

*astrological-cultural-spiritual-political
views & commentary...*

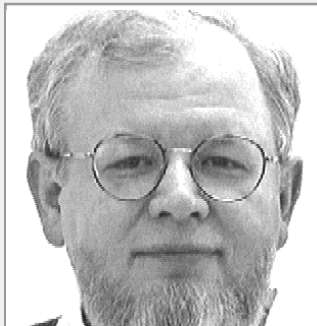
**Issue #43
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THE HERBST NEWSLETTER



Thoughts, dates, & reminders about our lives as members of the craziest species on this lovely planet. Like a message in a bottle washing up on the sandy shores of consciousness...

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Dear friends,

After an absence of three years, I've returned to Minneapolis and reopened my astrological practice.

This is the first edition of my newsletters to be delivered via email. Cool, huh? And so much easier for all of us. Just open your In Box every month and there it is. Like magic.

I'm available again for readings with existing and new clients, either in-person in the local Twin Cities area or, for those who live out-of-town,

via long-distance telephone. Session fees are currently \$120/hour.

Life has changed dramatically in three years. Millions of people are lost and struggling in what have become profoundly troubled times. Especially in a world of disturbed illusions and fearful realities, Individual sanity matters. Sometimes it's all we have. So maintaining in our personal lives a clear sense of who we are and where we're headed is important.

Most of you already know the quality of my work. To learn what my astrological tools have to say about your life now and for the years to come, please contact me. We'll schedule a date and time for me to come to your home or office for an in-person session, or for me to call you for a long-distance reading.

To schedule a personal session, send an email to bill@billherbst.com, or, if you prefer, call my cell phone at 612-207-4486 and leave a voicemail.

Future monthly newsletters will continue to be free, but will be sent out via email only. To add your email address to my mailing list, simply send me an email requesting a newsletter subscription. You can also read my newsletters online at my website—www.billherbst.com—and sign up for a free subscription there. I hope you find this month's commentary relevant and thought-provoking.

America & The Saturn-Pluto Eruption of 2001-2002

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Astrology charts the course of our collective history—past and future—through the changing relationships of the slower-moving outer bodies, especially Saturn and Pluto.

In society, Saturn represents structures and institutions of culture, as well as the restraining control of traditional authority to maintain the status quo. Saturn is conservative and cautious—the “order” side of law-and-order, which includes the pecking order of culture from the top down, from groups that are privileged and powerful all the way to those considered marginal or disenfranchised. Saturn is the “business” of life, especially through the economic commerce that runs the world.

By contrast, Pluto represents total transformation—the urge for complete change that bubbles away in the collective unconscious and wells up from time to time in the cultural equivalents of earthquakes, tidal waves, and volcanic eruptions. To get rid of the old and make way for the new, Pluto is extreme, destroying everything in its path. This is the purging of profound endings and beginnings—death and rebirth.

Saturn and Pluto are not gentle, and they do not play well together. Saturn is cold and harsh; Pluto is intense and destructive. When they pass through opposite points in the heavens, as they have three times over the past century, long-held and pent-up frustrations polarize against the existing order. The irresistible force of momentum (Pluto) confronts the immovable object of inertia (Saturn). Tektonic collisions challenge the status quo authority, which reacts by stubbornly retrenching and becoming repressive. But such resistance serves only to make the assault on the ruling order more sweeping. Both become more ruthless as the conflict escalates beyond any expectations. Repercussions take years to be fully realized.

When Saturn opposed Pluto in 1931, the Great Depression had reached such depths that Hoover was thrown out of office, replaced by Franklin Roosevelt and The New Deal, which changed the face of American government and society for five decades to come. At the same time, however, the Nazi party with its dark shadow of fascism rose to power in Germany.

During 1965-1966, Saturn again opposed Pluto (and Uranus also) at the center of that turbulent and radical decade. What began in idealism with Kennedy and the Peace Corps ended in disillusionment with Nixon and Watergate. Political Camelot to political assassinations, freedom riders in the South to the Watts riots in Los Angeles, Woodstock to Altamont, Berkeley student rights to the shootings at Kent State, the Great Society to the Vietnam War. We landed men on the moon, but we couldn't achieve peace or equality on earth.

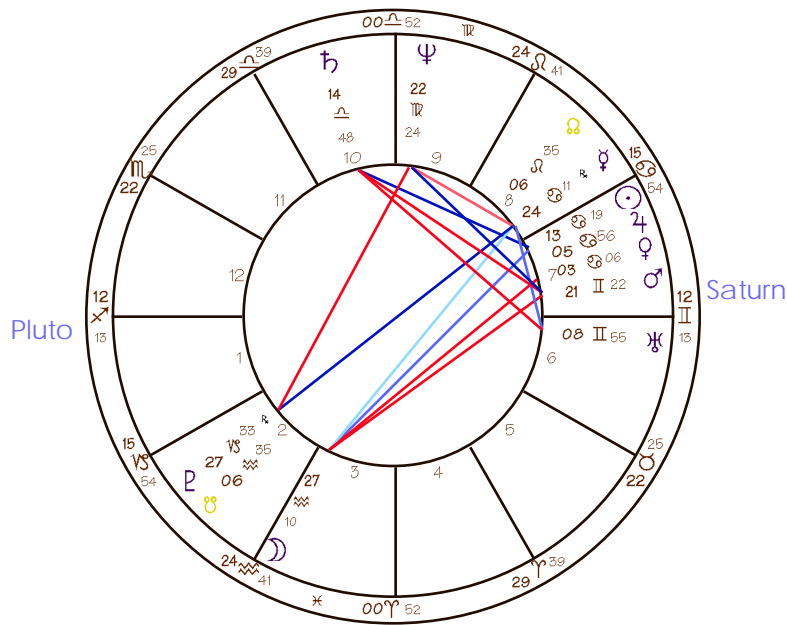
The most recent Saturn-Pluto opposition began in August, 2001, and culminated during the solar eclipse of June, 2002, but the reverberations will continue for literally years to come. Once again, the status quo has been challenged. The tragic events of September 11th of last year in the attacks on New York City and Washington occurred barely one month after the two planets reached critical mass. Could we imagine a more potent symbol of destruction of the existing order than the images burned into our brains of the collapsing towers of the World Trade Center?

This is a very big deal, folks. The Saturn-Pluto opposition fell right smack on the horizon of America's birth-chart, with Pluto in the east and Saturn in the west. No longer can we tromp around the world in our seven-league boots, using our economic and military dominance to bully other countries or unilaterally do whatever we wish. Saturn and Pluto imply that either we recognize the equality of others in the world or risk major consequences. Yes, it's a hard-ball world. The wars, purges, famines, and genocide of the 20th century display that fact all too clearly. We in America have been relatively insulated from the harsh reality, perhaps naively. But Saturn and Pluto mark the end of such innocence. Either we use our wealth and power

unselfishly (Pluto in the 2nd ruling the 12th) and honor our responsibility to promote justice in the world (Saturn in Libra/10th house), or we reap the whirlwind.

I don't condone murder, whether it's Al Qaeda ramming fuel-laden passenger jets into the World Trade Center or the American military slaughtering thousands of innocents in the pointless bombing of Afghanistan. That's all madness, as far as I'm concerned. I do, however, understand the deep ambivalence, if not outright resentment, against America held by millions of foreigners around the world (and by more Americans than the media would have us believe). If our political policies over the last 25 years had reflected more of our idealism and goodwill and less of our arrogance and self-righteousness, then September 11th might not have happened. That is part of the tragedy.

But this is not merely about attacks from outside. Pluto indicates the unearthing of hidden rot within. Past excesses and abuses of power, however unconscious, will come to light. Revelations of corporate malfeasance—Enron, Arthur Andersen and such—began as a trickle but have



rapidly escalated into a flood. Corporate fiscal responsibility appears to be no more truthful than advertising hype. No one knows who can be trusted anymore, certainly not in a business climate that is obviously tainted. Big corporations have been on a long binge drunk since the 1980s, and the hangover looks to be one hell of a social headache.

The American Dream includes lofty ideals that are truly revolutionary—representative, democratic government; freedom to speak our minds and worship as we choose without fear or repression; equality under the law, and the possibility for everyone to share in a piece of the economic pie. Those ideals have always been under siege. Periodically in American history the shadow aspect of human nature has gained the upper hand, but never moreso than now. When did *life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness* lose all meaning except as compulsive greed for material wealth? How did corporations and the rich become so insidious in co-opting our government through influence peddling that now they not only make the laws, but are above them to boot? What will we leave to future generations after *everything* has been commercialized, fouled, and discarded?

We should be ashamed of ourselves. The fact that we're not, at least not visibly, is telling. Our government's response to the crisis has been to ignore business scandals, throw out the Bill of Rights, and create an ersatz and perpetual "War on Terror" that suits certain powerful elites. I worry less about terrorists than I do some of the misguided "patriots" who presume to serve in elected office, corporate boardrooms, and public institutions.

This crisis is not about Republicans or Democrats, nor is it about liberals or conservatives. It's about honesty and integrity versus lies and illusions. It's about real versus fake freedoms. It's about protecting ourselves from ourselves, and saving the world from the worst impulses of immature human beings.

We would do well to reflect on where we've been and where we're going in this country. It's not too late for America to change directions, but I see no evidence yet that our rulers possess any clear understanding of what's at stake, nor that we as a nation have the collective will to shake off our delusions.

Astrologically, this is America's wake-up call. So far, it doesn't appear to me that we've awakened at all.



Bill Herbst resides in Minneapolis, Minnesota. To schedule an astrological session, either in-person locally or long-distance via telephone, send an email to bill@billherbst.com, or call 612-207-4486 and leave a voicemail.

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