

Astrology – WTF?

(Part Three)

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In Part One of this series, I wrote about how astrology introduced itself and effectively kidnapped me. In Part Two, I turned my attention to the deniers and debunkers, those who loudly assert that astrology is fake, who tend to characterize anyone who disagrees with that presumption as either deluded or outright criminal. In Part Three, I want to open up and take a look at the serious questions that have bothered me for 50 years.

*Before I launch into today's post, let me restate what I wrote in Part One: **Astrology is NOT science.** Yes, it uses the science of astronomy to build its playing field, but astrology itself has nothing to do with science. The two approaches to meaning and understanding seem to me mutually exclusive, which is a central presumption in what I'm exploring with this series.*

If astrology is false — if the relative positions and angular relationships of major bodies in the solar system do not reveal anything relevant about individual human lives or collective humanity — then many people will be happy. Their world-views will be confirmed and secure, and they can sleep soundly in their beds. On the other hand, if astrology is true — if the relative positions and angular relationships of major bodies in the solar system do indeed reveal accurate and relevant information about individual human lives and collective humanity, then everything we've ever been taught by modern civilization about the nature and the structure of the universe is cast into doubt. The whole edifice, the entire superstructure of presumed meanings creaks and groans, threatening to crumble and collapse.

And here's the disturbing kicker: Astrology **IS** true. It **does** actually reveal relevant information about our individual lives and collective humanity's ongoing evolution in what we call "civilization."

I have two deep-seated reactions to this, which I'll discuss one at a time. The first is to grapple with the profound difficulty of deciding how to regard what is offered by my society of presumably "authoritative" information. How much of it can I trust? What should I believe, and what should I reject?

These uncomfortable questions extend into everything that concerns me. If I want or need a new consumer item, such as a washing machine or toilet, can I reliably trust and count on the information put out by the companies who design, manufacture, and market the products? In general, my answer that that question is a heavily qualified "sort of," like saying "yes, maybe..."

Sometimes, but not always. On the other hand, when it comes to questions about why or how certain major events happened in society and what they mean, my response to the mainstream narrative, the explanations that are offered as "truth," are a little different. In terms of my feeling for their trustworthiness, they move from "sometimes, but not always," to "probably not."

For instance, questions such as "Who shot JFK?" or "Was 9-11 a false flag operation?" remain unanswered for me and open to speculation. I regard "Russiagate" as fake news, and I'm convinced that the entire COVID-19 pandemic was, from top to bottom, an exercise riddled with lies and untruth. I survived the first pair of vaccine jabs in 2020, but I will never get another. And as for the origins of the COVID virus, I will attest to my dying breath that America created that virus in part as a deep state bioweapon, and that it leaked from the Wuhan lab.

The recent whistleblower revelations about longstanding visitation by alien beings from extraterrestrial civilizations and the ongoing reverse engineering of their advanced technologies by an even deeper "deep state" beneath that of the NSA, CIA, and FBI, and run by rogue elements of the military-industrial complex for their own nefarious purposes of world domination is the current #1 hit on the Top 40 Conspiracies list. I don't have a firm position on that, but it sure as hell wouldn't surprise me if at least some of it is true.

Now, I've stated on numerous occasions and will reiterate here that I'm not a rampant conspiracy buff. Do I believe that the 1969 Moon landing was faked? No. Nor do I believe that Hillary Clinton was running a child pornography ring from the basement of a pizza parlor in Washington, D.C. That said, I think that false flag operations have been done (many of them — just read any of the numerous insider accounts of the CIA's sordid history of fomenting revolutions that overturned foreign governments). I also believe that Hillary is one of the Monsters, and I'm convinced there are indeed child pornography rings in the world, probably lots of them. Seems to me quite likely that many outlandish conspiracies contain elements of truth, although I'm as doubtful of the full-bore explanatory conspiracy stories as I am of the mainstream narratives. In short, I'm often not sure what's true in the realm of society, collective events, and the news, but I can smell bullshit a mile away.

So that's one ongoing reaction I have to what I regard as the FACT that astrology is real. I question the claims of *every* authority. That makes me more of an iconoclast than many people. And, in fairness, it makes my life more than a bit difficult. For instance, some people trust what their doctors tell them about their health. I may or may not accept what my doctor says. It depends. I am frankly more inclined to accept with minimal hesitation what my mechanic tells me about my car than what my doctor tells me about my health.

My second reaction to my longstanding acceptance of astrology's confirmed reality is that I'm bewildered (gob smacked might be more accurate) by the apparent fact that so few people I know seem upset about it.

I'll ease into this conundrum with a story about a dear friend of mine. I'll call her Betty, although that's not her real name. Betty is an expert in comparative religions and the historical traditions of spiritual disciplines, specifically, those of Christianity and Buddhism. Whenever I want to know something about religion or organized spiritual training, I ask Betty. She is my go-to-authority about such matters. She's also one of the 200-or-so people I trained in astrology during the mid-1970s, when I was teaching classes. Back then, I had three levels of classes in content rotation — introductory, intermediate, and advanced. I can say with some pride and pleasure that there are at least a couple working astrologers who started out learning the basics of their craft from me.

Recently, I explained to Betty my longstanding discomfort with the fact that astrology works. I have zero doubt about that. 13,000 sessions with clients and the examination of 35,000 charts has been more than sufficient to convince me of astrology's veracity. No, my discomfort is due to what that implies about everything else we've been told about how the universe is constructed.

To make a long story short, Betty's reaction was that OF COURSE astrology works, but she isn't the least bit disturbed about what that implies. Her reason was that (in her mind) different, even seemingly contradictory systems can co-exist comfortably, so that the orientations of science, religion, pragmatism, and astrology can all fit in a single multi-polar and multi-faceted dynamic universe.

Although I understand the intellectual conception (or perhaps conceit) of her rationale, I don't buy it. To me, it smacks of a perverse kind of "magical thinking" that essentially allows any fantasy or fiction one can make up to share the limelight equally with other demonstrable realities.

My resistance aside, though, Betty's reaction is an encapsulation of everything I've experienced over the past 50 years. As I alluded to earlier in this series, I have never been personally accosted by any astrology deniers. No one, in any social context of face-to-face interaction, has ever said to me, *"You're an astrologer? You must be kidding. How can you possibly believe in that garbage, for God's sake???* *It's horseshit."*

Do I presume that I've never encountered in any social situation a non-believer in astrology? No, I'm sure I have. Fully half of the American population doesn't (although polls tell us that 80% of Americans believe in angels...) But, whatever their beliefs, most humans are socialized and conditioned to minimize overt conflict in order to avoid being offensive and impolite. Oh sure, I have no doubt that people exist who would challenge me — some of them quite aggressively — but, as it turns out, in my personal experience no one ever has. (That's probably wise on their part, since I know all the arguments — pro and con — and could intellectually pound their ass to dust in a debate.)

No, my problem is not with astrology's doubters, deniers, and debunkers (although I do get mad at people held in high esteem culturally who trash astrology thoughtlessly in public). My problem is mostly with true believers. Although I'm a person of strong opinions about many things, and no one

has ever accused me of being wishy-washy, I feel a deep mistrust of excess certainty or dogma. True believers of any stripe give me the willies. I don't feel safe around such people, because their absolute certainty can, in the right situation, lead to unconscionable violence. True believers are more likely to be the kind of people who might actually kill you if you disagree with them.

But back to the issue at hand. Am I the only person on the planet who is disturbed the fact that astrology seems to be real and undeniably works to reveal valid information about our lives? I have days when I think I must be the only one. And that bothers me.

My friend Betty's response — that she's not bothered by the implications of astrology casting doubt on other schemes for understanding reality — strikes me as a little crazy. I'm not willing to throw my dear friend under the bus and say that she's completely insane, but her apparent comfort with what look to me like mutually exclusive systems is a little worrisome to me.

I imagine it makes life easier for Betty, and I know her well enough to realize that smooth social functioning is important to her, but still...

What I wrote above about 80% of Americans believing in angels is probably relevant here. Wherever it comes from — astrology, religion, dreams, etc. — the idea that the universe is attentive and involved in our personal lives is extremely prevalent among human beings. And yet, science and technology, economics and business, politics and government all lean in precisely the opposite direction, toward a discounting of the individual and a predominant concern for impersonal rules or universal principles. The bell curve is what matters, not the individual.

My friend Betty is clearly not alone. Obviously, in the real world of modern civilization here in 2023, people believe that both coexist, and while life may give them many reasons to be upset about their lives or the world, the contradiction between the individually personal and the collectively impersonal is mostly not among them.

All the hard sciences are based on the rules of logic. I'd presume that any scientist — a mathematician or physicist, for example — who saw what I've seen about astrology and confirmed its validity would be disturbed by the implications. But perhaps Betty and the billions of others humans who apparently perceive no contradiction and are comfortable with the coexistence of science and astrology feel that way because logic is of no importance to them.

I don't know. Maybe it's just me and my lack of maturity or understanding. I sure would like life to make more sense than it does, but it doesn't appear that life is interested in simplifying itself just to make me more comfortable.

End Part 3

I don't know if there will be a Part 4. Although what I've written in these three posts has hardly plumbed the depths of the nagging questions, this might be enough, or it may be all I've got to say about the subject. We'll see...