

Astrology: The Evidence of Science

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Astrologers claim that the cycles of the sun, moon and planets have a direct relationship to phenomena on Earth. In other words, the actual position of these bodies, relative to a specific point on the surface of the Earth, can indicate the quality of their participation in the nature of what occurs at that place, be it a birth or an event.

This system of analysis is very old. It is not based on the simplicities of cause and effect, but on the belief that there is an interactive relationship between all aspects of nature, operating seamlessly and continuously; the planets are a gauge of that relationship.

While this idea is simple enough, demonstrating it has proved remarkably difficult. This is because astrology — like psychotherapy — is primarily an interpretive process in which, rightly or wrongly, highly subjective assessments are continually being made. This is a process that does not lend itself easily to the demands of the statistician and, like psychotherapy, can easily fall victim to the researchers' primitive methodologies.

Therapists with long memories will no doubt remember the furore which greeted Eysenck and Wilson's impeccable research into the efficacy of depth psychotherapy. This research, which has been replicated in a variety of conditions, concluded that there was absolutely no

evidence whatsoever that psychotherapy contributed to any curative process.¹

More recent research has lead a lot of therapists to the belief that two out of three people who go for psychotherapy 'get better' — whatever that means, and it usually means they say they are better — compared with a lesser proportion who 'get better' without any psychotherapy. Eugene Gendlin² sums up the current view that it is not the type of therapy that affects the outcome so much as whether the client sees the therapist as warm, the length of training and experience of the therapist and other such variables. Gendlin believes that it is knowing how to use therapy which is the key factor but nobody has researched that factor in a quantitative way.

While the subtle and complex nature of the therapeutic process is almost cer-



tainly responsible for these uncertain results, it should be noted that the central claim of astrology — a direct relationship between planet and personality — can be demonstrated with remarkable precision.

Since the mid 1950s the French statisticians Michel and Françoise Gauquelin³ have investigated tens of thousands of timed birth-charts, for individuals known for specific occupations or personality traits, and have published their results to a mainly hostile audience. These findings have been replicated and are quite unambivalent: not only do those who are famous for a specific trait or occupation tend to have a definite astrological 'signature', but the nature of this signature is consistent across widely-differing databases.

To understand the significance of the Gauquelins' work we have to recall that, just as the sun rises, culminates and sets each day, so do each of the planets. As the Earth rotates on its axis all the planets rise in the east, achieve maximum elevation above us, and then set in the west. Astrologers claim that the position a planet occupies in the sky at the moment of birth directly relates to its expression in the life of the individual born at that moment. It is this relationship that the Gauquelins' research dramatically confirms.

The planet Mars, for instance, is traditionally associated with wars, soldiers, assertiveness and

sexuality — the classic macho qualities in fact. Individuals who are aggressive, competitive or highly self-motivated will often have a prominent Mars in their birth charts, and the Gauquelins' work shows exactly how this tends to fall.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of Mars in the charts of 1,485 champion athletes — the very people we would expect to demonstrate Mars energy in full measure. If the distribution of Mars in all of their birth charts was random, if it could be anywhere in the sky, then it should follow the dotted line. It does not.

We can see very clearly that more champion athletes are born with Mars having just risen above the horizon (the 'Rise/Setting' axis) or having just passed the culmination point. This research confirms the traditional assertion that the rising and culminating points are important, and also demonstrates a distribution of Mars that goes against chance by a factor of 5,000,000 to 1. A similar

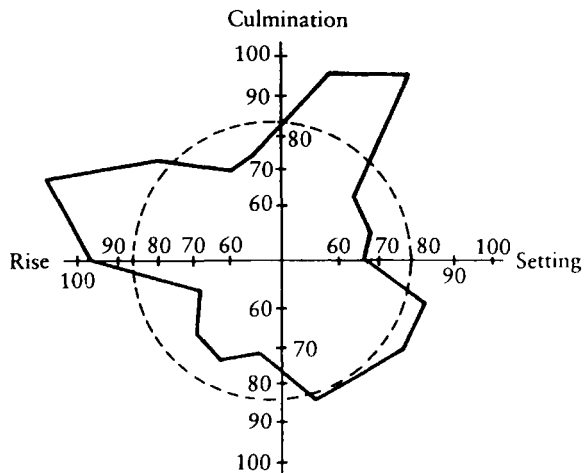


Figure 1

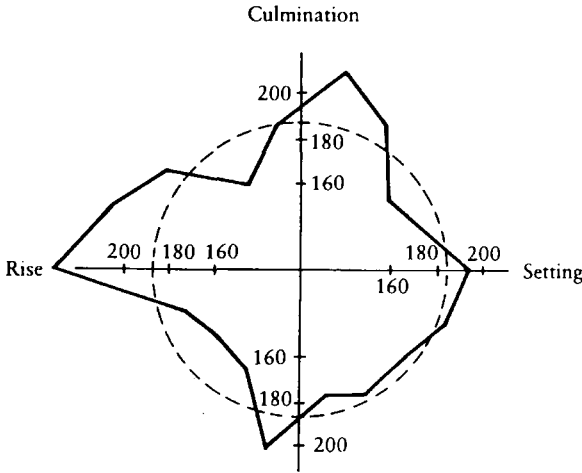


Figure 2

pattern emerges in the charts of military men.

If Mars is aggressive, then Saturn is cautious. Saturn is associated by astrologers with the traditional conservative values of thrift, moderation, self-reliance, modesty and the work ethic. In the charts of 3,305 scientists (Figure 2) we see that this time it is Saturn that is prominent around the rising and culminating points — and also around the setting and anti-culminating positions. The distribution reflects odds against chance of 100,000 to 1.

The planet Jupiter is quite the opposite in quality to Saturn. The Jupiter personality is an extrovert, big-hearted, expansive, and occasionally opinionated and pompous. Not surprisingly Jupiter occupies the rising, culminating and setting positions in the charts of 993 politicians (Figure 3, see page 18) — with odds against chance of 5,000 to 1. It also shows a similar distribution in the charts of actors.

In all three cases the individuals whose occupation reflects a specific planetary energy tend to have that very planet around the key rising or culminating points with a frequency that cannot be attributed to chance. But there is far more than this.

The Gauquelins' research with other databases also demonstrates that individuals whose personality (rather than occupation) can be characterised by a specific planetary quality will also tend to have that planet in similar key sectors. In other words, individuals who are known to be aggressive, assertive and combative will tend to have Mars in the rising or culminating sectors, those who are cautious or reserved will tend to have Saturn there, while those who are deemed to be expansive and 'larger than life' may have their Jupiter in the identical sectors.

What we are witnessing here is a highly consistent process at work. Traditional



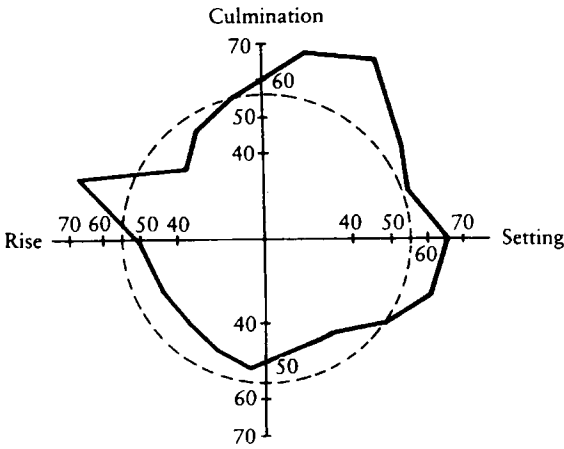


Figure 3

planetary energies are shown to relate to the occupations and character traits astrologers attribute to them, and they do so with remarkable regularity. In each case — and in the dozens and dozens of other occupation and trait analyses that the Gauquelins have carried out — there is a powerful tendency for planets to favour the same sections of the sky for expressing their energies in a dramatic way.

Many scientists, hostile to the idea of astrology, have attempted to challenge these statistics: for over 30 years they have failed to demonstrate any significant methodological error. One group, the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims for the Paranormal (CSICOP), publishers of the *Skeptical Enquirer*, went so far as to fiddle with a vital database in a desperate attempt to rig an anti-astrology result.

The full story has been written up by Dennis Rawlins, then chair of CSICOP (who resigned over the issue), and is also

the subject for a critical analysis by Dr. Patrick Curry in the *Zetetic Scholar* (1982 No.9). To quote Curry: "I don't think I need to stress how badly the Committee handled the investigation of the Mars effect . . . It seems that this situation must call into question any further (unrefereed, at least) CSICOP involvement in research on the Mars effect, and possibly any other 'paranormal' areas". Professor Eysenck is equally direct: "CSICOP. . . handled the whole affair in a

manner that cannot be justified on rational grounds".

The fact that certain aspects of astrology can be demonstrated to be true is disturbing to many individuals. It provokes powerful reactions in the same manner that concepts such as 'the unconscious' generated in the early part of this century. Just as the idea of the unconscious forced us to recognise that personality, behaviour, relationships and events can be linked in infinitely complex ways, so astrology confronts us with the possibility that these intricate connections may themselves only represent our surface awareness of a yet more enigmatic arrangement.

The process of chart analysis itself involves the interpretation of quite intricate planetary arrangements which, as yet, cannot be modelled statistically. There is some real evidence that the alternate positive and negative signs of the zodiac correlate with introversion/extroversion⁴ and that individuals in long-term

relationships have specific chart factors in common.⁵ There is also a coherent theory of how astrology might work, proposed by an astronomer.⁶

There seems little doubt that astrology

will ultimately reveal more of itself, and those counsellors prepared to consider the implication of this will be on the leading edge of a totally new approach to therapy.

1. Hans Eysenck and Glenn Wilson (ed.), *The Experimental Study of Freudian Theories*, Methuen, 1973
2. Eugene Gendlin, *Focusing*, Bantam, 1981
3. Michel Gauquelin, *Written in the Stars*, Aquarian, 1988

4. Hans Eysenck and David Nias, *Astrology: Science of Superstition*, Penguin, 1983
5. Mavis Klein, *Correlation*, December 1988, Vol. 8, No.2
6. Percy Seymour, *Astrology: The Evidence of Science*, Arkana, 1990

Astrology: Language of the Psyche

Christine Valentine

Since Freud's investigations of the psyche and psychic processes a whole new world has been opened up to us. We are now painfully aware of just how much 'we are lived by unknown and uncontrollable forces', to use Freud's words, and we now know that the rational, intellectual part of us is not all there is. We are not masters in our own house. Yet once we can find the humility to acknowledge this we can begin to approach, and learn something of, those unknown forces — and astrology is one means of doing so. Jung wrote, "Astrology, like the collective unconscious with which psychology is concerned, consists of symbolic configurations: the planets are the gods, symbols of the powers of the unconscious . . . What the zodiac and the

planets represent are not personal traits; they are impersonal and objective facts . . . The interpretation of the archetypes (the gods) and their mutual relations is the common concern of both arts".¹ Thus

