



### **Western Astrology and the extra-marital affair. Neptune in the chart of cheats.**

When the astrologer casts an eye over several hundred charts with the sole aim of seeing how many contain a specific item of scholarly importance it is often the case that something less polite jostles for attention along the way. There is some hidden mechanism, deep in the human brain, that automatically makes this distracting phenomenon more powerful when the batch contains a sprinkling of charts belonging to natives the practitioner knows has had an affair (or four). Therefore I was unable to avoid noticing (in passing) that most of the twenty seven such charts in my possession seemed to have a trident readily available for use. This required I go back and count them all properly, to make sure I had not exaggerated the frequency or significance of Neptune's weapon because it is something we might all have expected. There follows a lot of sums and suchlike to prove I did not imagine it. I do understand that this is seriously disappointing to those of you who expected the gossip instantly but we must dig the foundations before we get to the colour schemes.

Just because we might have guessed Neptune prominent is evidence of a two timing rat-bag does not exempt us from the systematic check. We might be deluded. If not we have a bit of validation for astrology and, if things follow their general course, there will be a few other noteworthy items turned up, as if by magic, during the exercise.

My databank is composed principally of people who are, or were, married but the underlying principles discussed here are not exclusive to legal partnerships. Whatever the living situation, secretly breaking an agreement to monogamy, whether it is explicitly expressed or would be understood by all reasonable people, is cheating. I have a couple of cases I consider a betrayal (almost) equivalent to an affair, where sex was not, or may not have been, involved. By my reckoning a secret relationship, conducted outside an existing partnership and covered by lies or calculated omission of truth because it is as emotionally significant or more significant than the primary partnership, is cheating. Particularly when everybody but the partner knows what is going on. These two cases are included in my list.

Twenty seven cases is not a lot to prove a theory. However it is not a bad number of folk willing to step into the daylight with sensitive information and by looking at the charts in close detail, along with others chosen for comparison, more evidence surfaced than might be expected.

Additional information was obtained by subjecting the charts of those individuals we might think of as "victims" of the cheater to equivalent scrutiny. Victimhood, delusion and self-delusion also belong to Neptune. Therefore it may be the case that the charts of the passive

spouse are actually similar to those of the active participant in the affair. We know that astrological symbols are frequently projected, so that Neptune conjunct Moon might equally mean I cheat, my wife cheats or my mother cheated. It might also mean my family ran a chemists by the sea. Is it possible to do better than that? Can we discover if there is a typical "victim", a type who is gullible in general or inclined to blindness in love? In addition is it possible to distinguish the Neptune of the philanderer from the symbolism in the chart of the alcoholic, addict, musician or Navy Captain?

The aspects between Neptune and the lights, planets and angles were checked in both sets of charts. Not all the charts have birth times accurate enough to use the angles and Moon, the partial results for these were still interesting and the intention is to offer them in due course.

In the case of the remaining bodies the charts of the active partner were found to contain;

More aspects between the Sun and Neptune than between Neptune and any other body or point.

More Sun, Neptune aspects than the charts of the passive partner.

Many more aspects than chance - but we have to acknowledge that a larger sample is needed to prove this was not a fluke.

16 of the 27 cheaters charts contained a Sun, Neptune aspect as measured. This includes Ptolemaic aspects of less than 5°, whether applying or separating. Plus the semi-sextile, semi-square, sesquiquadrate and inconjunct of less than 2°30' applying or separating.

16 from 27 amounts to 59%.

6 were less than 1 degree from exact. (Another had an orb of 1°04')

### **Aspects compared with chance.**

Planet A at zero Aries can only form a conjunction with planet B when it is at zero Aries. Planet A at zero Aries can only oppose planet B at zero Libra. All other aspects can occur twice. (Planet A squares B at zero Cancer or zero Capricorn). Therefore conjunctions and oppositions are half as likely to occur as the other aspects. However because aspects are given different orbs this changes how many we count.

The chance of any chart containing a Sun, Neptune conjunction or opposition with a 5° degree orb applying and separating is about 1 in 36. The cheaters group had 3 such conjunctions in 27 charts. Another way to see this is to realise that a random group would theoretically have to contain 108 charts for 3 conjunctions to occur.

3 conjunctions is technically four times chance. (400%)

There were 2 oppositions. This is equivalent to 266% of chance.

There were 4 squares (given double the chance of them occurring) this is also 266% chance. (There was a square of 5°58' applying, which was discounted but would usually be considered valid in natal work).

There was 1 sextile and 1 trine, which could be considered chance.

There were 4 semi-squares. This is 533% chance.

Note; the semi-square can occur twice as often as the conjunction but because the orb for minor planets is halved the number we count is halved. This makes chance the same as for

the conjunction. A random group of 36 charts should theoretically include 1 Sun, Neptune semi-square. We should not be shocked to find none at all in 27 charts.

There was 1 sesquiquadrate, which is half as likely as the 1 sextile and 1 trine because the allowed orb is half. Technically it is above chance, practically we can call it chance.

There is a valid argument that these results might be very skewed by the small sample. However they may be a little safer than statisticians would believe. The results for the semi-square were the most significant. 4 of them is technically twice as significant as 4 squares because of the different orbs we allow. Yet is it not interesting that "luck" has provided us with 4 semi-squares and 4 squares and only 1 sextile and 1 trine? Do we not expect more "difficult" aspects to result in nasty things?

One of the semi-squares was the closest of all the aspects at 0°28, the widest semi-square was 2°12 applying, when close this aspect may be significant.

### **Comparison with Sun, Neptune in the charts of the "victims"**

There was one extra case available in this group. Both halves of every pair were not included. Unsurprisingly few cheaters offer their own birth data and the damaged half has usually spent many years forgetting as much as they can about the ex. "It was July 1958 or 59, but it could have been June." is a little less precise than we need.

It has been said that Neptune is linked with the victim. None of the 28 individuals whom we might call "victims" because their partner had an affair had Sun, semi-square Neptune or Sun square Neptune. The difference between the two groups is additional evidence that the aspects may be more than random in the cheaters. (More comments on the passive half of the pair will follow).

The next most common aspect in the cheaters was Sun conjunct Neptune. There were none of those in the 28 victims either. (There was one case in the victims that fell outside the orb chosen for this test but which most people would count as an aspect, it was 5°34 applying).

Using the same orbs as for the cheaters charts the total number of Sun, Neptune aspects in the victims charts was six. (This includes one trine of 5°01 separating). This amounts to 21% compared with 59%.

There were a handful of wider aspects discounted, which would normally be noted in a reading but the same is also true of the other group. Like for like there are almost three times as many Sun, Neptune aspects in the cheaters as the cheated. They also tended to be different aspects. The conjunction, square and semi-square have been noted. The cheated had two inconjunctions within 2°30' and one discounted at 2°37. There were none in the cheaters.

The sextile, trine and opposition were equal in both groups. This is included for completeness but tells us very little.

Testing and comparing the two groups goes a little way towards proving the aspects found in the cheaters charts appears to be something other than random luck. However with a sample this small more proof is needed. A third group was tested as a crude form of control. I simply took the first 27 natal charts from the files of those who had been happily married for twenty years or more and subjected them to the same test. The assumption being that they were unlikely ever to have had an affair because few couples continue living together in bliss after one. The results were;

1 conjunction (cheaters 3, victims 0)

2 semi-sextiles (cheaters 0, victims 0)

1 sextile (cheaters 1, victims 1)

3 squares (cheaters 4, victims 0)

2 trines (cheaters 1, victims 2)

0 inconjunctions (cheaters 0, victims 2)

2 oppositions (cheaters 2, victims 1)

0 semi-squares (cheaters 4, victims 0)

0 sesquiquadrates (cheaters 1, victims 0)

The total in the “random” neutral group is 11,

which equals 40.7% (cheaters 59%, victims 21%)

The group size is too small to tell us much, other than the overall total of Neptune, Sun aspects is highest in the group who cheated. The semi-square seems to be more strongly confirmed as a cheaters aspect. The inconjunct may possibly be more common in the victim. (There was one more not included because it was 2°37'. Plus further evidence elsewhere. More later.)

During this test I realised that the “random” group was not. The first people in my files tended to be those I knew best. They included more dowzers, healers, psychics and (sadly), in-laws better educated in alcohol poisoning than the first two dozen folk you might just happen to meet at the post office (or on a coach trip to the Oktoberfest). In short there were many reasons why these people might have Neptune busy about their person, which had nothing to do with sneaking around. In addition they tended to be older because I had approached the longest married first. This has a bearing on the Neptune sign and outer planet aspects, which might change the outcome.

The next test was therefore made by deliberately collecting the charts of happily married people whose life suggested they might well have Neptune strong, in order to see how their Sun, Neptune aspects compared with the cheaters. The divorced, and those continuing to cohabit in misery were excluded, on the grounds that some might well have been involved in an affair and not announced it. A few single people were included because they could never have had an extra-marital affair (some had not had a serious relationship into adulthood) and therefore they could not blur the results with the cheaters. Orphaned, psychiatric nurses, who did exorcisms and went to sea with a violin were in. I chose the person for their life *before* checking the aspects and nobody was subsequently thrown out for not fitting a theory. The list included 61 individuals. It is of course possible that there was a well disguised cheat in those who said they were happily married. We can only do our best.

This group, who should have been engulfed by purple haze, contained a total of 26 individuals with a Sun, Neptune aspect. This equals 42.6%, which is considerably less than the 59% in the cheaters. It is also more than the 21% of the “victims”. The conclusion so far would seem to be that the extra-marital affair has more Sun, Neptune about it than many other things we associate with the combination, including playing the gullible, deluded or self-deluded victim.

**The “Neptunian” individuals had the following Sun, Neptune aspects;**

2 Conjunctions. One, some brain damage at birth. One, a mentally ill, violent father. Both had lifelong difficulties.

1 Semi-sextile. Wife died young and unexpectedly in hospital, two small children.

1 Semi-square. Widowed young, unexpectedly.

3 Sextiles, One, anaesthetist. One, widowed young. One, nursed mother with dementia, later had long term depression and institutionalised with dementia herself.

5 Squares. One, has Christian minister father, makes his living with photography. One, cares for a disabled child, sails his own sea yacht, does Tai chi. One, nurse, widowed young. One had a child die, strong religious faith. (Their spouse has Sun square Neptune  $5^{\circ}34'$ , applying, not included in counted squares.) One, had a young, adult son die, leaving his widow and two small children.

6 Trines. One, wife of last in list above, who lost adult son. One, dowser, married to dowser, care worker. One, sick father, institutionalised, some caring responsibilities, photography, developing psychic. One, blind two weeks after marriage, no cause discovered, happy marriage, works with blind and special needs, happy at work, son works at same college. One, two miscarriages, widowed with young child, ex librarian, maintains strong faith, now employed by church, brother a Christian minister. One, alcoholic grandmother who died young, alcohol problems both families, some crime, pubs, fish, strong religion split the family, later dowser, healer, music.

2 Sesquiquadrates, One, born on wild, isolated island, few inhabitants, dedicated Catholic. One, unable to have children, cares for mentally ill relative.

4 Inconjunctions, One, lost mother and brother young, occult interests. One, alcoholics in family, gifted psychic and healer. One had still born child and campaigned successfully for changes to medical textbooks and practice. She and partner work in complimentary medicine. One, atheist, strongly anti-orthodox religion but involved in animal care, nature conservation (and real ale.) Son a musician.

2 Oppositions. One, career in Navy. One, lost baby, carer of another child.

Many of the others in the group had less painful lives (to the best of my knowledge). Several had Sun, Neptune aspects wider than the orbs allowed in the test. Five had the sextile around  $7^{\circ}$  or  $8^{\circ}$ . One, a happy GP, healer, dowser. One a senior gynaecologist, wife a nursing sister. One happy working with husband in care work, father in the Merchant Navy. One dowser, happily married to dowser, food sensitivities, suspect damage from parent's break up. One strong Catholic, happy, music, art, education and child rearing more important than money.

One with a separating square of around  $6^{\circ}$  was widowed early but also a gifted healer and psychic with lifelong friends who were similar. A  $7^{\circ}$  square and a  $7^{\circ}$  conjunction belonged to two women who were widowed young because they had married men much older, one assumes they were more prepared for the event. A  $9^{\circ}$  opposition was found in a man with mental illness, who was widowed twice. The wider aspect may reflect the fact that the illness appeared to cause him far less distress than those around him.

There were also cases with similar life histories to those listed who had no Sun, Neptune aspect. In passing I noticed Neptune strong elsewhere, an example being the chart of the son of the last man listed with the  $9^{\circ}$  opposition. The son had his mother and step mother die and

lived with a mentally ill father. The son battled tenaciously with depression and is succored by research. He has Neptune less than half a degree from Saturn, both trine the Moon. Saturn is the chart ruler. This suggests his mother's death and the loss of a good substitute mother had more impact on him than severe damage by the father.

A further couple have so far been excluded because they fit into both the strong Neptunian themes and the known affair category. I was informed by one half that one of them had strayed years before but I was not told which one. They are the only example I have of a team that actually repaired the rift and are now genuinely happy together. One half has the Neptune, Sun conjunction and the other the inconjunction. The conjunction was found more often in the cheaters group than other groups or chance. This is also the "further evidence" mentioned earlier that the inconjunction may possibly be a victims aspect.

If we allow ourselves to believe the partner with the conjunction is the cheater and add it to the list, (which is working backwards by assuming guilt based on the previous astrology, rather than discovering the astrology by certain knowledge of guilt), then that would make 4 out of 28 cheaters with a close Sun, Neptune conjunction. Theoretically chance takes 144 charts to produce 4 such conjunctions. We know it could be a fluke. We also know Neptune. If it looks like a fish and smells like a fish, and brings dark glasses and factor 28, we might be justified in dumping probability theory faster than a mathematician.

What seems so far to have emerged is that Sun, Neptune aspects seem to be more problematic than helpful and are worse the closer the aspect. The trine seems to indicate natives who suffer hardship but who are able to rebuild their lives after or have some more positive Neptunian tendencies in addition to trouble or losses.

Only 1 of the 61 individuals with the Neptune lifestyle had Neptune semi-square Sun. None of the 27 victims or the other small more "random" group of 27 had it. In total that equals 1 in 115 charts, in which we might expect to find Neptune, Sun aspects of some kind, against 4 in 27 charts of cheaters.

The Belgian astrologer Luc De Jaeger has tested a group of charts of particularly long marriages against a group of marriages that ended in divorce. Using orbs of 1, 2 or 3 degrees he found the most common aspect in the divorced was Venus semi-square Mars. (Find this at [www.cosmitec-astrological-compatibility-advice.com](http://www.cosmitec-astrological-compatibility-advice.com) in the back issues of the newsletter. There is also some research on women cheaters).

This also supports the suspicion that a close semi-square may have a connection with divorce. If so it is a reasonable assumption that the cause or style of the breakdown is likely to be shown by the nature of the planets involved. This aspect is usually described as a "minor frustration". An affair may not rank with the death of a spouse or a child but it is usually enough to finish a relationship. Some say the betrayal feels worse than if the partner had died because death is not usually a choice, betrayal is. Those who stay together afterwards tend to live in grudging resignation only because houses are expensive. There may be something particular about the nature of this aspect that damages relationships or it may act in a very similar way and as powerfully as the square *when the orb is close enough*.

The semi-square is described in more detail than usual by Bernadette Brady.<sup>1</sup> Her observations lead her to conclude that it is an exercise in patience. Fight whatever is in your way and it gets worse, wait and it will eventually go away. Brady does a lot of work before reaching a verdict, so this is likely to be excellent advice when dealing with a transit. Just how long do we wait when we are blessed with the thing at birth? And what do we do in the meantime when the Sun and Moon or Saturn and Ascendant are involved? "Your stationary Pluto just needs to progress three degrees" is not a sentence guaranteed to cheer. Perhaps

the semi-square needs closer investigation, if we are to help people sidestep an entire lifetime of frustration and failure.

Rob Hand has succinctly described the semi-square,<sup>2</sup> which most people agree is part of the two series. He takes a major attribute of the number two, that of polarity and adds it to a fundamental quality of four, that of resistance. Voila the semi-square. This sounds so simple we should all have noticed it but most of us seem only to have got the resistance half. Hand's version seems to add just the insight we need to understand why this aspect might turn up regularly alongside relationship difficulties. Male and female have to be close to the silver medal in the polarity awards. Throw in resistance, which is called being stubborn in real life, and we have eternal war, eternal stalemate or two things that need to walk in separate directions. If the semi-square involves both polarity and resistance, while the square is only the latter, the "minor" aspect may actually be more problematic in all situations where polarity or duality are involved.

The frequency of the Venus, Mars semi-square in the charts of marriages that ended in divorce, which was discovered by De Jaeger, highlights a male, female polarity. It implies there may be a constant struggle for the individuals to balance unfettered, personal action against the desire for a partner, or that the two might have priorities and interests that are genuinely difficult to reconcile. Given that the two planets are more suited to lovers than friends or family it may be that there is a sense of lost fun. I would speculate that similar would be the case in a natal chart.

Perhaps we should advise those with semi-squares, (particularly when they appear connected to relationship issues), that they are firm and they will somehow keep meeting partners who are pig-headed. Perhaps we should advise them to find out which of the other person's stupid, rigid rules they can live with before tying the knot. A small number may be open to the idea they will have to learn flexibility or coping strategies. Some may actually be attracted to stubborn others because they are like Dad or they have Moon in Taurus and it feels like home (for two years) or they live with the deadly belief that they will change him in time.

### **Why was Sun, Neptune frequent in the cheaters?**

To repeat, the Neptune, Sun aspect was the most frequent Neptune aspect in the cheaters. It was higher than chance and higher than in the victims or the two other test groups. This leads me to the conclusion that the affair is generally an act of will. A continuing liaison outside an existing relationship takes skilful organising. It often involves friends or family who provide alibis or turn a blind eye. One act of indiscretion at the office party may be blamed on boredom and Tequila. A week-end of passion needs advance booking, a suitable cover story, a Brazilian wax and better knickers. There is time to back out, presumably there is the decision not to.

The victims appear to have more Neptune, Moon aspects *but it is a very small group and yet to be properly checked*. This might imply the victim tends to be betrayed by their emotions not their intellect. Early experience of relationships may be a factor.

That Sun, Neptune appeared considerably more often than either Mars, Neptune or Venus, Neptune suggests that an affair is not motivated by the things we think provoke it. Most affairs then appear not to be a search for sensual pleasure. The examples in my possession suggest that many of these people are simply tricky and self-serving in general. One or two appear to live with general chaos and minimal contact with responsibility. Sun, Neptune implies difficulty accepting life just has a lot of Monday mornings and washing up.

There is another possibility. Neptune, Sun suggests some affairs occur because the person has something we might call an ill-defined or undeveloped core. If the power centre is not

functioning the individual may have trouble in life because of lack of self-confidence, direction or will. This version is not wilful selfishness but *weak* will. This means in the usually accepted sense but also in the astrologically understood sense. The facet of the Sun that we link with Leonine romance may combine with Neptune to build the illusion that the new love, or the new lover, will provide or renew the missing centre. Checking the rest of the chart for signs of a weak father, insufficient structure, all work, no play, early domination and so on may be of help in discovering what it is that the individual is really seeking to obtain by the affair, which has not been provided by normal channels. Neptune implies indirect action to obtain what the Sun wants or to avoid what it does not. The rest of the chart may indicate what that thing is, which is the first step towards finding how to get it in a less destructive manner.

#### References

1. Bernadette Brady. *The Eagle and the Lark*. Weiser. p 25.
2. Robert Hand. *Horoscope Symbols*. Para Research. p 106