



NEWSLETTER

NOW WEEKLY!

With art by Vera!

from the Astrology Center of America / AstroAmerica.com

November 20, 2012

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Books

JACK, at the AFA, has sent me three good ones:

The Degrees, by W. David Crowl. Inspired by Donna Walter Henson's **book**, Crowl dissects charts to get to the essence of each degree of the zodiac, generally from the Sun's degree. Unlike the Sabians, he starts at 0 and goes to 29 of each of the signs:

0° Scorpio: Strength of character, and good natured. **2° Scorpio:** The green-eyed monster, also music. **3° Scorpio:** Good for a politician, etc.

In his Introduction is an absolutely stunning summation: For all signs, all beginning degrees have egos, all ending degrees

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A L M A N A C K

for the week (all times GMT)

Notes

20	06:18	☉		♊	
	14:31	♁	28	♋	41 First Qtr/Void
	16:55	☽	✕		
21	21:51	☉	✕		
22	01:20	♀	♌		Retrograde entry!
	06:32	☽	△	♀	Void
	07:12	☉	□	♊	
	08:59	♀	△	♊	
23	01:12	☽	♄		
	03:37	☽	△	☉	
	10:05	♂	□	♌	
24	01:35	☽	✕	♄	Void
	22:52	♂	✕	♌	
25	12:18	☽	♃		
	18:28	♀		♌	
26	14:15	☉	△	♌	
	22:17	♀		♊	
	22:49	♀	♁		Hooray!

Extracted & adapted from **AstroAmerica's Daily Ephemeris, 2000-2020**. **Buy.**

have difficulties, all middle degrees are odd in some fashion. Lots more.

The tireless James Holden has a new translation: Paul of Alexandria's **Introduction to Astrology**. This was previously available as an Arhat book. The new AFA edition is superior, both in translation and in publishing. This is complete with the famous Scholia, including that of Heliodorus (Olympiodorus). Holden says the book is largely limited to signs of the Zodiac. If there was more to it, as it seems there once was, it has been lost. I was inspired to guess that Greek astrologers were not all concentrated in Alexandria, as we have long presumed, but were actually widely dispersed (just as we are now!). They tagged themselves with "of Alexandria" or "**The Egyptian**" to show where they were trained. Just as learned people now customarily add "Ph.D." to their names.

The third entry is a new printing of Priscilla Gilbert's **Accident Patterns**, which combines her two earlier books into one: In the first half, all the accidents are fatal and Gilbert told us why. In the second half, death was avoided, and again Gilbert finds the exact astrological reasons. Each of the many examples complete with wheels and multiple levels of forecasting analysis.

Happy Thanksgiving! See you next week! — Dave



STAR OF THE WEEK

★★★☆☆

BUNGULA *alpha Centauri*! 29 ♌, 38

Notes: A binary star, white and yellowish, on the left forefoot of the Centaur. According to Bullinger it bore the ancient name of Toliman, meaning Heretofore and Hereafter. It is the nearest to our system of all the stars and lies at a distance of about 275,000 times that of the earth from the Sun.

Influence: According to Ptolemy it is of the nature of Venus and Jupiter. It gives beneficence, friends, refinement and a position of honor.

With Sun: Envious, self-centered, slow but fairly successful progress, many enemies, loss of inheritance.

With Moon: Popular, many friends, diplomatic, secret bad habits, excessive drinking, involved in disputes but emerges successfully.

—from **Fixed Stars**, by Vivian Robson. **Buy.**

Ivy M. Goldstein-Jacobson
1893-1990



IVY'S GEM OF THE WEEK

What the Fixed Signs Hide

SOMEWHERE in our charts we all have the Fixed Signs Taurus, Leo, Scorpio and Aquarius, occupied by natal planets or thereafter by progressed planets, but not all of us recognize that these are the “inescapable” Signs. That is, the ones holding us to our debts because of their holding-fixity, plus the fact that they are naturally on the succedent houses and thus have to do with money, obligations and debts, therefore payment or punishment. What the Fixed Signs hide most, however, is hidden away in their middle degrees, as we shall now explain.

Where the Cardinal Signs may be expected to accumulate few debts because they pay as they go and receive payment as they go, while the Common Signs run up accounts-payable when convenient and pay that way, the Fixed Signs assume an established and more-or-less continual financial responsibility to pay on the instalment plan, discharging their debts in the present lifetime here and now, to avoid penalty.

The one who pays most promptly is Taurus, ruler of the 2nd House (money on hand). Scorpio, ruler of the 8th house (debt obligations) needs dunning, and Aquarius, ruler of the 11th house (salary that he cannot control) pays as he gets it, but as his money-2nd is the 12th-of-need he has less on hand. Afflictions in Leo denote indebtedness incurred in childhood and never repaid—or a real propensity in mature years to ignore financial responsibility even though he might not disclaim it: he leaves it to someone else to handle, like the “child” Leo is because he rules the 5th, the family’s money-2nd. — **All Over the Earth Astrologically**, 1963. **Buy.**

Harry Houdini:

The Man With Two Birthdays

HARRY HOUDINI, the stage name of Ehrich Weiss, said he had two birthdays: March 24, 1874, and April 5, 1874. You look at those two dates and immediately you think, the first is in the Julian calendar and the second in the Gregorian.

For those of you not up to speed, the Julian calendar was instituted by Julius Caesar and considered every fourth year, without fail, to be a leap year. This was not quite exactly accurate, so in 1582, Pope Gregory declared a unilateral forward shift of 10 days. The difference in the two calendars (Old Style to New Style) is that, in the Gregorian system, century years, such as 1700, 1800, 1900, are considered leap years only if they are exactly divisible by 400. Which means the year 1900 was not a leap year (check your ephemeris, if you have one). 1896 was a leap year. The next one was 1904, a gap of eight years. 2000 was a leap year.

Quickly you work out the difference between the two calendars in the 19th century was 12 days. And then you count the days from March 24 to April 5 and get 13. And you are stumped.

Then, being both a good astrologer and a good biographer, you are inspired. You note that young Ehrich was born in Budapest and came to America when he was four and thereafter claimed to have been born in Appleton, Wisconsin. One would shrewdly guess that Houdini worked out the difference, not only between the Julian and Gregorian calendars, but local time in Budapest to local time in Wisconsin, thus accounting for the extra day.

This is, of course, of interest only to bean counters and astrologers. But then you stand back and ask, *What the heck was going on in the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the last decades of the 19th century? Were they using two calendars?* How insane is that? No wonder the Hapsburgs fell apart in WWI. Amazing they lasted that long.

You consult a **standard reference** and learn, to your surprise, that Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia, Romania, Yugoslavia and Greece did not adopt the Gregorian calendar until the 20th century. No, that doesn’t include Hungary, but what the heck. Why did Harry claim two different days, unless Hungary really was using the Julian calendar at the time?

Shouldn’t he know?

Consulting the usual astro reference, the **AstroData Bank**, we find Harry Houdini’s birth day to be April 5, while **Libra Rising** gives him March 24, 1874. There is no mention of calendar nonsense anywhere.

Everyone is agreed upon a 4 am birth time in Budapest, which has a longitude of 19 degrees east. Appleton, WI, is 88° West, the difference being 107 degrees. At a rate of four minutes of time for every degree of latitude, that’s a time shift of 7 hours and 8 minutes. Which means that 4 am local mean time in Budapest works out to be 8:52 pm LMT the previous day in Appleton. (Four am being approximate, remember.) Houdini’s calculation of his day of birth — the inclusion of the extra day — is thereby confirmed.

So now we have solved the puzzle of why Houdini has two birth days and, it seems, two birth charts.

Confirmation of April 5, as opposed to March 24, using my usual method (ascendant, ruler of the ascendant, house and sign of the ruler, the Moon’s position by sign and house), is easy:

March 24, 1874, 4 am, Budapest, we have Pisces rising. Ruling planet Jupiter is retrograde and debilitated in Virgo in the 7th house. The Moon is in Gemini in the 4th. This is a weak, ineffective person dominated by carping, useless women (the Jupiter stuff), with no fixed address (Moon – Mercury). For those of you paying attention, the retrograde Mercury in Pisces, opposite a retrograde Jupiter in Virgo, is a mirror to the current retrograde Mercury in Sagittarius opposite a retrograde Jupiter in Gemini.

The April 5th chart is altogether different. Aries rises, the Sun is nearby, giving a pugnacious fighter, which Houdini was. Ruling planet Mars is debilitated in Taurus, in the 2nd house, giving a need to prove himself (Taurus–2nd house), which is to say, this is not just about money. Note the north node conjunct Mars to give him justification for his actions, and Pluto to give extra power. All of which is opposite the Moon, in Scorpio in the 8th.

Sun in Aries, Moon in Scorpio, this is an immensely Martian man, a man of power and action, one who is intense (Moon in Scor-

continued, pg. 4

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This is a serialization of Vivian Robson's masterpiece, *A Student's Text-Book of Astrology*. It is now in print.

Part 120:
Minor Methods

continued:—

Synodical Lunations. A Synodical Lunation is the return of the progressed Moon to the same distance from the progressed Sun as the radical Moon was from the radical Sun. Each Synodical Lunation, which occurs once every 29½ days or thereabouts, measures to one year of life, and a map should be erected for the moment when the relationship of the luminaries to each other is exactly the same as at birth. The first return of the luminaries to their birth relationship will take place in the month after birth, and will measure from age 1 to age 2, and so on. Synodical lunations are subsidiary to directions and are to be interpreted in the same way as a Solar Revolution.

Current Synodical Lunations. These are maps erected for any given month in the current year when the luminaries are in the same relationship as at birth. Their rule is limited to the space of one month.

Lunar Revolutions. This is exactly analogous to the Solar Revolution and is a map erected for each month of the current year and for the moment when the Moon returns to its exact longitude at birth. It rules for one month.

Diurnal Horoscope. This is a map erected for the time of birth on each day in the current year and rules for one day only. Its chief uses are for finding the exact date of operation of an aspect, and for determining good and bad days, those days being bad on which the malefics or their radical places pass across the angles of the diurnal horoscope.

— *A Student's Text-Book of Astrology*, by Vivian Robson. Price \$25.95. **Buy.**

November 22:
1718—Blackbeard killed, near N. Carolina
1858—Denver, Colorado, founded
1869—Cutty Sark launched, Dumbarton
1928—Premiere of Bolero, by Ravel

Jupiter in Opposition

From *Ancient Astrology, Theory and Practice*, by Firmicus Maternus

JUPITER and Mars in opposition indicate an unstable life and continual loss of possessions. Hostility of friends is stirred up, and there is the greatest danger from riots or rash activities.

If Jupiter and the Sun are in opposition, they waste the paternal inheritance and destroy all income. They cause demotion from former high office so that the natives are always in an inferior position. These misfortunes are less in a diurnal chart, stronger in a nocturnal.

Jupiter and Venus in opposition hinder all advancement and all hope of promotion.

The natives will not at any time have faithful affection from friends; their friends persecute them with fraud and treachery, never address them with true words, but are always trying to deceive them. Other friends, angry over rivalries, foment various kinds of quarrels with them. Wherever a benefit is bestowed it is repaid by hostility.

Nevertheless the natives will have an increase in good fortune in some directions; they will always have sufficient income. If Jupiter is found in the terms of Venus, they will always have continued affection.

Jupiter and Mercury in opposition [true at the moment—*Dave*] attack those who have had training in learned speech. Also they stir up fearful popular riots; the natives are often confronted with the wrath of the people; also they have bad relations with kings and powerful men because of those who envy them.

They either suffer from death of brothers, are alienated from brotherly affection by quarrels, or encounter homicidal hatreds from blood kin. — *Ancient Astrology Theory and Practice*, translated by Jean Rhys Bram. **Buy.**

On Horary Astrology

from *Alan Leo's Dictionary of Astrology*

IN Horary Astrology the planets must be taken as symbols or signifiers, each representing its own special property. The planets may be considered as the life, and the signs as the form or expression. The Sun will always represent power and authority, magnanimity, grandeur, and is always very high, noble, and lofty, its influence being modified according to the sign and aspect. It represents persons having authority and those holding the greatest power.

Mercury represents all literary affairs and matters connected with books, papers, and correspondence, also with travel and children. It also represents food-stuffs in a general way, but much depends upon the aspect to this planet and the sign that it is in. It represents secretaries, clerks, messengers, and all those who are connected with the transference of thought.

Venus represents the female sex generally, and all matters that are effeminate, or of a pleasure-giving and sensuous nature. It is concerned with finance, love, courtship, and marriage. It is the planet of mirth and pleasure.

Mars represents the male sex generally, military men, doctors, surgeons, and all persons who use force and energy, and those who are assertive, positive, and at times aggressive. It is the planet of activity, that stirs into action all life of every description. It is always hot in its nature and its tendency is to set everything boiling.

Jupiter is temperate; the great social planet, bringing success, and governing all matters of a benefic nature. It represents the truly religious, and everything that is jovial, happy and free. It is the planet of benevolence, mercy and compassion. — *Alan Leo's Dictionary of Astrology*. **Buy.**



pio), and, Moon opposite the chart ruler, one innately suspicious of men like himself. Houdini is intensely psychic himself, but from his Moon-Mars opposition, eventually came to distrust anything psychic. Mars opposite in its debility but ruling the Moon means he must fight against himself.

The Moon being the physical body itself, the opposition with Mars, as chart ruler, meant that Houdini constantly pushed himself to ever greater feats of sheer endurance, and did so publicly: The ascendant.

The Moon-Mars opposition explains his escape ability. In examining a set of handcuffs, or in devising a clever escape from a milk can full of water, he first turned the matter over in his mind, throwing it between his Moon and Mars/Pluto conjunction. Oppositions are like this, they are inherently restless. They examine, they re-examine, they probe, they lurk. It is a fairly slow process and when the Moon is involved, always a conscious, gut-level one.

Some believe Houdini's escapes to have been genuine magic, in other words, due to a bending of physical laws. This is in fact a fuzzy area. The super-microscopic examination that Houdini could make, of a safe, of a lock, of anything, would invariably reveal its inherent faults, which Houdini could magnify and exploit. And there is no mechanical device that does not have faults.

And even if there were, by some fantastic chance, a perfect device, one from which escape was impossible, Houdini's ability of sheer analysis would find a way to cheat the system, without anyone ever knowing he did.

Because there is gray, mal-formed area that is beyond simple physics but is not yet quite "magical" which hyper-powerful analysis opens up. There is a level at which things happen which are not, strictly speaking, magical, but which are beyond ordinary ability. It is like when an Olympic athlete sets a new world record time. During the time in which he makes his effort, he is not quite in the same, strictly physical world as the rest of us. Houdini's escapes were like this.

IT IS not that Harry Houdini disliked spiritualists, but in the first three decades of the 20th century saw a major psychic/spiritualist/theosophist awakening. Everyone was spouting karma and life after death and talking to the dead. The April 5 chart, with its Moon-Mars opposition, says this hit Houdini full in the face. The opposition, combined with his fame as a performer, gave him no choice but to oppose and expose. Which he did.

All the while with the forlorn hope that

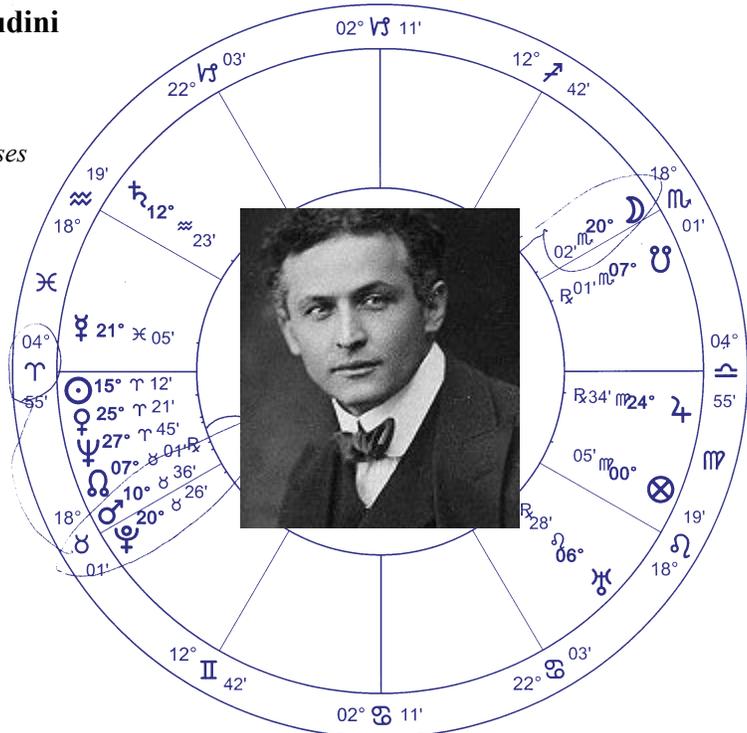
Harry Houdini

April 5, 1874

4:00 am

Budapest

Placidus houses
mean node



someone, somewhere, must have the answer, that there must be someone who, like Harry, actually knew, as Harry himself did. Moon in Scorpio in the 8th house, Harry Houdini knew that Spiritualism was real. It was only its practitioners who were fakes. Houdini was careful to expose individuals. He never denounced the belief itself.

Which accounts for his intense desire to communicate with his wife after his death, but, Moon opposed to Mars, his inability to actually do so. (Note Venus and Mars in mutual reception and mutual debility, with Venus ruling the 7th house, of the wife.) The harder he tried to communicate, the more he failed. Yes. Your life will go on, even after your body is dead. Harry's life did.

What eventually becomes of such people, you ask? Eventually they fade out (i.e. fall asleep) and eventually are reincarnated normally, but as highly charged as Houdini appears to have been, I doubt that has yet happened. He is presumably today in a self-contained stupor.

LET'S GO further in solving the riddle of his birthdays. Harry Houdini's father, Mayer Sámuel Weisz, was a Rabbi. The Gregorian calendar, promoted by the Pope himself, is Christian. The Jews have their own calendar. They were never under any pressure to change. No, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was not schizoid. (Well, maybe a little bit.)

While they need take no note of Christian goings-on, Jews customarily conform to

the standards of the society in which they live. Evidence of this can be seen in the birth of Albert Einstein, a Jew born in Ulm, Germany. When, a few weeks ago, I had trouble making sense of his life expectancy, I added twelve days to his birth (presuming it to be OS) to see if that would work better. It did not.

So why were Jews in Budapest using the Old Style calendar? It helps to pull back and get a larger view.

At the time, Russia was still using the Julian calendar and as it happened, many millions of Jews lived in Russia. They would have used the Russian calendar, in other words, the Julian. That Hungarian Jews were using the Russian calendar means they had cultural ties to their co-religionists in Russia, rather than the Christian locals on the streets in Budapest. Regardless of national borders, there would be trade among Jews, as they all spoke a common version of eastern Yiddish, in Hungary as well as in Russia. Such is how cultures make a mockery of nation and their borders.

WE then consider Russia itself. Russia allegedly switched from Julian to Gregorian on January 26, 1918. Or to be more precise, it advanced the date by 13 days and then, from 1923 to 1940, tried a variety of calendars, among them, a year of twelve months, each of which had 6 weeks of five days. Which was followed by 12 months of five weeks, each of which had six days. On June 27, 1940, these were abandoned in favor of a simple Grego-

rian calendar.

So was that the end of it? I chanced upon a Russian immigrant in an Amtrack train, summer of 2002, and put some questions to him. His answers were a revelation:

While the Gregorian calendar was in daily use in the old Soviet Union, and while the Orthodox Church was suppressed during the entire Soviet period, in fact *the common people continued to use the Julian calendar to mark their own birthdays*. They flatly rejected the Gregorian, which was used only to record the births of children of party members. Here in America we have a simplistic idea of the old USSR, that it was an absolute totalitarian nightmare. This is of course absurd. The population successfully rejected Party rule in many trivial and subtle ways. Birthdates were only one of them.

If this is true, then we must be careful should we delineate the charts of ordinary Russian citizens, as they will presume we know, when we will not. Or they will simply forget. As an example, I wanted to present a chart of a well-known Soviet defector, but regret I could not find one.

Rudolf Nureyev's father, for example, was a Red Army political commissar. So Nureyev's birth will be in Gregorian.

Svetlana Alliluyeva, another famous defector, was the daughter of Josef Stalin. No good.

Valentina Kozlova, a ballerina, seems to have been from common stock. Born in Moscow on August 26, 1957, she has no birth time. Without a birth time, choosing between New Style and Old Style is too much guesswork to be reliable. I am disappointed.

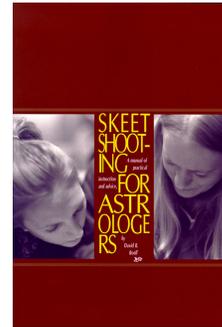
Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the Moon, died on August 25, 2012. I have been wanting to look at his chart for several weeks. Next week I will.

I am asked if I can read ordinary charts the way I read celebrity charts. I regret that I cannot, as I need a biography in order to understand how the individual uses his astrological makeup. I would have lots of fun with catty exchanges with a wife or husband, boyfriend or girlfriend, but wouldn't that be ego-destroying?

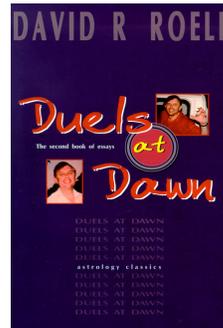
I once worked with a clairvoyant. She would scan the most significant past lives, I would find them in the natal chart. I remember a client where the sign of the Moon was from one life, while the house the Moon was in was due to a different life. Get me the right partner, I can dazzle like this.

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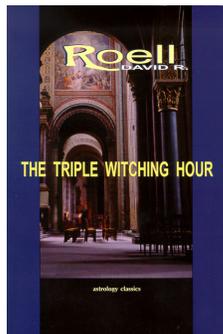
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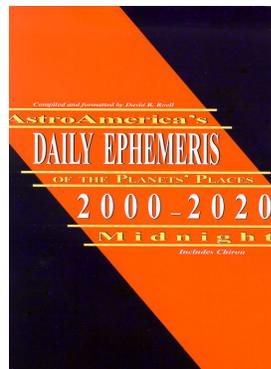


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