

## Astrology in the 21st Century

Oh Goddess who resides in all creatures in the form of  
Confusion

Hail to thee, hail to thee, all hail to thee!

Here is where I am: I read the "astrological" articles about events such as this full moon and for me they are just irritating. "Moon in 14 degrees of Cancer:" they're all writing "about" that, without any irony, as though the Fullness of the Moon were an isolated thing. Like there it is, the Full Moon, over there in Cancer. And then they'll go off and start listing the qualities of the "Moon in Cancer" as they came to be known in the second half of the twentieth century. 4th house, home, etc.

I guess there's a market for it, but I don't feel like it does any credit to the art of astrology. The Moon in a Sun sign?

Let me get kind of technical on ya.

The Moon will be at 14 degrees and 0 minutes of the sign of Cancer at 7:54 PM Pacific and will be in 15 degrees and 0 minutes of the sign of Cancer at 9:50 PM Pacific. Considering that every month, the Moon spends about the same amount of time, around 2 hours, in that "degree" of the zodiac, my personal sense is that it's important to convey what it is that makes the Moon Full.

The Moon is Full each month when it is on the other side of the Earth from the Sun. I want to try to help you conceptualize this for yourself.

To start with, let's just visualize "The Zodiac." Do you remember playing tetherball when you were a kid? Let's use the image of the ball on a string attached to a fixed point to describe the mechanics of the Full. Let the Earth be the ball and instead of a pole, attach the string to the Sun. And just have the Earth doing circles around the Sun.

If you happen to be standing or maybe sitting on the Earth (and a high percentage of people reading this will be), you could think of that string as pointing to the degree of the zodiac that the Sun is in at any moment. Like essentially you're playing tetherball in a round room which has a mural that kind of looks like the markings on a dial watch. 12 signs, each having 30 degrees in it (and each degree has 60 minutes in it but we don't need to get THAT technical). From Earth, you sight down that string and whatever sign is behind the Sun is the one it's in.

Here, I must digress: Ophiucus is not "new." Every few years some astro-putz has a beer and decides it's important to include this "13th sign," as though Ptolemy didn't know about it, and suddenly everybody is all like, "OMG, am I a Sag, a Scorpio, or an

Ophiuchan?" And then some anti-astrology putz will use that as an excuse to write an article about how lame astrology is.

And honestly, Sun sign astrology is that lame. Google this, "how many people are born each day": the top article I get says that in 1997, 365,000 people were born every day, or about 1.1 million people/month. So, in 1997, there were around 1.1 million "Aries" born, and Sun sign astrology is predicated on the idea that the concept of "Aries" is going to hold true for all 1.1 million of those people. And not only will it be true for that population, it will be true for every living person who was born during the month the Sun is Aries. If there are 7 billion people alive today and 1/12th of them were born when the Sun was in the sign of Aries, then there must be around 580 million Aries alive today. You think if you gave all those people a personality quiz, there would be ANY commonality other than that they're mammalian? Check out this site: <http://www.worldometers.info/> and watch that ticker go. You want to tell me that every one of the people born today is going to be "A Capricorn?"

Maybe we could at this point be pedantic and talk about the precession of the equinoxes and how really today the Sun is in 21 degrees of Sagittarius? I mean, you know all that "alignment with the center of the galaxy" stuff? Try January 11th, for that.

There's a difference between constellations and signs, and none of the constellations are actually the same size, and once you know that the concept of the 12 or 13 signs of the zodiac is really wacky.

I was talking with my 10 year-old last night and she was wanting to know about why she has such a negative view of Christianity (colonialism, racism, endless war, that kind of thing). And in order to explain it I had to make a really big generalization about people, which is that most people don't want to think for themselves. It's just too much work, I guess. And of course there are SOME people who are perfectly happy to take advantage of that fact. There's just this amicable relationship between people who are more comfortable believing what they're told and people who think of themselves as knowing what to tell them. Myself, I just want you to keep asking questions, and I try to write in a way that encourages the spirit of inquiry.

So, to adequately explain the version of Christianity that is held as defining today, of course I had to talk about the Gutenberg revolution, the impact of the printing press. And then we pondered what inaccuracies – in the portrayal of miracles, for instance - may have arisen during the 1500 years during which only clerics had bibles, during which time certain people for certain reasons may have changed the stories in the bible. And were able to without the risk of fact-checkers.

Which of course holds true as you study religious history.

Christianity isn't bad, I said, it's the way it has been used to control the masses which is

bad. The ultimate effect of the Gutenberg press wasn't religious freedom; it was just a multiplication of the church power structure. Because.... People are conditioned to conform. It's easier to be told what to think, eat, wear; how to pray, why to pray, and so on.

You want to talk about the 4th house? Think blood-line conditioning. Home is where the conditioning comes from.

While astrology itself is at least 6000 years old, Sun sign astrology is around 150 years old. "Horoscopes" in the form of short-paragraph blurbs about what's going on if you're "a Capricorn" are an invention of people who want to sell newspapers and who capitalized on not only people's gullibility but people's actual desire to be told what to think, eat, wear, etc....

Newspaper horoscopes are sort of like a reverse-Gutenberg moment. The Gutenberg press sort of like crowd-sourced the subtleties of theology, while Sun-sign astrology is like something the Ministry of Truth is smearing on the masses.

So then, what is astrology, anyway? Let me tell you, there are no good short answers to that question, but here's mine as of this morning:

"Astrology is a branch of the study of energetic unity when that is conceived of as the relationship between parts of a whole."

I can "know" things like: there is a disconnection between the signs and the constellations; there are 365 days in a 360 degree circle; that for most of a 6000 year history of study by the most brilliant minds in history, Ophiuchus has been ignored; that there is AS YET no scientific corroboration between astrological assumptions and outcomes... I can "know" these things and still call myself an astrologer.

For me the greatest challenge, when I call myself an astrologer, is that it creates an assumption about me, which is that I must "believe" in Sun sign astrology. Which frankly makes me want to puke. I have no idea what "a Capricorn" is, and I don't think anyone else does either. There is a quality of humanity which can be labelled "Capricornian," but for me there is no association between that and being born between December 21st and January 20th.

One of the reasons I take the time to say this kind of thing is that I want to work with discerning people.

Conceptually, you could think of every Full Moon as simply an amplification of the Moon by the Sun. It is a worshipful event to me, the Fullness, but that is true regardless of what "sign" the Moon is in.

What makes a Moon Full is its relationship to the Sun: it is Full at the moment when it is "opposite" the Sun. To use the tetherball analogy, if the line from the Sun to the Earth is extended beyond the Earth, it is when the Moon crosses that line that it is Full.

Which it does on average every 29.53 days, with the range being from 29.18 days to 29.93 days, thereby offering an excellent clue into what polarity-types like to call "the feminine." Which is to say, it resists being predictable.

And here's the thing: wherever there are indigenous people – and we are all at least descended from indigenous people – there is a ritualized, ceremonial celebration of the Fullness of the Moon. There are likely to be seasonal characteristics to that celebration, and the "signs" such as they are, are seasonal.

This is the first Full Moon after the Solstice, and it so happens that in years when the most recent New Moon was on or before the Solstice, then that Full Moon will be in the sign of Cancer. Does that mean that that Moon is going to partake of the qualities of the sign of Cancer to you?

Personally, as I move through life, I use all kinds of ways to get helpful information. And astrology, "a branch of the study of energetic unity when that is conceived of as the relationship between parts of a whole," does provide me with information that has proven to be helpful. Very helpful, really, in terms of the ways it has helped me understand the timing of difficult transitions in my life.

And in a moment, I'm going to show a little of how I geek into an "event" like this Full Moon, in a way that is helpful to me. But before I do that, let me ask you a question. First, imagine, an isolated, stone-age population. Not just indigenous but actually primeval. Maybe even pre-language. Actually, let's just open this right up to non-human populations too. Species-wise, it's up to you. So there's this population, maybe a forest, or a garden, or a herd, or school.... A tribe of some kind, let's call it. The only requirement is that it can't be characterized as 1st or 2nd world human.

And the question is this: does this population act in some way differently during the Full Moon as compared to other times?

As far as I know, every population on this planet other than first world humans exhibits an awareness of the Moon cycle. That awareness, when extended to the rest of the solar system, is at the core of what I call "Astrology."

Cool beans?

Cool.

So, Mr. Dvorsky, in his June of 2014 article titled "Why believing in astrology is not as

harmless as you think," expressed a kind of judgmentalism around astrology that I completely concur with.

When, that is, astrology is limited to its mainstream, Sun Sign mass-consumption component. Which is something practiced by people who don't know about the sidereal zodiac and Ophiuchus and, you know, stuff that "smart" people like him think about. Smart as in judgmental, but not discerning. In a fourth house way, I wonder what inspired him – a very busy writer and thinker – to crank that article out. What was cracking his whip, at the time?

I must say, too, that regardless of gender, anyone can be sexist by expressing a disdain for the unquantifiable. But when you write an article which implies that women are more susceptible to quackery than men, then you are overtly, if not explicitly, sexist.

Nuff said. So for me, what gets me off is degree astrology and the relationship between points in the zodiac. Oh my God, degree astrology? Am I ready, after 2,000 words, to rock "degree astrology?" Yeah, I guess I am. Like this:

Words like "Capricorn" or "Aries" refer to rather undefinable qualitative aspects of the human genome. As part of a course in self-awareness, they're helpful. As part of a paternalistic system of limiting the experience of life to diagnostic quanta, they're probably way more harmful than Mr. Dvorsky even imagines.

When I say, "you are a Capricorn," I may not be saying the same thing as if I said, "You are a sinner." But I would be DOING the same thing. I would be boxing you up, for your convenience and mine.

But if I say, "Part of your being expresses Capricorn-ness," and guided you to identify in your own terms how and why that is, then I would be, in my opinion, helping you on the path to individuation. And if it were me doing it, then I would use degree symbols to help you get in touch with your own version of the Capricorn strand of your DNA.

Degree symbols are, just like signs, "undefinable qualitative aspects of the human genome." There are 360 of them rather than 12.

When I use astrology to help people individuate, I do it by offering tools for self-awareness. Specifically, I teach personal-frequency awareness. It is dishonest for me to tell a client how they are or why they are when in fact I am involved in the lifelong project of figuring myself out. Instead, what I do is offer ways to become aware of A) their behavior patterns, which I think of and talk about as living things. The awareness of those patterns then leads to B) an awareness of the one in them who has the patterns.

Most people, by the time they come to me, have recognized their patterns and most of the work we do is on getting really clear on that discrete entity who is actually my

client.

For instance, if I were to crank an article on Ethics or Transhumanism without taking time to find out just what it is that an Ethicist or Transhumanist does, then I would most likely be doing so in a way that was expressive of a blood-line behavior pattern (really, most of our negative judgments come from the 4th house) rather than as an act of communication which emanated from my true being.

For me, what we're doing here is learning to be human. Crazy, I know – especially when you consider that for the most part, the great effort humanity has made is towards learning to not be human. We put a lot of time and effort into being “Pious” or “Angelic” or “rational” or “beings of light” or whatever.... I mean, how many people have you ever heard say, “I’m really working on being human?” Talk about a big project.

To start with, the word human, qualitatively, is as undefinable as the word Capricorn. And yet people who scoff at Capricorn as a label can unreservedly call themselves Transhumanists?

Well, for me, Astrology as I know it is the, well, actually it's the best tool I know for developing self-awareness, i.e. learning to be human. Astrology as I know it is not Sun sign astrology to say the least. It's a thing I do that I call astrology. I can't really be any more clear about it than that. In my way of looking at charts, the Sun is rarely the strongest energy. It can be, but at best it's got a 1 in 17 chance to be so. I do look at the Sun but when I do what I'm looking at is most likely to be the point it occupies in the zodiac (i.e. which of the 360 degrees it occupies), and also what other points in the zodiac are in significant angular relationship to it (i.e. modifying it).

None of which is in any way boxing anyone in but instead is offering avenues of exploration towards becoming self-aware at the frequency level. Not unlike Zen koans, for instance. More harmful than you think, for sure.

So anyway, now that I've done all this structural riffing.... About this Full Moon that happens at 11:53 PM Eastern tonight, January 4th 2015.....

What I see is a Sun/Moon opposition, with the Sun in the 15th degree of Capricorn (14 degrees and 31 minutes, which if you use degree symbols you look at as the 15th degree, sigh) and the Moon in the 15th degree of Cancer, which opposition is modified strongly by the presence of Pluto who I call Kaali, who sits in the 14th degree of Capricorn. All three of which bodies (Sun/Moon/Pluto) are in a square or 90 degree aspect to the love light/racist-dissociative despot known as Uranus sitting in the 14th degree of Aries. Which in astro-parlance you'd call a T-square to Uranus in Aries 14.

And how, pray tell, wouldst thou generate self-awareness in an individual sense from an observation of the condition of the collective (which is what mundane astrology is

about)? Well, I would offer the degree symbols for Capricorn/Cancer 15, if I were writing an article anyway. Egad! Apparently I am!

Like this: From John Sandbach's Chandra series of zodiac degree symbols, I am going to offer you the Moon in Cancer 15 as amplified by the Sun in Capricorn 15. For the purposes of this experiment, please, at the moment of the Fullness (correct for your time zone, hey?), take approximately 17 seconds to, in an intuitive, meditative way, put yourself in between these 2 images: On the one hand, "A boarded-up doorway that leads to another realm." And on the other hand, "A woman wearing a necklace of skulls."

For verily, I say to you, that "When we conceive of totality, we should never forget its ambivalent character. Both the creative and the destructive principles are one and the same. Both emanate from the same divine cosmic energy that becomes manifest in the unfolding of the history of the universe"

Sri Vanamali, "Shakti, Realm of the Divine Mother."

In celebrating the Moon, you are joining with the more beautiful stream of the history of the universe that you know is possible.

And for that, I thank you.

With Love,

Jon