

Transparency

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We've reached a point in this looney-tunes presidential campaign where yet another of the relatively unusual issues that pop up like weeds has taken center-stage. This time it's concerns over transparency, the marked tendency on the part of both major-party candidates — Clinton and Trump — to withhold disclosures, revealing relevant information about themselves to the voting public only on a selective basis, under duress, or sometimes not at all.

The kerfuffle over Hillary's recent health problems is less about the actual state of her health than over the decisions (either by her or by her campaign staff) to parse out the information about the sequence of recent ill health events in dribs and drabs, rather than immediately and in a straightforward manner.

Conversely, Donald Trump continues to refuse to release his tax returns, always hiding behind the shopworn and completely debunked excuse that he's under audit by the IRS and thus "can't" release his returns to public scrutiny. Of course, the fact that a certain statement is repeatedly shown to be utterly false carries no weight with Donald. He goes right on repeating the lie as if it were true.

The candidates' birth charts have much to offer about the dynamics behind their respective lack of transparency. Sometimes the astrology details distinct elements of their behavior and strategy. In other ways, the charts show us a kind of "karmic overview" of what these two people are up against. In that latter perspective, the indications from their charts are less about behavior or choice, and more about the archetypal symbolism with which each has to contend, sometimes despite their best intentions. In other words, personal astrology goes beyond showing us the decisions or choices made by individuals to reveal the larger context of their lives that come through no matter what they do.

First Hillary. I need to restate the uncertainty surrounding an accurate time of birth for Ms. Clinton. Two birth times have been claimed by investigators, and the respective charts, while sharing the tonal similarities of the same confirmed birth date, are profoundly different in the individuating factors produced by the time of day a person was born. The natal charts of two individuals born on the same day but at different times, or even at the same time but in different parts of the world, often end up more different than similar. To apply a useful metaphor, people born on the same day are singing a life-song that uses the

same chord structure, but the melodies and lyrics can be, and usually are, very different, because of the critical importance in astrology of the exact birth-time and place.

Of the two possible charts for Hillary, I've chosen the chart that I feel is more likely to be correct, since it dovetails better with my knowledge of her history and perception of her temperament, but there's no guarantee that I'm right, nor that either chart is necessarily accurate. Some of what I'll write below concerning Hillary is reflected in both charts, but I'll custom-tailor my presumptions to fit the chart I'm using.

Hillary has been accused for decades of being secretive and controlling. Her birth chart agrees with this assessment, although the reasons behind those strategies are defined in the chart as less-than-conscious and probably unintentional.

The Sun in Hillary's natal chart, symbolizing who she is "inside" and the most basic ways she perceives reality and approaches living, is in the sign Scorpio. Of the twelve archetypal signs of the zodiac, Scorpio is notorious for its reputation as secretive. As an astrologer and a Scorpio Sun myself, I find that assumption simplistic, over-general, and often incorrect. To my way of thinking, Scorpio isn't "secretive," *per se*, but instead *suspicious*. On the other hand, Scorpio is definitely controlling. This is not a spontaneous, anything-goes, let-the-chips-fall-where-they-may sign of the zodiac. (Those qualities are found on the Gemini-Sagittarius axis, and Donald Trump is a perfect example of a quicksilver Gemini Sun and full Sagittarian Moon.) As a power-based, suspicious sign, Scorpio is concerned that others may not perceive and interpret reality as it does, so it doesn't give away (reveal) who or what it is until it's ready to do so. That's not secretive, it's cautious, and Scorpio would say that the caution is warranted.

So, is Hillary secretive? No. Is she controlling? Absolutely.

The other fundamental quality of Hillary's natal Sun is its position in the 12th house. The houses represent arenas of life-experience, and the 12th is the arena where ordinary, plain reality is shrouded by dreams. These dreams may be ideals or illusions, true or false, but they obscure the obvious and create phantasmagorical perceptions. The tangible and intangible coincide and merge. In short, the 12th house is, indeed, an area of experience where much is hidden, under the surface, or not as it appears.

The Sun in Hillary's birth chart is not the whole story, however. Far from it. Hillary is not only a Scorpio Sun, but also Scorpio rising. Mercury and Venus are also in Scorpio near the Ascendant, and both are squared to a very significant stellium of three planets (Mars, Saturn, and Pluto) in Leo/9th house.

Hillary is not an artist or a carpenter. She's a lawyer, and not just literally, but temperamentally and metaphorically as well. The five-planet alignment of

Mercury and Venus square to Mars, Saturn, and Pluto from the 9th house to the 12th/1st implies that she sees every public interaction as a courtroom. Everything she says is a legal argument. She is always building a case and presenting it to the jury.

Unlike someone like Barack Obama, however, Hillary is not a natural or accomplished on-stage performer. Her public persona doesn't "win over" her audience. Instead, like the lawyer she is, Hillary relies on facts and arguments to convince others.

The most exact connection in that five-planet alignment is a near-partile square between Mercury in Scorpio and Saturn in Leo (less than 1° orb). This implies that Hillary is not confident of her ability to perceive correctly or communicate accurately. As a result, the fear of making mistakes or failing to convince others causes her to work overtime to get everything right. Paradoxically, that effort is sometimes so intense that it leads to errors, which then bite Hillary on the ass.

Contrast Hillary's exact Mercury-Saturn square in Scorpio-Leo to Donald Trump's Mercury-Neptune square in Cancer-Libra. Here's Hillary, doing her lawyer thing, striving mightily to get every detail right before she says anything, confirming and re-confirming everything she thinks and sees to make sure it's both real and accurate. God forbid that she should get even a single detail wrong.

Meanwhile, Donald Trump can't tell the difference between fact and fiction. In Trump's mind, reality intertwines with fantasy, and they might as well be one and the same. It's not that Trump merely has trouble distinguishing between truth and lies, but that he doesn't care. With his Sun-Uranus and Leo Rising, the truth is whatever he thinks it is.

Just as Scorpio is associated with secrecy, perhaps incorrectly, so an alignment between Mercury and Neptune is associated with lying, since an individual with those symbols connected can't discern fact from fiction. But that association with lies is only partially correct. Mercury is logic and rationality in its sequential mode — one thing leads to another in a chain of connected perceptions; Neptune, on the other hand, is instantaneous perception of the whole, with no steps or process, just a divine leap to seeing the final meaning. That's part of the difference between rationality and intuition.

Donald Trump is sometimes dead-on and almost uncanny in perceiving the tenor of the times or the mood of the crowd. He leaps beyond the rational to embrace the intuitive, and at times he is downright brilliant in cutting through all the noise and saying the profound, over-arching truth.

And yet, this occasional brilliance is contrasted with an even greater number of completely whacked-out, bat-shit crazy public statements Trump offers as factual

that are totally made-up, often not by Trump himself, but by some nutty belief he heard or read.

Trump's chart is not secretive or cautious where verbal expression is concerned. He is liable to say anything at any time. That's not to suggest, however, that Trump isn't controlling. As much as his Gemini Sun-Uranus and full Moon in Sagittarius combined with his Mercury-Neptune square may allow Trump to shoot his mouth off "from the hip," so to speak, his Leo Rising with Mars on the Ascendant indicates that he always has a warrior's sense of whether or not he is in an advantageous position.

That Leo Mars on the Ascendant has many meanings, of course, among them the tendency to attack when challenged. With Trump's temperament, the best defense is a good offense. He sees challenge or criticism from others as a personal attack, and he immediately goes after his critic with an assault of his own. More relevant to this commentary, however, is the meaning (along with his 10th-house Uranus) of aggressively wanting to always be in charge. Trump is the Strong Man, the authoritarian leader of the pack. He sees himself as the Stud Duck, the 800-lb. gorilla, and the Dominant Male. In his own psyche, he is the All and Everything, the Beginning and the End. Trump doesn't really want to be President; he wants to be God.

Another incorrect presumption in astrology is the belief that Leo is the sign of natural and self-assured confidence. No, Leo is a sign of increasing public displays of confidence based on inward insecurity. It's the *fake-it-til-you-make-it* sign of the zodiac, where bravado and bombast are the road to social success. This is Method Acting, where the actor becomes the character that he or she portrays. Yes, Leonine types are natural performers. They love nothing better than being on-stage and in the limelight, because this gives them the chance to shine, become stars, and lay to rest their own lurking interior uncertainties about themselves. Over a lifetime, a person with a strong Leo quotient may actually achieve true and authentic confidence, but that's the end result, not the beginning. More than any other sign, the Leo archetype involves coming to believe the mythic stories we tell ourselves about ourselves. And Donald Trump is very far down that road.

Both candidates have difficult Venus-Saturn connections in their natal charts. Hillary has Venus in Scorpio/12th square to Saturn in Leo/9th, while Donald has Venus conjunct Saturn in Cancer/11th. Those connections tie personal love to limitation, responsibility, and ambition. In fact, much of their experience of love is linked with success or failure in their careers.

This doesn't imply that they won't marry or create a family. Quite the contrary. For Trump especially, personal family is critical, and something he will work hard to achieve and maintain, despite setbacks and disappointments. Neither Trump

nor Clinton are individuals for whom personal love flows easily, and their lives will contain more-than-average heartache or loss.

With Venus and Saturn together, love becomes denser and more physical, linked with the real world more than the emotional or ethereal realms. People with Venus-Saturn connections want the perfect partner, the perfect children, and the perfect family, considered in the context of social appearances and success. Often they achieve that, but the psychic costs of such strategic choices can be very great.

For Hillary Clinton, with her Venus-Saturn square from the 12th to the 9th houses, the question is: *What duties, sacrifices, or even moral transgressions will love require from me?*

For Donald Trump, with his 11th house conjunction of Venus and Saturn, the question is: *Who loves me?*

Stated in overall terms, Clinton and Trump are two people whose hearts are guarded, and that alone is enough to make them seem less than transparent to others and the public. The fact that their charts are replete with additional factors that muddy the waters of clear visibility implies that public concerns are justified about the differences between who they want us to believe they are versus who they truly are.