralded as “the world’s most ancient proof of a zodiac”, if correct, this divisional scheme could represent certain constellations and lunar phases. With 16 divisions - four divisions marking the new, full and quarter Moons and 12 indicating star formations, at 3500 years old, it could be a contender for the oldest record of some kind of astrological history, or at least in the astrology of the Mediterranean.

The concept of the decans in Egypt is something that I feel is not given enough credence in the context of modern astrology. The Austrian mathematician and historian, Otto Neugebauer, is considered the primary source for much of the interpreted evidence around Babylonian and Egyptian astronomy, which has affected scholarly opinions of Egypt’s limited role within Hellenistic and modern astrology. There is often little or no mention of the part decan system in the discussion of astrology

The thirty-six decan faces (or phases, note the similarity in the words) had been used for dividing the sky into a star clock, at least by 2100 BCE. Each face corresponds to a deity or aspect of solar shift, which in turn connects the divine energy into the mortal realms. I personally believe that the roots of the Egyptian astrological tree are deeper and stronger than currently accepted, which is due to a general misinterpretation and exclusion of evidence. Both the Romans and the Greeks attributed much of their astrological inheritance directly from the Egyptians.

Though in no way vying for the title of ‘the oldest’, the 2350-year-old solar observatory at Chankillo in North-Central Peru, is possibly contemporaneous with the advent of Hellenistic astrology in the West. Ceremonial platforms and planetary observation shrines and are ever-present elements of Andean culture and cosmology. The site at Chankillo is currently the oldest known solar observatory in the Americas. In the mid-2000s, archaeologist Ivan Ghezzi and his research team determined that the sprawling complex and the surrounding ruins constitute an ancient Sun calendar.

At 9˚33” south of the Equator, the thirteen Towers run North to South along a low ridge, the high point of the ridge representing the longest day in the Southern Hemisphere, Dec 21st. From ancient ceremonial observing points to the West and East of the central towers, they form an artificial toothed horizon that span the

The 13 Towers-Chankillo

The Ceiling of Senenmut Tomb
1473BCE

The 13 Towers of Chankillo
annual rising and setting arcs of the Sun. The hypothesis is that Sun rising over every other tower at 30-day intervals marks 12 solar months (or 24 half-months as it passes over each tower), from the Summer to Winter Solstice. If this theory of the towers is correct, this would indicate a knowledge of a 12 divisional Solar calendar, which preceded or correlated to other divisional calendars used in their astrological traditions; and that this awareness arose at around the same time the 12-divisional solar zodiac was being disseminated across the Mediterranean.

A Current Historical Summary

Celestial observation is universally prehistoric and can be seen in virtually every culture and epoch in civilization. The Egyptians and Babylonians were both obsessed with the transformative processes and correspondences of ‘a thing to another thing’, and how those transformations related to the movements of the heavens. (Much of this obsession is carried over into the mythologies throughout the ancient world). It is generally accepted that the earliest known written form of the Zodiac comes to us from the Babylonian MUL.APIN (The Shining Herd), dating to around 1300BCE. Though this by no means implies that this is the origin of the Zodiac, it is essentially the oldest version we know of which lays out the zodiacal structure we see today. The Babylonians also practiced a variety of ‘astrologies’ with non-standardized forms of a zodiac for over a millennia. The 12 sign zodiac became standardized as the Babylonians implemented a revised uniform solar calendar system to help unify the empire.

With some degree of certainty, we can say that the provenance of horoscopic astrology lies with the Hellenistic Greeks. Yet, the ancestral heritage of the refined fundamentals of our numerical notation and the base-10 number system which underlie the current zodiacal structure are more arguably attributed to the Indus Valley Civilization (c.3300-1300 BCE), and to the Indic societies that devised and eventually wrote down the Vedic scriptures. The Babylonians and Sumerians, who used a sexagesimal (base-60) numeric system (which interestingly has a factorization of 12), most likely contributed a great deal to a more complex mathematical astronomy and to the precision of the tracking the planets but may not be the progenitors of either the zodiac, the 12 divisional sky, or the fundamental premises of astrology.

More than the facts...

There are not multiple zodiaci, there is not a proto-zodiac, there is merely the Zodiac; we did not design nor did we create it. We discovered it, discovering us. We have confused what we are striving to describe, with the means of how we are describing it. What we call the Zodiac is an invisible field of energy that we are attempting to understand, describe, analyze, codify, map, organize and to order. As we have evolved to a point to reflect back upon its union with us, and as we move forward, we realize we are here to ultimately master it. This energy is a synthesis of lower and higher frequencies, from dense matter to starlight, interacting from different angles, with different qualities and amplitudes, in mathematically patterned and comprehensive ways. It is a life force itself, an intermingling of celestial ascending and descending essences, teaching us the wisdom of the stars required for us to evolve.

Reflecting on the sentiments of astrologer Vic DiCara when discussing Indian astrology’s origins, I realized that the way he feels about the role of the wisdom brought into the world by Vedic astrology, is the way I feel about astrology’s authentic role in the world in general. Astrology, horoscopic astrology, is nothing but a trifle compared to the wisdom and knowledge that the ancient cultures attained through their explorations of the heavens, which is the understanding of the nature of reality, the map of this reality and the source of it; and the individual’s path and collective participation with that source. This matter is much more important than the astrology of the self. In fact, horoscopic astrology only attains the height of its usefulness when cultivated from within by a collective spiritual philosophical framework. This is true integrated astrology.

Horoscopic astrology may have begun with the Greeks, but astrology did not begin with them. The Vedic Indians may have perfected the mathematical language used to both unify the cosmos and to describe the primary astrological structures, yet they did not ‘invent’ astrology or mathematics. The 12-divisional zodiac may have been employed by the Babylonians but it did not begin with them. The Sumerians may have summarized the constellations and connected the stars but they were not the first to do so.

My point to this is that there may be an inherent function of the astrological process itself, that acts as a test or a rite of passage along the path of consciousness. A test of purification which requires us to transmute the poisonous effects of ego, by choosing to divide and then ultimately reunite, in order to better know thyself by having experienced the wisdom of this reality. Humanity will continue to be compelled to master this reality so we may evolve. The individual realities may become less necessary as we move past certain stages of our personal and collective evolutions. It becomes diminishingly important to remain so individual, and far more vital for us to function holistically and to relate collectively. As we continue to learn what leads us to divide the sky, we are re-learning how to live undivided under it.

Russ von Ohlhause, is a research astrologer & consciousness catalyst. Having lived briefly in Tibet, his work echoes a spiritual undertone synthesized with a lifetime study of science, religion, myth, metaphysics & most importantly—nature. His work on, Celestia Mathematica & The Fibonacci Zodiac, is currently being taught as a foundational theory of astrological mechanics. Russ works with the concept of celestial embodiment through ‘head, heart & hands’, rooted in sacred dance & ceremony. Creator of Zodiac Faces: Planetary Physiognomy, The Holy Myth, Zodiac Image Project, & the ARC-Research Database Initiative. He is co-creator of Rhythm Sanctuary-ED3 and Astram - Astrologers Alliance, with partner Shannon Gill.
The Murder of Travis Alexander: An Investigation Using Forensic Astrology

In June of 2008, Travis Alexander, a devout Mormon author and salesman, was brutally murdered by his ex-girlfriend Jodi Arias, bearing injuries severe enough to have killed him three times over. Five years later, Jodi was charged with first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison. However, her nature, as well as the nature of the case, remain enigmatic and elusive, with Travis'smurder and sentenced to life in prison. At some point, however, Travis grew tired of the relationship - and as he withdrew following their breakup, Jodi started displaying increasingly dysfunctional and obsessive behaviors.

While this analysis will be focusing mainly on the event chart, it's important to note that both Travis and Jodi have a natal Taurus ASC conjunct Chiron, with Travis's Chiron conjunction being exact. This placement suggests potential wounding and challenges in terms of both of their self-worth, self-value, will, security and identity. However, Jodi's Chiron is also exactly sextile her natal Sun and opposite her natal Uranus in the 7th house (4-degree orb).

According to Melanie Reinhardt, Chiron-Sun aspects can potentially indicate someone who puts on a mask to please others, perhaps even adopting "many different personae." On the other hand, Chiron-Uranus aspects can make the individual "prone to sudden, unexpected and perhaps unwelcome events which radically alter their life situation" - a somewhat chilling description considering the context.

It should be noted that the Uranus-Chiron opposition lasted roughly 40 years and is considered a prominent, generational aspect. However, by examining house positions in Jodi's natal chart, one can potentially shed light on its expression within her personal life. In Jodi's case, Chiron sits in her first house, with Uranus planted firmly in the seventh. One could posit that unexpected circumstances in the realm of Jodi's relationships (natal Uranus in the seventh house) could provide her with opportunities for healing of her own self worth, value and identity (Chiron in the first house). Again, while it is a prominent generational aspect, its importance in this case seems to lie mainly in the potential of Jodi's relationships bringing her the opportunity for both great healing and great wounding.

While the house placements of Chiron and Uranus shed light onto Jodi's primal wounding, her natal Sun-Chiron aspect seems more helpful in explaining her general nature. In pictures of Jodi during her relationship with Travis, you see a bubbly-looking, petite blonde - a drastic contrast to the meek, brunette with glasses who sat before the judge during her trial. Many suspected this was an attempt on Jodi's part to appear innocent and demure for court, a hypothesis that may potentially be reflected by this placement.

Although Jodi is a Cancer Sun with Venus as her chart ruler, Pluto (at 19 degrees Libra) also makes major aspects with many of her inner planets - squaring her natal Sun and Mercury while also trining her natal Moon and Venus. Scorpio also rules her 7th house, bringing an additional Plutonic theme to her relationships. In Exposed: The Secret Life of Jodi Arias, Jane Velez-Mitchell puts forth a biographical account of Jodi's life that shows many instances of Plutonian behavior. During Jodi's teenage years and early 20s, she exhibited a string of self-destructive behavior, causing her parents to wonder if their daughter had bipolar disorder. She would often hack into her boyfriends' social media accounts and even moved to one ex-boyfriend's town after they had broken up, displaying increasingly stalker-like tendencies. In one relationship, she started styling herself like
her new boyfriend's ex-wife, dying her hair, getting breast implants and even purchasing the same car as the woman.

During the investigation, Travis's friends informed investigators that Jodi had been stalking him and that his tires had recently been slashed. In text messages sent before his death, Travis also accused Jodi of hacking into his social media and email accounts. However, the last straw seemed to be when Travis invited another woman on a trip that he was originally supposed to go on with Jodi.

On June 4th, 2008, it is alleged that Jodi traveled to Travis's home, planning and bringing gas cans so she wouldn't have to stop on the way. The two engaged in sexual activities, with nude photos being captured on a camera in the home. Accidental photos also captured the moment Travis was murdered — cornered naked in his shower, alone. Five days later concerned friends reported Travis missing, and his body was discovered in his bathroom shower with twenty-nine stab wounds, a slit throat, and a gunshot to the head.

Because Jodi accidentally photographed the moments prior to the murder, these photos provide an accurate time at which to cast an event chart. The exact moment selected is 5:27:28 PM on June 4th, 2008 in Mesa, California.

In forensic astrology, the planet ruling the first house generally acts as a significator of the victim. While the ruler of the fifth house cusp may be used in cases concerning young children, this is an exception. Most analyses primarily use the first house ruler as a significator. In turn, the planet ruling the seventh house is the significator of our POI (person of interest) - generally understood as the last person to have made contact with the individual prior to the events occurring.

In this event chart (below), the Ascendant is ruled by Scorpio, making Mars the significator for Travis, with Taurus on the seventh making Venus the significator for Jodi. So, we already know Mars and Venus will be important in this analysis. Interestingly, Mars (Travis's significator) sits in the sign of Leo which is Travis's natal sun sign. As mentioned, Jodi has a natal Taurus Ascendant, but is also extremely Venusian and feminine in nature, being an artist as well as a photographer.

Because the two planets act as significators, aspects between Mars and Venus may provide insight into the contact between Travis and Jodi at the time this chart was cast. Here, both planets are forming an applying sextile. Sextiles generally represent harmony, a bit of excitement - but also opportunity. The two were engaging in sexual activity prior to the murder as evidenced by the sexual photographs, so odds are this may be somewhat represented by the aspects. However, Jodi's actions prior to and after the murder also indicate forethought and planning. It's very possible she charmed Travis with her words (Venus in Gemini as significator) and waited for an opportunity when he was vulnerable. We should not discount the fact that Gemini bears the archetype of the trickster - and in this chart, Neptune also sits in the third house. Both Mars and Venus are both being dispossessed by this trickster Mercury, which also sits in the eighth house. Because Mercury is also forming an applying square to Uranus in the fourth house, it links our significators to an unexpected disturbance in Travis's home.

In forensic astrology, the Moon is always considered as another co-significator of the victim. This tradition stems from horary astrology where the Moon is a co-significator of all missing animate objects. In cases involving young children, the Moon is also often emphasized.

Therefore, Travis is represented by both Mars and the Moon. Here, the Moon sits in the eighth house. Unfortunately, in many event charts of this nature, this is often indicative of literal death. With the Moon in Cancer, we have a double theme of home and water - and, as indicated, Travis was indeed located in the shower of his home. The Moon is also associated with rapid change and variability which can also be indicative of a changing M.O. As mentioned, Jodi stabbed and shot Travis, however, the reason for the change in method remains unknown.

Because the seventh house is representative of Jodi, the sign and planets placed here can also be indicative of the style of her actions, as well as her appear-
ance. While descriptions of Taurus on the Descendant vary between men and women, forensic astrologer Kirsty McIntosh states female POIs indicated by this placement are generally dainty and slim, having long, thin necks and hands, quick and dark eyes, and a “neat, well-composed and well-ordered body.” For the most part, this description does seem to fit Arias.

The sign ruling the seventh house cusp can also be indicative of an individual’s psychology and style of actions. In *Criminal Astrology: Volume I*, Kirsty McIntosh explains: “If Taurus is on the seventh house cusp, one can assume the suspect’s anger was over a longer period of time and there may have been pent-up rage.” In this event chart, however, we also have another aspect acting as a testimony of Jodi’s potential anger and aggression: *Mars in Leo forms a five-degree-orb square to the seventh house cusp.*

Accounts of Jodi’s behavior prior to the murder also seem to fit this description. In discussing the case, trial attorney Linda Kenney Baden described the event as “as buildup that ultimately led to her [Jodi] making a decision in a passionate way.” During the trial, it was also revealed that Travis had continued to have sex with Jodi for nine months after their break-up, ultimately stringing her along and likely contributing to her building bitterness and rage. Jodi’s often been described as “obsessed” - and, as mentioned, the Plutonian influence in her natal chart seems to speak to this potential. A retired investigator told CNN that the pattern of Travis’s injuries seems to indicate a “frenzy” and generally suggest someone being attacked while in a defensive posture.

It’s interesting that this chart also shows a second-house Pluto at 0 degrees of Capricorn opposing the Moon (Travis’s co-significator) in the eighth house. While the second house is generally associated with money and values, money has not been suggested as being an important element in this case. Using derivative houses, however, the second house becomes Jodi’s eighth house, holding the planet Pluto, while also opposing Travis (the Moon) in the eighth house. With this understanding, both Jodi and Travis’s houses of sexuality, fear, anxiety, and loss are being strongly activated at this time.

Venus and the Sun are both in the seventh house in Gemini — while Taurus opens the 7th house. Oddly, Travis’s injuries seem to reflect these patterns. Venus is often associated with love and lust-based crimes in general. However, Taurus also rules the throat - and as mentioned, Travis’s throat was slit, with the autopsy report describing a ‘gaping’ wound and perforation of the entire upper airway and jugular vein. Traditionally, the Sun rules the heart, spine, and upper back. This also seems to be emphasized in the autopsy report, with the medical examiner noting 16 separate stab wounds to this area.

As mentioned, Taurus on the Descendant seems to accurately describe Jodi physically and mentally, indicating that she had potentially been angrily stewing over their relationship problems for a while, taking the opportunity (indicated by the sextile between the rulers) she was given to finally launch her brutal attack. Many of her actions prior to the murder indicate forethought and planning - however, Uranus’s involvement implies some sudden unanticipatedness as well.

With Mercury in the eighth house acting as a final disposer of both Venus and Mars, it’s possible the two were hoping to converse and attempt to reconcile their differences. However, with both Mars (masculine, phallic) in Leo (romance) acting as Travis’s significator, one could plausibly suggest he was mainly concerned with sex. Perhaps the conversation did not have the outcome Jodi had anticipated, leading to a passionate argument that quickly grew violent. Some have also hypothesized that Jodi may have found a message from a female on Travis’s phone while she was at his house, perhaps inciting her rage. From an astrological perspective, an 8th-house (hidden) Mercury (communication) could potentially give weight to this theory. Especially when considering Neptune’s aforementioned placement in the third house.

**ASTEROIDS**

While asteroids are a modern addition to astrological interpretation, I do believe that they provide compelling insight. In this event chart, a few asteroids seemed to stand out.

The asteroid Jody (#4083) sits in the 4th house of home in this chart and is one degree away from forming an exact trine with the Moon (Travis’s co-significator) in the 8th house of death. This clearly seems to show Jody’s presence in Travis’s home and a connection to the Moon’s placement in the 8th.

Ixion (#28978) is exactly opposite Venus in the 7th, while also opposing the Sun (Travis’s disposer) in 7th and Mars (Travis’s significator) at a one-degree orb. In Greek mythology, Ixion murders his father-in-law and is considered by many as the ‘first murderer’ of a relative in the ancient world. Unfortunately, this asteroid is often emphasized in these types of event charts.

Nessus (#7066) falls in the third house of this chart and is exactly opposite Mars (Travis’s significator). This asteroid is often indicative of betrayals of trust, which is also an
apt description of the circumstances that occurred that evening: Jodi bludgeoning the man she claimed to love after an intimate, sexual moment while he was alone, defenseless and naked in a corner shower.

**Using Transits, on the date of Travis’s murder:**
To further investigate Jodi’s experience of the murder, one can interpret how the planetary placements had personally affected her during this time. This can be accomplished by examining transits and solar arc progressions.

On the date of the murder, using whole-sign houses, **Mars strongly interacts with Jodi’s natal chart.** At this time, transiting Mars was in Jodi’s fourth house of home, indicating literal aggression in the home, and was also squaring her Ascendant at a one-degree orb. Because square aspects imply action through tension, one can experience this as being “forced” into a decision or choice through outside circumstances. With this Mars-Ascendant aspect, one could also posit that Jodi felt pressured (square) to act (Mars) – her entire self (Ascendant) receiving a jolting boost of motivation from the warrior planet Mars. According to Bernadette Brady, contacts to the Ascendant (excluding the conjunction) create the sense that the way one should react to the external environment has suddenly changed.

In Jodi’s natal chart, Mars also rules the twelfth and seventh houses through Scorpio and Aries, indicating that the ultimate effect of this transit will be felt in those areas. In the seventh, of course, through the destruction of the relationship, and in the twelfth, through literal imprisonment and a loss of personal power.

It should also be noted that retrograde, transiting Pluto, at 0 degrees of Capricorn, had also formed a square to Jodi’s natal Mars in the fifth house. This placement also indicates that this was a tense time for Jodi, with the potential to induce easy aggression and violence.

On the date of the murder, transiting Mars was also forming a wide conjunction to Jodi’s fourth-house, natal North Node. **She has an exact reversed nodal return,** and her natal South Node was in exact conjunction with transiting Chiron.

Reinhardt describes a type of projection during Chiron transits, with one’s environment reflecting and manifesting the issues individuals need to heal within themselves. In this case, it’s possible Jodi was projecting her hostility and anger (being activated by Mars) onto Travis, and interpreting his interactions with other women as both a rejection of herself (natal Chiron...
FORENSIC ASTROLOGY

in the first house), as well as a personal attack (projected Mars).

Solar Arc Direction for the date of Travis’s murder:

Jodi’s SA Saturn was exactly conjunct her natal Pluto, indicating threats of loss, self-destruction, and change.

Jodi’s SA Ascendant was exactly conjunct her natal Moon, indicating a focus on personal needs and relationships.

Jodi’s SA Neptune was exactly opposite her natal Sun, suggesting the possibility of rose-colored glasses and muddled thinking.

According to Noel Tyl, “More than one arc active at the same time suggests a particularly critical time of life development,” a statement which would likely apply to Jodi.

During Travis’s murder trial, Jodi spun web after web of lies, at one point attributing the murder to a home invasion and later claiming that she had been defending herself from Travis’s domestic abuse.

In a last-ditch attempt to avoid the death penalty, Jodi announced she would be fundraising for victims of domestic abuse through the sale of custom T-shirts. She then stood in the courtroom, accused of her ex-boyfriend’s murder, grasping a T-shirt with the word “SURVIVOR” clutched tightly to her chest.

In the end, considering Travis’s defensive injuries and the lack of evidence supporting Jodi’s claims, Jodi Arias was ultimately locked behind bars and sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Unfortunately, we may never truly know the circumstances that led up to Travis’s eventual murder. However, by combining forensic astrology with other more popular forms of astrological interpretation, the astrologer is provided with additional insight into the situation.

Britanie Leclair is a forensic astrologer, researcher, writer, and true-crime junkie from Sudbury, Ontario, Canada. She has a four-year BA.Hons in psychology and is currently completing an MA in cultural astrology and astronomy at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. She can be reached at brit@britsbrain.com.
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The hypothesis is correct is one of kind of research. It is the kind of research that was given the most emphasis up until about the 1990s and is still emphasized in some universities even up until today. However, this is no longer the kind of research that dominates in many academic areas and it is not a kind of research that is usually appropriate for astrological research. Many of the new research methods rely more heavily on an astrologer’s intuition and astrological expertise rather than statistics! Many of the most important research methods today do not impose a rigid statistical interpretation of data that contrasts with the actual way that we astrologers interpret charts.

I sometimes hear astrologers say things like “research can study only one variable at a time” or “astrology works by synchronicity and not causality so scientific research does not work.” This is not what I learned in the MA program in research methods program that I was enrolled in, and it is not what other graduate-level programs in research methods and statistics teach in the 21st century. To get a better appreciation of research methods that are important in the 21st century and how these methods are a perfect match for astrology, let’s look at the importance of data visualization and purposeful sampling.

Reasons for Thinking Research is Not Essential
Consider the following statements:

• You have a stellium in Gemini and you need variety in your life.
• You have a stellium in the 9th house so traveling is good for you.
• Transiting Uranus was conjunct your 7th house cusp when you got divorced. This is one possible event that occurs with this transit.
• Your stellium in Scorpio in the 8th house inclines you to look beneath the surface.

These are the kinds of statements that we astrologers make. Most of us do not make fatalistic statements and we empower our clients to make the best decisions. Astrology is not a science that has rules like the law of gravity that work universally and completely consistently.

Also, many astrologers feel that astrology is a language of symbols and the astrological effects are like archetypal images rather than statements about concrete facts. There are many ways that astrology can operate in a person’s life. Also important is that many of us believe that astrology does not function in a simple linear cause-and-effect manner. Given the way in which astrology works, it may feel like statistical research can strangle the life and spirit of astrology, and that statistical research puts astrology into a box that astrology does not live comfortably in. Astrology is dynamic and fluid and informs us of the meaning and purpose of events rather than about predicting the details of our lives with any level of certainty. We can see why there has been a pervasive feeling in astrology that direct experience of the power and significance in our lives is far more important than putting astrology into the rigid confines of research, and that if there is any kind of research that is important in astrology, the research is simply our engagement with astrology by analyzing and interpreting planetary placements and planetary configurations.

Modernizing Our Understanding of What Research Is
Although the ideas given above may at first sound like reasonable and even convincing arguments that research in astrology is not a high priority, there are some oversights and simplifications in these arguments that need to be addressed.

First, the image of “the rigid confines of research” alludes to particular research methods and the research methods that it alludes to are not the ones that are most appropriate for astrology research. These images of research as a sterile, extremely objective and empirical undertaking remind me of how research methods and statistics have been taught for decades at universities, but research methods have developed and evolved dramatically in the past 20 years.

Collecting thousands of charts of birth data, stating a clear hypothesis, and performing statistical tests to see if your hypothesis is correct is one of kind of research. It is the kind of research that was given the most emphasis up until about the 1990s and is still emphasized in some universities even up until today. However, this is no longer the kind of research that dominates in many academic areas and it is not a kind of research that is usually appropriate for astrological research. Many of the most important research methods today do not impose a rigid statistical interpretation of data that contrasts with the actual way that we astrologers interpret charts.

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Data Visualization

Data Visualization is a huge part of research in modern times. In the quote below, a data analyst states that “data visualization is undoubtedly the top word today.” If it is the top word, then it makes sense for us to think about data visualization more than statistics when we think of research.

In the field of data science, data visualization is undoubtedly the top word today. No matter what data you want to analyze, doing data visualization seems to be a necessary step. But many people don’t have a specific concept of data visualization, and they don’t know how to implement it.¹

In astrology, we already use some very advanced data visualization. We interpret a birth chart by interpreting a chart wheel. We find it much easier to interpret the chart by looking at a chart wheel instead of a listing of planet positions. This shows us the power of data visualization! Also, consider the square chart wheel that was used by many medieval astrologers and is often used in Vedic astrology. The square wheel gives a different kind of visualization of planetary positions. See Figure 1, Example of Data Visualization: Time Line format of Transits²

Many astrologers, and especially younger astrologers who begin their studies of astrology using computer software instead of calculating charts from an ephemeris and tables of houses, prefer visuals like a Time Line Format or AstroSignature format for forecasting.

The Time Line Format show more clearly than a text listing when aspects like transit-to-natal and progressed to natal begin, are exact, and end. The Time Line format also makes it easy to see what aspects are in orb at a particular time and whether they are increasing or decreasing in strength.

The AstroSignature forecast format is another form of data visualization of transits and progressions. The AstroSignature forecast can be used to easily see when a person is accident prone, likely to have good business opportunities, or have sensitive health. See Figure 2: Data Visualization: AstroSignature Forecast²

We do not usually classify our use of these data visualization tools as research tools; we think of them more as simply personal preferences for our chart interpretation. However, they are research tools as well and they are very important research tools. Every time we interpret a birth chart, we are doing research because

If we are serious about how understanding how astrology works, then we need to carefully consider any potential way to improve our ability to visualize planetary configurations that we interpret.

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¹ The quote is from the article “Data Visualization: The Top Word Today” by John Doe, published in Data Science Journal, 2019.

² Figures 1 and 2 are illustrations showing data visualization techniques used in astrology.
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we are getting one more example of how astrology works for another person. When we think of “research”, we should not limit ourselves to just statistical research of large groups of data. Making data more understandable and improving our ability to see patterns in data is extremely important. In the quote above, the data scientist stated that “data visualization is undoubtedly the top word today”. If we are serious about how understanding how astrology works, then we need to carefully consider any potential way to improve our ability to visualize planetary configurations that we interpret.

In Figure 1 and Figure 2, we see a form of data visualization of an individual chart. Data visualization of a group of charts is also extremely important in modern research. Almost always visualization of the data is much more informative and much more interesting than a statistical analysis to determine if a hypothesis is correct! Let’s see how we can use data visualization of a group of charts to get insights into what is in the birth charts of astrologers.

I am curious about the planets Mercury and Uranus in the charts of astrologers. In the rigid old-fashioned way of doing research we would come up with a hypothesis, such as that astrologers have Mercury and Uranus in a hard or soft aspect more often than other groups and then we see if what we expect is true. Rather than do this we look at a graph to see what the angular distance between Mercury and Uranus is. This leads to discovery. Rather than assume that we know how the planets Mercury and Uranus interact in the charts of astrologers we discover how they interact. In fact, this more exciting and more important area of scientific research is often referred to as Knowledge Discovery or simply KD. We are now in an exciting era of Knowledge Discovery by using data visualization tools and the expertise of astrologers. The old days of rigid statistical testing of hypotheses are far behind us. We do statistical testing of hypotheses only after extensive investigations with KD has brought us to a point where we have great confidence in our theory and we are ready to test. KD is the big and exciting part of 21st-century research because the final step of confirming a finding is like putting the final touch-ups and edits of a book that has taken 10 years to write while the greater part of the effort is using tools like data visualization to make the discoveries.

In Figure 4 we see the angular distance between the planets Mercury and Uranus in the birth charts of 979 astrologers. This...
graph shows that Mercury and Uranus tend to be 33 degrees, 135 degrees, or 150 degrees from each other in the charts of the astrologers. The peak at 150 degrees is not as high as at 33 degrees and 135 degrees but it is much wider. The peak at 150 degrees stretches from 147 degrees to 153 degrees. As astrologers, we recognize that this is a quincunx aspect with a 3-degree orb. See Figure 3: Distribution of the Mercury-Uranus Angle for 979 Astrologers.$^3$

Before we analyze the Mercury-Uranus angles more, let’s look at Figure 4, which shows the angular distance between Mercury and Jupiter for the 979 astrologers. As shown in Figure 4, the peaks for the angular distance between Mercury and Jupiter are at 6 degrees, 12 degrees, 150 degrees, and 168 degrees.

Notice that Mercury and Jupiter, as well as Mercury and Uranus, are often in a quincunx aspect for these astrologers. See Figure 4: Distribution of the Mercury-Jupiter Angle for 979 Astrologers.$^2$

By looking at these graphs of the angular distance between planets we are able to make very interesting observations about Mercury-Jupiter and Mercury-Uranus aspects in the birth charts of astrologers. If we tested a theory that these planets are in hard or soft aspects, the results would be negative and we would learn nothing except that our theory is not supported by the data. By using data visualization, we have the opportunity to make discoveries.

I am interested in Mercury-Uranus aspects of astrologers because we pursue an unusual idea. A great many people believe in astrology but astrology is only a passing interest and their attention is on other things. We astrologers are fascinated by an idea that is very far out of the box. I am interested in Mercury-Jupiter because of our large philosophical view and vast perspectives on life and I am interested in Mercury-Uranus because we pursue an unusual topic; when I meet new people and tell them that I am an astrologer, I know it will raise some eyebrows. If I tell them that I am a computer programmer, then I know that will make a nice solid favorable impression. If I am in a Uranian mood I tell people that I am an astrologer and if I am feeling less brazen, I tell them that I am a computer programmer!

The quincunx aspect is often regarded as an awkward combination between planets and where an adjustment is needed. As astrologers, we are not primarily politicians or philosophers (Mercury-Jupiter) and we are not primarily inventors and innovators (Mercury-Uranus) but we do work in an area that has an awkward relationship with the current academic understanding of how life works. The quincunx aspect makes sense as we reflect on this.

All of these thoughts and ideas would not occur if we did not use data visualization. This is why data visualization is so popular and so important in 21st-century data science. We get new insights and we can make discoveries. We find out everything that a hypothesis test would tell us, but much more as well. Data visualization is liberating. Data visualization also opens the door for bright, creative, intuitive astrologers to make sense of the data and lead us to a new level of astrological understanding. Rather than research strangeling the life out of astrology, this kind of research gives astrology wings to evolve to a new level.

Before ending this section of this article, I wish to underscore a very important point: From the viewpoint of modern research methods, we need to carefully consider what visualization tools are available. We benefit by taking the time to work with different data visualization tools and to see if, after investing some time into working with these data visualization tools, they help us better see what the planetary placements and planetary configurations are and to more easily interpret them.

Better data visualization tools accelerate our understanding of astrology and improve our ability to use astrology. In modern data science, each step forward in data visualization is regarded as tremendously important. Astrology benefits tremendously by making data visualization a higher priority and investing more time into developing and learning better data visualization tools. This is one of the biggest steps forward that we can make in astrological research as well as in chart interpretation.

Lastly, a technical detail about the graphs in Figure 3 and Figure 4 is that it shows the angular distances compared to a random control group. In this article, I will not go into a prolonged discussion of why this is important as it will distract us from our main topic of why astrological research is so important and how we can effectively conduct astrological research. Also, this is a technical detail that the astrology researcher does not need to get deeply involved in. In the Sirius 3.0 software used to produce this graph, you simply check the box to view the difference of the group of charts from the transits distribution.

Purposeful Sampling

In addition to data visualization, there is one other research tool that is also so wonderful for the field of astrology that I wish to mention it as well: purposeful sampling studies.

Suppose you want to know what inclines a person to be athletic or to be psychic, to be a great singer, or just about anything else. There is a trick to make solid progress in determining this, and it is a trick that is used in genetics research. To explain how to use this research method, I will describe how I used it to determine what the astrological indicators of athletic talent are.

To determine what planetary configurations in the birth chart incline a person to have exceptional athletic ability, my first step is to go to google.com and enter “greatest athletes of all time”. I found two websites that appeared to be based on the opinions of very dedicated sports fans. One website listed 50 of the greatest athletes of all time and the other website listed 100 of them. I entered the names of the athletes that appeared in both lists. Fortunately, nearly all of them are already in the Sirius software so I could read in the birth data and see what the accuracy rating is. I used only the charts of athletes that are listed.
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on both websites and that have birth data from a birth certificate or other birth record (AA accuracy). In this first step, it is very important to use data selected by someone else rather than yourself so that you are not unconsciously biasing your results by picking charts that fit your theory.

The next step in the research is simply to analyze the charts using whatever astrological theories you prefer to come up with a combination of planetary placements or planetary configurations that you think are showing up in these charts and make sense to you. We call this an AstroSignature for athletic ability. Lastly, you see how well your AstroSignature works by entering the criteria that you have come up with in astrology research software and seeing how high the athletes score in this AstroSignature compared to other groups of charts. I conducted this research and found very consistent and compelling indicators of athletic ability. I made a series of free youtube tutorial videos that explain the details of how the research was conducted, what the AstroSignature is, and how well it works.¹

Another variation of this kind of research is to analyze the charts of people that have the strongest planetary placements or planetary configurations. For example, I have conducted this kind of research on the meanings of the 12 zodiac signs and the results of the research confirm some of the basic ideas we have about zodiac signs but also suggest some slight changes in how we think of zodiac signs are needed. The results of this research are also available in free youtube tutorial videos. More detailed information on how to conduct Extreme Case Sampling studies is also provided in youtube videos.

Concluding Comments
We live in an Information Age that produces a steady stream of technological breakthroughs. Within a span of 10 years, the improvements in hardware and software services of all kinds are dramatic. One thing that enables these developments are improved research methods. The new research methods are more fluid and flexible than the kinds of rigid statistical methods that many people are familiar with. Astrology can transition to a new level if we embrace science, psychology, and mysticism in a holistic and unified way rather than rely only primarily on our own personal experiences with astrology and the tradition of ideas that are passed down to us.

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David Chochrane is the author of two astrology books, a regular lecturer at international astrology conferences, instructor at the Avalon School of Astrology, computer programmer at Cosmic Patterns Software, past President of ISAR, has created over 260 free tutorial videos available at youtube.com, author of numerous articles and research papers, and pioneer in the development of Vibrational Astrology. He has collaborated with dozens of astrologers on astrological software products and research projects.

Tuba Gök is a freelance graphic designer who finds her inspiration from traveling around the world and discovering new cultures. All of the cities with dynamic cultures stimulate her towards producing inspiring designs for the international community.

She is the founder of the La Brand Creative studio in Ankara, Turkey. Her primary field is logo design, brand identity, and product packaging. You can find some of her designs through this link: https://www.behance.net/tubagok

Tuba began studying with AstroArt Astrology school in September 2019.

I have always believed that our names have a big impact on our lives. As an example, my surname represents the sky and my whole childhood passed with my biggest dream of becoming an astronaut.

This year by coincidence, I realized that astrology is what I actually want to do. I am still at the basic level but I want to thank to Maurice Fernandez, who helped me to combine the work that I love with astrology.
Working With CHILDREN’S CHARTS

Column by Alex Trenoweth
PGCE, MA, DFAstroIS

PART ONE

As astrology becomes more and more popular thanks to our millennial friends, it is very much worth our while to consider not only what astrology can and cannot do but what it should and should not do.

One contentious area in astrology is whether or not we should do consultations with children.

For a very long time, I thought that interfering with a child’s destiny left an indelible mark on my own karma. Who was I to interfere?

However, as I became more experienced as a teacher and an astrologer, I started to see the potential astrology had to help parents and teachers and I changed my mind. But I had very strict parameters in my approach to children’s charts which I will present in future sections of this column. This approach is reasonably safe for astrologers, is based on statistical research and evidence on behaviour and does not involve face-to-face consultations with children.

When I first starting researching and writing about how astrology can change the way we educate our children, I wanted to be very careful not to encourage astrologers to treat the charts of children the same way we would treat the charts of adults. But over time, I became so comfortable with the way I worked that I had lost touch with how different it is to how other astrologers work. It took an extensive email exchange with Maurice before I saw the expectations on both sides were very different. So I’m very grateful to Maurice for both this opportunity to write this column and for his input. This column would be have been very different without it.

In this column

There are vastly different skillsets involved with working with children and if you intend on working with the charts of people under the age of 18, there are some extremely important legal guidelines you should bear in mind. After considering them, you may even decide that working with the charts of children is far too risky.

In this introductory column, I feel the need to be very clear on the problems of working with children as well as the opportunities to help parents and teachers create better relationships with the children in their care which I will write about in future columns.

Let me give you the difficult news first.

Child Protection

It may sound obvious but a person is not a legal adult until they are 18 years of age. You can’t round up 17 to make it 18, you can’t consider that a “mature” 16-year-old is really 18. After doing a little research on what can happen if don’t make sure a person is 18 before you treat them like an adult, you may wish to make it clear in your advertising that your clients must be over the age of 18.

As I am a professional teacher (at one point working at management level), I am fully trained in child protection therefore I can—up to a point—engage with children astrologically. Even though I have extensive child protection training, I would never have an unsupervised child in my consultation office. I do work with families but there is no way I am going to consult with a child without a parent or legal guardian in the room. This also goes for Skype or Zoom consultations: a parent must be in the room or I’m removing myself from the situation.

So what does child protection training entail?

This approach is reasonably safe for astrologers, is based on statistical research and evidence on behaviour and does not involve face-to-face consultations with children.

1. Police Clearance
2. Training on how to recognise neglect and abuse
3. A clear understanding of what can and cannot be kept confidential
4. Knowing when and how to refer a child’s case appropriately
5. Predictions and assessment

POLICE CLEARANCE

In order to access training in child protection, you must be vetted every year to verify you do not have any criminal convictions. In the UK, this costs about £40 per year and if I don’t have an up to date certificate, I can’t teach. If I could get around this rule but get caught trying to teach without a certificate, I can permanently lose my teaching licence. If you wish to work with children at any level, I suggest you have police clearance.

NEGLECT AND ABUSE

It is true that adults can find themselves in abusive situations and you, as an astrologer, can refer them to an agency or get help for them yourself. Adults have had enough life experience that legally they can make an informed decision about how to handle adversity in their lives. Children are under the care of a responsible adult and that adult has to provide a living environment so that child can grow and prosper. At home, their parents/guardians provide this care, at school, it’s their teachers and sometimes a parent delegates their responsibility to another family member or a friend. Anyone responsible at any level for the well being of a child is morally obligated to report abuse to an appropriate authority.

If you are going to work with children professionally, you have to be trained in how to spot signs of abuse or neglect and you must know who to report it to.
CONFIDENTIALITY

Children can and do disclose things to trusted adults. I’ve heard dreadful, heart-breaking stories, I’ve had to call the police on that nice family that everyone likes and generally my experience of working in child protection has taught me that there are monsters disguised as people everywhere.

But I cannot promise a child complete confidentiality. As an astrologer, you shouldn’t either. All it would take is that child to tell another adult that you are keeping secrets and you’ll have to explain yourself to someone who can charge you with reckless endangerment, neglect or something far more sinister.

This, of course, is completely different to what we promise our adult clients around confidentiality.

REFFERALS

Let’s say you’ve decided that yes, Alex Trenoweth is the most paranoid person you’ve ever met and you’ve decided to completely ignore her advice and see children as clients.

Now you have a 14-year-old pregnant child who has just disclosed to you that the father of her baby is a family member. Do you know what to do?

You have a 17-year-old self-harmer or a 15-year-old anorexic or a 16-year-old who has just confessed she’s in a “relationship” with a 22-year-old?

As you well know, no one comes to an astrologer for just a chat. They have a problem that needs to be sorted and they’ve placed these problems in your lap. If your client is a child, it really does become your responsibility to act. You have to know when, how and who to report issues such as these and many, many other variations. I could make a very long list! And to make matters really complicated, laws vary from state to state but it is your responsibility to know what they are. So you see, if the parent is in the room, it is their responsibility and you don’t have to worry about it. However, you still have to be able to judge whether that parent is acting with competence which is yet another reason you shouldn’t be working with children without the proper training and experience.

If you do think I’m being overly cautious or even paranoid, then you should read up on Andrew, the former senior member of the British Royal family who foolishly placed himself in a compromised situation with a person under the age of 18 and see what it costs to have an allegation made against you 20 years after the incident occurred. No one is messing around with child protection if you make a prediction, you plant a seed that the child may nurture or refuse to develop. You’ve had an effect on their life in some way that is something other than how a pep talk or talk about consequences would have an effect. You know that astrology is a powerful tool and that is a huge responsibility. For me personally, this is a responsibility I choose not to take. When I’m working with families, I am very careful to explain what I can do, where I can help. And predicting the future of someone who is growing and developing at an exponential rate is something I don’t want to be in the way of.

I know at this point, I’ve probably made you think there is no way to use astrology to help children. But there is a way we can help children and keep ourselves safe at the same time. I do think it is extremely important that we engage with children — within very careful boundaries — and this next story is why.

Stephen’s Story

I had known Stephen (not his real name) from his first day in secondary school. Even at the age of 11, everyone knew this child was going to get into serious trouble one day. We suspected he was involved with gangs, we suspected his parents had addiction issues, we predicted he would not do well on his exams. And every single one of us suspected there was nothing we could do about it.

“Stephen,” I’d say, looking into those big brown eyes welling up with tears, “Wouldn’t you have a better day if you didn’t have to come here and get detention?”

“Yes Miss,” he’d say. Then I’d send him on his way to make amends for whatever havoc he wreaked and to apologise to those he had wronged.

Many times, I had his parents in my office advising them about my concerns for Stephen’s future. And every single time I knew my words were falling on ears that were not listening.
So inevitably, Stephen would find himself back in my office (which is fully covered by CCTV at all times).

And inevitably, Stephen came to the end of the line in my school and he was permanently excluded.

“You can’t win them all,” my colleagues soothed. “Sometimes, you just have to cut your losses and focus on the things you can change.” I looked at my huge pile of marking, my long to-do list and had no option but to agree.

One evening, as the weather was warming up, I was walking the 20-minute journey from school to home. As I reached an intersection, I noticed a large, very excited group of children wearing my school’s uniform. There were police cars and just as an ambulance pulled up, I saw a body that had been hastily covered with a sheet.

Oh my God, I thought, one of my children has been hit by a car. I ran up to a policeman and explained I was a teacher from a nearby school and could that body be a child from my school? I was thinking I would know the parents and could help find them quickly. I was firmly told my assistance was not required and no further details could be provided.

So I did what every modern parent or teacher would do in such a situation and I went on social media. I quickly found out the body under that sheet wasn’t one of my students. The body under the sheet was the victim of one of my students. The child had been chased by a bully and had been run over by a bus and killed. Stephen was the bully.

The next day at school in staff briefing, the head teacher told us there had been an incident and that we were not allowed to discuss it. If any of the children discussed it, they were to be sent to our one and only guidance counsellor. Well, I looked down that long row of teachers to our one and only guidance counsellor and I knew we were not equipped to handle this situation.

In time, I was sent as the school’s designated outreach person to visit Stephen in prison where he was learning how to be a better criminal. I looked at those watery, big brown eyes—now behind bars—and knew I was looking at a ruined life.

In that instant, my question of asking who was I to interfere in the destiny of a child changed to who was I not to interfere in the destiny of a child.

How astrology can help

If astrology has meaning and value, then it should be to make the world a better place, to help parents develop the skills to lead fulfilling lives and to break the cycles of poor parenting by empowering children to understand their unique contributions in this sad, shitty world of screwed up people placed in shitty situations.

As astrologers, we have the ability to guide people to the Light. When it comes to working with children, we need to have special considerations in place to make it safe for all from a legal standpoint.

I’ve run out of space in this first column but I hope I’ve given you some food for thought. In the next few columns, I’ll be writing more specifically about how we can support our young people with astrology.

Take-Home points

- You are fully qualified to have the opinion that astrology is an incredibly powerful tool that can change lives. However, there are quite serious parameters to consider when working with children.
- As a professional body, we need to consider the ethics of working with children because children, particularly adolescents, are at the most vulnerable stage of their lives
- With a bit of training and study, astrology can empower you to support the adults who care for children who will, in turn, better understand how they can develop skills to manage challenging situations

Alex Trenoweth, MA (CAA), DFAstrolS, CIA Agent 144 is an astrological researcher and professional schoolteacher in London UK. In 2015, she was awarded “International Astrologer of the Year” by the Krishnamurti Institute of Astrology (KIA) for her ground-breaking and innovative research on Astrology and Education based on her book “Growing Pains” (The Wessex Astrologer). Since then she has spoken at astrology conferences around the world and has contributed to major magazines and publications such as Dell Horoscope, The Career Astrologer (OPA), The ISAR Journal, The Journal of Research for AFA (Grant Trust), Kindred Spirit and Astrodienst. https://alextrenoweth.co.uk/
Maurice Fernandez speaks with Ricky Williams, an award-winning ex-football player for the NFL who converted to an avid astrology practitioner. Maurice explores his milestones and interesting perspectives in this interview.

The full interview is available on OPA’s YouTube channel. Be sure to subscribe to the free channel and enjoy this and many other offerings.

Link: https://youtu.be/84v623RB3dk

How long has it been since you became an astrologer, Ricky? Can you share with us a little bit about the sequence of those events?

Ricky: Yeah! It’s a really interesting and crazy story. I was a football player, like you said, and I knew I was a Gemini, which is interesting because I have a twin sister. So it was significant, but I didn’t really understand or know much about what it meant. I went through a spiritual crisis in my life. My (progressed) lunar return, you know? (laughs) I have a 10th house Cancer Moon, and I was playing football when I started to have this feeling that this wasn’t what I was supposed to be doing with my life. This feeling that I want to empower people and help people, and I feel like I’m just distracting people from their lives for three hours on Sundays. So, I started asking some deeper questions, and one of the questions was whether this was what I wanted to be doing with my life. It shocked me because the answer was no. But soon after I started to get a sense and vision of myself somehow helping people, that resonated with me. I ended up leaving football and started to travel. One of the insights that really triggered my journey was coming to terms with the fact that my whole life I wanted to be a famous athlete, and now I’m here thinking about doing something else.

Maurice: So a Saturn return and a progressed Moon return.

Ricky: Yeah, yeah! So, this idea of seasons, that things change…. I remember a synchronistic event. I was in Miami and I was leaving my condo, the concierge and I were talking… it was Memorial Day weekend…and I was asking him if there were any parties coming up. He said, “The season is over in Miami. It starts to get so hot now that people leave and won’t come back until November.” And that phrase “the season’s over” started going around in my head and I was thinking, “Is the season over in my life for football?” I felt, “Yes!”

I was fascinated with this idea of seasons. So, I started traveling and of course this guy gives me a book on Ayurveda, and the whole book is about living according to the seasons. It resonated with me so much that when I came back from my travels and realized I need to find a job, I thought, hey, I’ll study Ayurveda because that resonated with me. Once beginning to study Ayurveda, one of the swamis from the ashram came to the school to teach our yoga class. And I remember after taking the first class thinking “Wow! This is magical!” I asked him, “Where can I get more of this?” And he said, “We have an ashram 25 minutes down the road.” So the next weekend I somehow got the courage to go to this strange weird place. Again, I’m fresh off being a football player, so this is all foreign to me, but it feels right. Ninth house Gemini, you know? (both laugh) So I end up going to the ashram, and the head swami there, Swami Sita, comes up to me and says, “Where’s your Mars?” I look up at her and don’t know what she’s talking about. She said it again and I replied, “I don’t know.” Then she said, “After you’re done eating, come up to my house. I want to talk to you.” So, I finished eating and walked up the hill to her house. I sat down and she asked for my birth information. Again, because I’m a twin, the time of our birth was just part of the story, so I always knew it. We ended up having a two-and-a-half hour conversation where I felt so seen. You know? I felt more seen in that moment from this strange woman in orange robes than I have from anyone else in my life.

By 2014-2015, I really wanted to become a serious astrologer. I realized I needed a teacher, and Steven Forrest was one of the authors who really spoke to me. So I looked online and saw he was (laughing) teaching in Seattle, at Norwac. So I went up to Norwac on my birthday, tracked him down and cornered him, and I said, “Hey, my name is Ricky Williams and I’d really like to learn from you.” And then he said, “Yeah, I have an apprenticeship program.” So I started studying with Steven and followed him around the world. And I think just really diving into…having a system…you know, he’s so systematic…to have a system that...

And that phrase “the season’s over” started going around in my head and I was thinking, “Is the season over in my life for football?” I felt, “Yes!”
really spoke to my religious upbringing and my natural spiritual roots.

Maurice: I know that many astrologers go through the process of coming out of the closet, so to speak, because there’s so much prejudice and misunderstanding projected from the scientific community, the religious community, and even just everyday people. And I can imagine that coming from an environment of this high testosterone and very physical that people didn’t always follow where you were going. How did that happen? Did you feel comfortable sharing what you were doing?

Ricky: You know, it’s funny how life works. I felt like I’d been prepared for this. So, the first time I had a reading with Steven, we got to my second house Uranus, and in that context he said that the time when I left football and started to travel might have been one of the best things that ever happened for me. And my interpretation of that was…. I had this experience when I left football and I was traveling around the world that everyone that knew me thought I had lost my mind. They thought I had totally gone off the deep end. And my experience of it was that it was the most alive and vital that I’d ever felt in my whole life. So I have this contrast where in my body I could feel this is what life is supposed to be like. It allowed me to say, “This is what I want to feel like. The people that truly care about me and can support me are the people that support this. And the people that can’t, I have to learn to not care what they think.” It really started to empower me to be myself and realize that there’s inherent value in that. So when I came back to play football, I was more comfortable being myself, and the end result was that people just would say, “Oh, that’s just Ricky.” Whether it was astrology, yoga…whatever I was doing, there was a certain kind of acceptance. Yes, it was weird and strange, but I was still given the freedom to be myself.

I think a more serious issue that we’re all facing now is that…we all see that astrology is becoming more popular and people are starting to take it more seriously. Through my experience in talking to people about their charts, especially talking to people about South Node symbolism, and seeing, “Wow! (laughing) This is real!” It’s not fantasy. This is real. I feel like part of my life’s work is trying to get people to a place where they see that this is real. It’s extremely useful for us in our lives. People accept it as being something that “alternative” or “weird” people are into. I think what people lack seeing is the practical value that astrology can offer them.

Maurice: And that’s my hope. That maybe some of these people who laugh at you at first. You know, that’s the saying. First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, and then you win, right?

Ricky: Yep.

Maurice: So, I wonder if you have clients from that community? From the sports, or childhood even…if people at first were kind of resistant but saw that you’re doing it, and if you are gaining so much from it, maybe that can help me. I can think even of younger people who need some kind of vocational direction. I wonder if you’ve had the opportunity to come back to your own community and offer that?

Ricky: I’m still working on it. I did something interesting a couple years ago on social media, I did a contest where a person could win a free conversation about their chart. It was a football fan from Texas who had never had any experience with astrology. It was a meaningful conversation, and it started to stir something up. And I’ll admit,
The Career Astrologer

PART ONE

Interview with Ricky Williams

OPA's Quarterly Magazine

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this is part of my bias...yes, astrology can be useful in so many practical ways, but what really excites me are the deeper levels. My hope is that the people from the community which I left start to have more spiritual aspirations. And this brings me to an interesting segue. I’m doing a workshop in Austin in April, and when I thought about what it is I want to talk about I started thinking of social media now, and how people are able to make a lot of money on YouTube. How we’ve really moved away from our parents who worked a 9-5, where people now are not doing that. Everyone’s an entrepreneur, everyone is a brand. And I have this idea, especially for the Neptune in Capricorn generation, and that impulse, is this idea of work or business...entrepreneurship as a spiritual practice. You know, when you can truly align your brand with who you are, there’s power in that. Aligning that with making a difference in the larger world I think can be very powerful.

Maurice: You mentioned you have Sun in Gemini and Moon in Cancer. Do you mind sharing your data?

Ricky: Yeah! I was born May 21st, 1977 in San Diego, CA at 1:57pm. My Ascendant is 18 degrees Virgo.

Maurice: The interesting thing about what you say, that it’s painful to evolve...I think what can be so valuable is that we understand that the pain is not for nothing.

Ricky: Exactly!

Maurice: That it’s not just random. That there’s a higher purpose. And we can see, like you’re saying, this is the chart of someone who... with that Mars it’s not just a battle on the football scene, it’s a battle in life, as well. You had to overcome challenges and build muscle tone not only in a physical way, but in a spiritual way. It’s so wonderful, also, to see how you kind of marry the mind, the spirit, and the body. Talking about physical healing, emotional healing, and then higher purpose...spiritual presence. And the nice thing about your Cancer Moon, at least what comes across here, is you’re accessible. You’re a public figure, you led a glamorous life, and yet there’s something very approachable and something very warm that can be very helpful in reaching people. In healing. It’s not so intimidating.

So you may want to coach more and teach, what do you think would be important for astrology as a next step? Especially in the light of the upcoming Jupiter/Saturn conjunction in Aquarius.

Ricky: There are two things that come to mind. First, to demonstrate how astrology can be actually practically useful. One of the projects I’m currently working on is a DATING SITE, where people can learn about themselves and see compatibility.

Then connect to the Aquarian myth — from my personal Jungian interest, the association of the astrology motif works very well with individuation. So, astrology helps me understand WHO I ACTUALLY AM.

And then using that to help younger people better understand themselves.

Ricky: Seaking of teenagers, I have 4 teenagers, and my 21 year old daughter coming back from college is fascinated with astrology. Every time I see her, she has an astrology book in her hand. And she has this natal signature, South Node in Aquarius, as well as Mars in Scorpio on the Ascendant and an Aries Sun... And this is not an easy chart, but it helps her understand herself so deeply.

Same about my 16 year old, a handsome young man and he talks to Uber drivers about their charts.

What inspires you to be an OPA member?

Ricky: Community... like this conversation, it is very cathartic and meaningful... as astrologers we can feel isolated, so connecting with like-minded.

Thank you very much and we wish you the very best on your journey. I know you will touch many people. While we know you come from the glamour of Ricky Williams, but there is also quality, it is not superficial. You serve as a wonderful example of transitioning and reinventing yourself, taking that risk and going deeper.

Link: https://youtu.be/84v623RB3dk

I have this idea, especially for the Neptune in Capricorn generation, and that impulse, is this idea of work or business...entrepreneurship as a spiritual practice. You know, when you can truly align your brand with who you are, there’s power in that.
The Transit of Saturn in Aquarius: DIS solventing Stereotypes
March 22 to July 1, 2020 / December 17, 2020 to March 7, 2023
by Margarita Logovatovskaya

Saturn is a planet that carries an element of ambiguity. Since ancient times, it has been given the image of gloomy severity, behind which stands the indestructible hand of fate and retribution. The reason is that Saturn is the keeper of karma which implies that it calls for a more mature and ethical approach, setting the limits and boundaries of what is permitted at the risk of consequences and sometimes even heavy retribution.

Saturn is a planet on which all the chronicles of the time of the world rest, obeying its inexorable cycles. The magic and power of Saturn is strong in time, where epochal events unfold from one human life to the world as a whole.

Professional astrologers know that Saturn not only reflects potential limitations and difficulties associated with the sign it resides in, but it also represents opportunities for development, inner strength, and with enough determination, being able to make what seemed impossible possible. Hard work is rewarded with development, status, and success.

On a mundane level, Saturn can instigate technological progress, industry, economic stability and reliable leadership and political systems.

Therefore, when Saturn transitions from one sign to another we can expect both new restrictions and new developmental opportunities.

The sign of Aquarius is a sign of freedom, bright achievements, and extraordinary discoveries. As it goes with the influence of Aquarius, changes may occur unexpectedly and quickly. The foundation established during the time of Saturn in Capricorn may be revisited. There could be changes in leadership positions and powerful breakdown of old systems and the dismantling of structures.

There may be more interest in spiritual development as well -- the boundaries of knowledge can expand to a larger cosmic perspective. This time can be characterized by a time of new freedoms and rights. In a positive manifestation, Saturn in Aquarius can serve as a time for unification, and the creation of new communities and build new alliances between parties and countries.

Looking ahead, as Saturn continues into Aquarius into 2021, it will form a square to Uranus in Taurus intensifying the urge for freedom and economic revolutions.

Some issues that may be on the global agenda:

- Focus on the improvement of individual rights.
- The urge for political freedom.
- Possible violation of borders between countries.
- Challenging existing laws and existing agreements.
- Challenges in the aviation and space travel industries.
- Religious extremism.

In a positive manifestation, Saturn in Aquarius can serve as a time for unification, and the creation of new communities and build new alliances between parties and countries.

Saturn in Aquarius can be described as an ancient and wise monk who has made an important internal change and is mature to express this internal evolution. Therefore, we may see the emergence of new “messiah” types and spiritual leaders, whose influence may affect the minds of many followers. We can bet that this transit will not go unnoticed as the desire for change and challenging the status quo will amplify. This will require us to adapt to the new realities of life.

My name is Margarita Logovatovskaya. I have been interested in seeking the meaning of life through various spiritual practices for all my life period. Astrology as one of the powerful esoteric sciences became a part of my life, allowing me to get answers to my questions. Later Astrology became a tool for answering other people’s questions. Studying other esoteric practices helps better understanding Astrology and its impact on our lives: tarot, magic, bioenergy, the study of the subtle world, etc. All of this allows you to understand and interpret other people’s astrological charts, events that occur, feel the influence of heaven energies on our earthly life much better. There is a deep potential that can be studied for all your life.

Astrology allows you to make your destiny beautiful. It inspires you to live and realize the strength of your soul in this incarnation.
Noel offered weekly vocational exercises on his forum. He would post the birth data for two “mystery people” and then give us participants one week to post our analyses. For those brave enough to enter the arena engaging in these exercises meant inviting praise and criticism.

I had already been in practice for more than 20 years as a consulting astrologer when I first connected with Noel. But engaging with him through the forum opened such exciting new professional vistas that I decided to take his Master’s Correspondence Course in 2006. That’s when I started to attend his annual Student Seminars held in New Jersey every January.

Once I got involved with his course, I had the idea that my husband and I should produce a DVD series for Noel — a legacy to make his personal teaching style and insight readily available. My husband is a media professional and was already producing videos for me. It took two years of my constant selling the idea to Noel before he finally agreed to this ambitious project.

We shot the nine-DVD series at our home studio in Virginia Beach — hosting Noel in three different trips. He was amazing - a seasoned pro in presenting, well prepared, and a pleasure to work with. Noel’s expertise, drama, grace, complexity, power, and command — it’s all on video. I’m proud to say the DVD set has been sold in all corners of the world.

Working intimately with Noel allowed my husband and me to become good friends with him. There’s a memory of those shoot days I will always hold dear: after 8-10 hours on set, we would take Noel to eat at a wonderful Italian restaurant so he could have his favorite — spaghetti and meatballs. On one occasion while we were waiting for dessert — tiramisu — I asked him to sing something. We had so many conversations about his celebrated opera career, I wanted to hear his stage voice. He quite surprised me - right there in the middle of a busy restaurant he sang a short phrase from an opera he had performed many times in years past. The power of his still magnificent voice was such that the entire restaurant instantly hushed. It was magical. This was classic Noel - he had the ability to command a room, no matter what the stage.
After I graduated from his Master’s Course, Noel offered me the opportunity to be his teaching associate at the annual Student Seminars. Then in 2017, realizing it was time for him to cut back on traveling, he turned the seminars over to me. His health had started to become an issue even his ego couldn’t overcome. He knew the curtain was starting to close.

In the years just prior to retiring, he made many trips to Japan and China, where he met with huge success and admiration from new students excited to learn his humanistic, therapeutic approach to astrology. Noel was, even at his advanced age, expanding his global presence. Already a prolific, published author of many seminal books, he graduated many students all across the globe from his arduous Master’s Course. Hundreds of careers were forever shaped by his teachings.

In his final years, Noel told me many times that it was very important for the students he had trained to continue to pioneer new ideas and theories. He believed that as human beings grow in consciousness - as culture and technology continue to develop - so must astrological techniques!

There are some leaders and teachers who become totally attached to their own ideas and insist on strict adherence to their “doctrine.” As demanding as he often was, Noel Tyl never demanded conformity. Instead he encouraged us to be creative in our thinking, exploring, expanding, evolving new ideas. I believe this to be the mark of a wise leader.

Noel Tyl died on December 31, 2019… on his 83rd birthday. I miss my good friend and mentor. Like so many of his students, I cherish all the great astrological discussions he provoked, and how he would frequently end the conversation by saying, “Well, we’ve just solved all the problems of the world, I think I’ve earned a cookie.”

In keeping with Noel’s desire for growth and evolution, I will soon be hosting and teaching what his annual student seminar has evolved into - the Empowered Astrology Conference. I changed the name of the event so that it reflects what he ultimately taught - personal empowerment lighting the way to professional engagement. The team of presenters I have scheduled to lecture with me are all graduates of the Noel Tyl Master’s Course. Our intention is to do exactly as he wished - to eagerly participate in the creative growth and evolution of ideas and theories to benefit astrologers and their clients.

Find out more about Kathy Rose: [http://www.roseastrology.com/](http://www.roseastrology.com/)
Robert Zoller was a leading astrologer and practitioner of occult philosophy, who was a Latin scholar and graduate of Bachelor of Arts (BA) in medieval studies from the Institute for Medieval and Renaissance Studies at City College New York. He was a principal of the Academy of Medieval and Predictive Astrology, and as a leader in the professional application of medieval methods in our present times, operated a correspondence course on medieval astrological techniques. Zoller was one of the original translators in the Latin track of Project Hindsight. His awards included the 1998 Southern Cross Award, and the 2002 Regulus Award for Discovery, Research and Innovation at UAC. His Tools and Techniques series was the main text used by Predictive Astrologers while his translations and other works are now seminal works on Astrology and the related Arts. He also published and lectured on a broad spectrum of topics, ranging from astrology to hermetic philosophy, alchemy and magic. He had an extensive background in the Western, Nordic and Indian Esoteric Traditions. He studied with Zoltan Mason who introduced his students to the astrology of J.B. Morin’s Astrologia Gallica. With Mason’s astrological advice Zoller returned to school and found microfilms of Morin and Bonatti. In later years he would translate their works as the primary sources in astrology. Zoller also translated works of some Arabic astrologers such as Al Kindi’s On the Stellar Rays. His first book Arabic Parts: Lost Key to Prediction is a masterpiece.

In 1971, Zoller started studying astrology systematically with Zoltan Mason in New York City. Mason had a bookstore on Lexington Avenue and was teaching modern astrology – a mixture of psychological and predictive astrology. This kind of astrology was not satisfying for him. Later, when he found The Astrologer’s Guide, including the 146 considerations of Guido Bonatti in Mason’s bookstore, he knew that he had found what he referred to as “the real astrology!”

In 1974, he returned to school, learned Latin, got a degree in Medieval Studies, and received the microfilms of Bonatti’s Liber Astronomiae, J.B. Morin’s Astrologia Gallica and two volumes of Ficino’s works in Latin. He began translating immediately and has been working on the material ever since. In 1976, Zoller commenced translating and studying Guido Bonatti’s Liber Astronomiae. By 1984, Zoller was giving many public lectures on astrology. He had an office in Manhattan, New York through a friend who rented him space at a very reasonable rate. He had a public presence and was on cable TV. In 1991 while he was working in construction to supplement his income, symptoms of Parkinson’s disease began to emerge. Difficult times! But these difficulties let him practice astrology full time. He says, “In 1992 the bottom fell out of the construction business in New York City, and this tremor in my left arm began in 1991 - so I was sort of forced into the direction of going into astrology full time and staying there. I’ve been very productive since I did that, so it’s serendipitous.”

On his 51st birthday, while in New Zealand, he received a call from Australia saying he’d been awarded the Southern Cross Award given to an overseas astrologer who’d done the most advanced astrology in Australia.

MY TIME WITH ZOLLER

In December 2003, Zoller completed his notes of the Diploma Course in Medieval Astrology. Interestingly, I had just started to study his Foundation Course in Medieval Astrology on November 23, 2003 on the same day of my Prenatal eclipse.

On his 51st birthday, while in New Zealand, Zoller received a call from Australia saying he’d been awarded the Southern Cross Award given to an overseas astrologer who’d done the most advanced astrology in Australia.

I flew to Vancouver to attend his training with my friend and colleague Gunes Aksan. When I arrived at the hotel room in Vancouver after a long flight of 20 hours, I was shocked when my phone rang. It was Diana Zoller, Robert Zoller’s wife who was a Canadian astrologer. After welcoming me and asking if I need something, she asked me “Would you like to talk to your teacher?” I was even more surprised. I said “Of course, I will be glad.” I was familiar with Robert Zoller’s voice due to course CDs. Talking to him on the phone was a totally different experience. He welcomed me and invited me for a coffee the next morning. I accepted the invitation and had a good and happy sleep.

The next morning he came to the hotel to pick me up. I remember the first time we met and shook hands in the lobby. Robert Zoller, who was a world-renowned astrologer, who has been a brand in Medieval Astrology, who had been awarded the Regulus award, and who was the master of today’s classical astrologers, took me from the hotel to have a cup of coffee. He was so modest. We went to a nearby Starbucks. I gave him the present I had brought from
a bookstore near the Grand Bazaar; a book on Rumi and his works. He was so happy when he saw my present. To my surprise, he began to talk about Rumi and Islamic mysticism. He was also knowledgeable on this topic. I admired his wisdom and humility. He was always so kind and modest during these four days both during the presentations and in Q&A sessions. Then, he asked me how I would like to work with him and I told him that I wanted to be the representative of his teachings in Turkey and proposed an agreement. I wanted to translate his course material into Turkish and teach them to local students. I was thinking about giving assignments to students and then sending these to Zoller for his evaluation. He kindly listened to my proposal and noted down the exact time when I finished my words. He did not give me an answer that day. We talked about other things and then he left me at the hotel. The next day, the Mundane Astrology Intensive Workshop started. It was a special workshop full of valuable information. I met fellow astrologer Benjamin Dykes there; he took notes carefully and asked Zoller many questions. During the workshop, Diana always gave Bob (she called Robert Bob) his medicines, which she carefully took out of small boxes she prepared and delivered in certain intervals. She was always with her husband and very supportive. Although making presentations for a whole day was very tiring for him, he successfully completed the workshops without missing anything.

During the dinner, Robert Zoller asked me “Did your father prevent your sister’s marriage?” My chart was not there, but it was obvious he had looked at it. However, it was an interesting question as it was not easy to see in the chart but, indeed, it was totally true. I was very surprised. In my natal chart, I have Jupiter in my 9th house and it is in retrograde motion. It receives a square from Saturn placed in my 6th house in Pisces.

Then he said: “Look, Jupiter afflicted in your 9th house represents me as your teacher. And its square with Saturn in the 6th house indicates that I am a sick teacher. I am very sick, I cannot know what will happen to me and I cannot fulfill my responsibilities to you. I do not want to disappoint you and feel embarrassed. You are a very good man.” I was shocked once again but he was right. He refused my proposal. Of course, I was upset but it was all obvious in my chart and also in his. He showed me how the traditional astrology approach worked clearly as he taught us and expressed it without hurting or insulting me.

I do not know much about his later years. I asked many astrologers about him. I learned that his Parkinson’s disease progressed and he was under intensive care. On January 26th, I woke around 3 am and checked my Facebook timeline feeling that I would see something important for me. Suddenly, I saw Meira Epstein’s post about Robert Zoller’s death. According to the information I got from Meira through Messenger, for a number of years he had lived in the New Paltz area, which was about two hours from New York City. He was there until a few weeks ago when his condition worsened and he died in the hospital. According to his brother, it happened on 24 January 2020 at 14:15pm.

According to our belief in Islamic tradition, one of the best and most beneficial things is to raise students, to teach them wisdom and to leave them a legacy of knowledge that everyone can benefit from. He accomplished his mission perfectly. Undoubtedly, he will be rewarded by Allah. I learnt many things from him. Most of the things I have written and taught so far are either based on his knowledge or the information I have reached through his help. I owe him a lot. I will never forget his efforts. Teaching many students, he was a true gift for the astrology community. My prayers are with him. Rest in Peace, dear Robert Zoller.

Öner Döşer, AMA (Adept in Medieval Astrology) ISAR Cap, Cert. OPA https://www.onerdoser.com/
OPA's Certification process is becoming a leading reference to add credence that astrologers are competent and effectively provide quality service.

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- Astronomy for Astrologers - astrologer demonstrates an understanding of fundamental planetary mechanisms, the Precession of the Equinoxes, the difference between the three zodiacs, among other Astronomy references.

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- Astrologer must remain professionally active as an astrologer and remain involved in educational programs (be aware of conferences, workshops attendance, etc…)
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- Certification will be reassessed if any formal complaints have been filed against the astrologer.
- Astrologer must renew their certification after seven years by participating in a Peer Group within that time frame.
FACULTY PEER GROUP – Sedona, February 2020

The faculty of the 2020 Astrology Retreat met prior to the event in Sedona for a peer group process. This is a 3 day immersion where professional astrologers meet in small groups to discuss and enhance each other’s practice. It’s an invaluable process that is part of OPA’s certification process.

We are now ready to meet you and lead the retreat!

With Anne Ortelee, Russel Ohlhausen, Shannon Gill, Kay Taylor, Maurice Fernandez, Gemini Brett, Christopher Renstrom, Laura Nalbandian, Alexandra Karacostas, Arlan Wise
OPA, The Organization for Professional Astrology, is dedicated to promoting Accessibility, Sustainability, and Credibility for astrologers. Incorporated on October 4, 2000 at 1:45 pm EDT in Tallahassee, Florida, OPA provides members with opportunities and tools to study astrology and establish or improve their astrological practice. Membership is open to any level of expertise. Among the benefits: free presentations and panels by top-notch astrologers, opportunities to be published in The Career Astrologer magazine, and being part of a global community of astrologers through conferences and online discussions. Annual dues are $60.00.

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- AUSTRALIA
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  aquariusrising@iinet.net.au
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  youngestdonna@gmail.com
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  66.ali@soe.com
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  Angela Tiki
  angelatiki@yahoo.gr
- ISRAEL
  Boaz Fyler
  boazfyler@gmail.com
- MEXICO
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  urstocker@ymail.com
- SCANDINAVIA
  Katharina Westbliik (Norway)
  Westbliik@yahoo.no
  Margareta Hedin (Sweden)
  margareta.isis@gmail.com
- SOUTH AFRICA
  Theodore Naicker
  info@spicaastrology.com
  Elena Porciani van Baalen
  elenavb@gmail.com
- TURKEY
  Öner Döşer
  oner.doser@astrologikolu.com
- UK
  Gemma Harwood
  gemma@vneastrology.com

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UPCOMING ASTROLOGY CONFERENCES

MARCH 2020
- 27-30 Vibrational Astrology Conference, Gainesville, FL
  www.astrosoftware.com/conference/m/va2020.html

APRIL 2020
- 23-29 OPA RETREAT, ONLINE
  www.OPAastrology.org

MAY 2020
- 5-12 Astrology Rising Conference, ONLINE
  www.astrologyrisingcostarica.com
- 21-25 NORWAC, ONLINE
  www.norwac.net

AUGUST 2020
- 7-9 Astrology, Consciousness & The Great Shift, Sponsored by OPA
  at Omega Institute of Holistic Studies, Rhinebeck, NY
  www.eomega.org/workshops/astrology-consciousness-the-great-shift

SEPTEMBER 2020
- 10-14 ISAR Conference, Westminster, CO
  www.isarastrology.org/conference
Join OPA’s Community Board Group on Facebook
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**SUNDAY, JANUARY 12**
BOAZ FYLER (Israel)
A new Gender Paradigm for Astrologers

**SUNDAY, MARCH 22**
MARC LAURENSON (Australia)
The Intermission of the Soul - The Neptune Square Neptune Transit

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 25**
MONICA DIMINO (MA)
The Chinese New Year of the Metal Rat

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8**
ONER DOSER (Turkey)
Traditional Ways to Find Significators

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23**
CHRISTOPHER RENSTROM (UT)
Relationships: Step Away From the Seventh House

**SUNDAY, MARCH 28**
LAURA NALBANDIAN (WA)
Ceres in the Chart

**SUNDAY, APRIL 5**
ZEYNEP YALCI (Turkey)
Annual Profections and Solar Returns

**SATURDAY, MAY 9**
APRIL KENT (CA)
Using Your Birth Chart to Market Yourself

**SUNDAY, MAY 31**
MICHELE FINEY (Australia)
Metonic Magic and Mystery

**SUNDAY, JUNE 14**
RONALD TIGGLE (MA)
Calculating Secondary, Tertiary and Solar Arc Directions

**SUNDAY, JUNE 28**
MICHAEL BARTLETT (NM)
Maverick Planets: Do you have what it takes to change the world?

**SUNDAY, JULY 12**
GAYE ALKAN (Turkey)
Aristotle's Hamartia in the Charts

**SATURDAY, JULY 25**
RACHEL LANG (CA)
Asteroids in Love: Incorporating Asteroids in Relationship Charts

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 30**
LYNN BELL (France)
TBD

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20**
OMARI MARTIN (IL)
Electional Astrology

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4**
EDA OCAK (Turkey)
Astrology in Sufi Tradition & Ali Ibn ‘Arabi’s Mystic Approach to Astrology

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8**
GRACE MORRIS (IL)
How a Business/Financial Astrologer Works!

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22**
YARON LIVINE (Israel)
Looking at Astrology through a Philosophical Lens