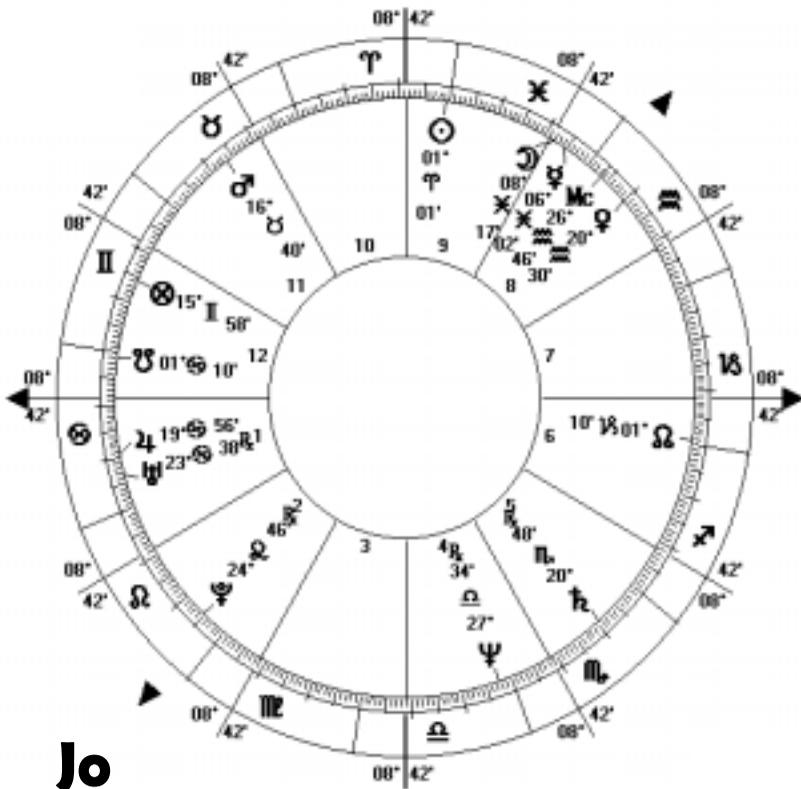


Sun/ascendant combinations: Aries and Cancer

This piece is a brief study of individuals who share various combinations of Sun and ascendant. If we consider these two factors we are dealing with 144 possible combinations (12x12). The only work I am aware of that systematically interprets combinations of major chart factors (of Sun and Moon in this case) is that by Charles and Suzi Harvey (*Sun Sign, Moon Sign*, Aquarian Press 1994). If we consider Sun, Moon and ascendant we have 1728 possible combinations (12x12x12). If we wanted to devote just two pages to each combination, that would come to a work of around 3500 pages, or five encyclopaedic-sized volumes – a monumental labour that would occupy the better part of a working life. Would it be worth the effort? I doubt it, for even though it seems at first a valuable system of typology, 1728 different human types, experience shows even when individuals share the same Sun, Moon and ascending signs, the similarities are not as much as we might expect.

In Jupiter and Mercury and A to Z I consider two sets of individuals who share the same combinations: Stephi Graf and Queen Victoria (both triple Gemini) and Mad King Ludwig and Captain Bligh (Virgo Suns, Gemini Moons and Cancer ascendants). In the former pair we are hard pushed to find similarities, although we can draw some interesting parallels between the lives of Bligh and Ludwig. Of course, we would also expect significant differences, because while Sun, Moon and ascendant form the main planks of most astrologers' interpretations, there are also important things in the chart which add significantly to the mix – particularly planets on angles, or conjunct the Sun or Moon. And we also have to bear in mind that true uniqueness is created when the warp of planetary energies is filtered through the weft of environment and circumstances.

The three charts below are of women I was friendly with at university. We will call them Sal, Jo and Erika, although these are not their real names. The data for two is from birth certificate, the third from the individual.



Jo

22 March 1955, 10.15 GMT, Aberfeldy 56n37/3w54

They share the same Sun and ascending signs – Aries and Cancer – so it is an interesting exercise to see what similarities and differences they have.

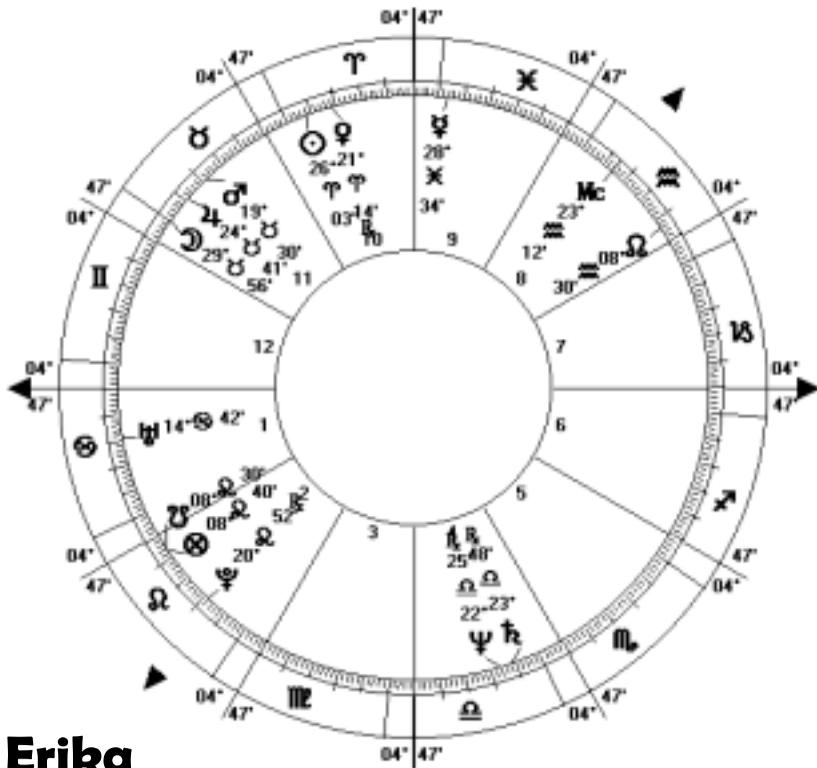
I first grouped the charts together because the three women followed the same profession – they all left university to become teachers of English. This is noteworthy, but at the same time this Sun/ascendant combination is not one that the conventional wisdom links to teaching. Rather, it would be Sagittarius/Gemini or Aquarius/Leo. Leo has a connection with children, specifically with the nurturing of potential and talent, while Aquarius symbolises, at one level, the urge to raise the awareness and

consciousness of others. I have a collection of charts of headmasters and they support the conventional wisdom to some extent, although often it seems to be Venus and its signs that are accented,

In these three charts there is no great emphasis on these 'teaching' factors, although we do note some Taurus and Libra and in two cases Uranus (part-ruler of Aquarius) is conjunct the ascendant. A lot of people born with Cancer rising between 1949 and 1956 are going to share this latter set up. Whether or not Uranus here relates to their chosen career, the planet did not seem to reflect obviously in the women's characters in the way suggested by many text books. They were not eccentric, rebellious, students of the occult, prone to sudden change or electrifying insights, or

Born: 31 March 1953, 10.00 GMT, Oldham 53n33/2w7





Erika

Born: 16 April 1953, 08.20 GMT, Bathgate 55n55/3w39

extremely individualistic. Erika, however, was keen on politics and involved in groups working to better society, which is suggestive of Uranus.

Jo and Sal manifested characteristic Aries traits, but these were not particularly apparent in Erika. Sal had red hair, a rather austere manner and a formidable temper, with the sort of voice that could freeze an ill-behaved class of children in an instant. She was forward and direct in her dealings with people, but her judgement was poor and she spent a good part of her adult life enduring the consequences of rash actions, usually involving men. Aries has a zest for life, although it is generally easier to maintain this at the age of 20 than at 40 when the world has proved

refractory and one's head aches from butting against it. Sal seemed to have lost much of her zest by the time I met her, when she was aged about 30.

In Erika the self-protective Cancerian carapace and hardness of Aries were evident in that she sometimes presented an aloof and rather sneering, cynical face to the world, but this veneer was readily breached to reveal the softest, kindest, most gentle nature of the three (she later specialised in teaching backward or disturbed children). Most astrologers might have predicted this, given the strong Venus nature of her chart, the Sun-Venus conjunction and the Taurus Moon.

If you had met Jo in a social situation you might have assumed she was a Gemini. She was chatty and inquisitive, interested in other people's lives, and this reflects the close Mercury/Moon conjunction. But Aries characteristics were also very apparent. She was refreshingly candid, lively and enlivening. She was energetic, throwing herself into anything she undertook. There was something of the tomboy about her, she was a good actress, and had a sharp sense of humour. Her directness sometimes manifested as bluntness and rudeness, and there were occasions when she was simply provocative and confrontational rather than enlivening. However, for the most part she was well adjusted socially, and there was none of the domineering, intense side of Mars.

Erika and Sal suffered difficult and unhappy childhoods. The former's father abandoned the family when she was very young and she and her siblings were looked after by a mother whose mental condition was deteriorating. Sal suffered the trauma of discovering her mother's dead boy (she had committed suicide). But Jo seemed to enjoy a happy, stable childhood in rural Scotland. It is said whenever Cancer is strong in a chart (Taurus also) then the nature of childhood experience is particularly important, and it seems to be the case here. Jo's path through life seems to have run relatively smoothly. She has three children, a comfortable home and has been with her husband for thirty-odd years. The Pisces Moon seems to emerge in the fact that she was willing to sacrifice her own wishes to further her husband's, working to support him, for example,

while he developed his creative talents. Erika found domestic happiness later in life, from the age of about 40, while Sal seems to have spent much of her adult life yearning for what came so naturally to Jo, happy marriage, nice house and a family. Sal married young, had an affair within a year, became pregnant, was abandoned by both husband and lover, and struggled for seventeen years or so to bring up a child on her own. Despite this, she desperately wanted more children and spent the last of her fertile years chasing a man who plainly wasn't going to provide her with what she wanted. This theme of frustration and self denial can perhaps be seen in the Moon/Neptune/Saturn conjunction. (We note Erika's natal Sun/Venus is opposed by the Neptune and Saturn conjunction, while in Jo's case the conjunction has separated and the planets do not make aspects to major points in the chart.)

We should make the point that the observations presented here are snapshots, impressions from a particular time and place where my path in life and the subjects' crossed. It is not a complete picture of those individuals from cradle to grave, which we generally only get from biography. From a learning point of view I always found consultations rather frustrating. One can get valuable feedback in a one-hour session, but I learned a lot more about astrology from a more leisurely observational viewpoint over a longer period of time, and from good biography (which has an additional advantage of providing a range of viewpoints of an individual).
