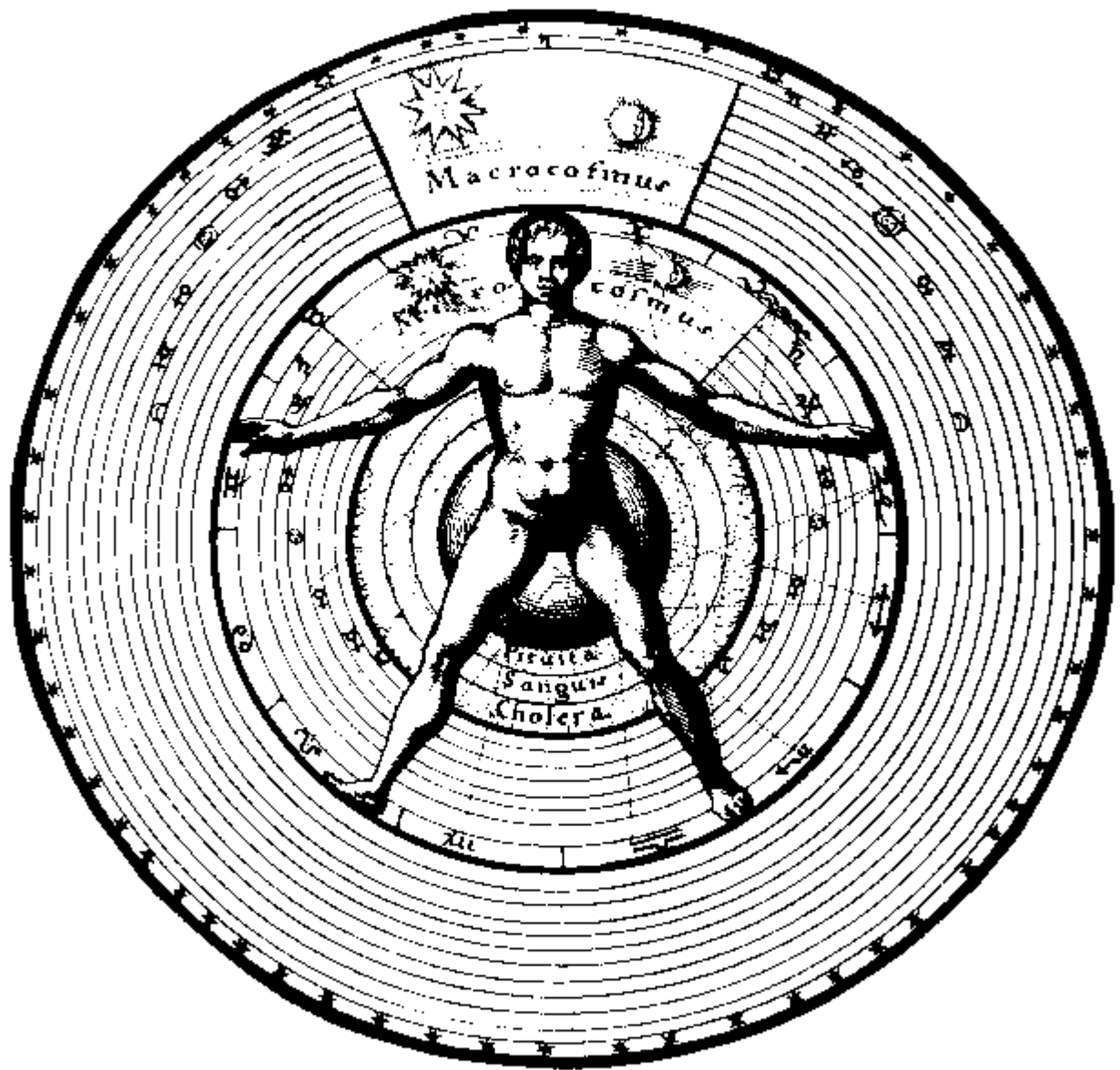


ESSAYS IN MEDICAL ASTROLOGY



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PLUTO'S ROLE IN MEDICAL ASTROLOGY

The planet *Pluto* presents the student of astrology with a difficult problem. Having been discovered as late as 1930, there is lacking the accumulated knowledge of the centuries to support subjective observation of Pluto's real symbolism, meaning and implications in delineating the natal horoscope. Its true rulership is still being questioned in some sources - is it truly Scorpio, or does Pluto rule Aries, or both? Does Mars co-rule Scorpio? Is Pluto really in detriment in Taurus? And in what sign is Pluto exalted, or in its fall? These questions, to this day, remain far from settled!

Think then how much more difficult it is for the student of *medical astrology* to assess Pluto's meaning then in the light of all of this remaining confusion! In his monumental work, originally published in 1933, Dr. H. L. Cornell, M.D., completely ignored Pluto. It was not until 1972, in its third edition, that Laurel Lowe'll added a brief, seven-page Introduction to the Third Edition to recognize Pluto's implications for the medical astrologer. And this book is certainly the *cornerstone* reference text in any respectable medical astrology research library. What then is the student of medical astrology to think of Pluto? How is he to assess its implications in reading the natal chart?

Perhaps it is not as difficult as it first seems, for now having lived with Pluto for fifty years, Pluto is slowly revealing its secrets to us, *grudgingly* it's true (in typical Scorpio fashion), but this process is ongoing. Paradoxically, almost all of the major medical discoveries made within the last fifty years is Pluto related! And, in this article, we'll be looking at some of them in detail with the view to extrapolating its meaning from the particular to the general. Let's first direct our attention to some principles that seem rather firmly attached to Pluto.

PLUTO'S PLANETARY POLARITY

A very strong case has consistently been made throughout the astrological literature of the past fifty years for Neptune as being Pluto's planetary opposite - and I believe that this is right! We are presented in medical astrology with good pragmatic evidence for this polarity. Pluto is said to be the ruler of *bacteria, viruses, protozoa and parasites* - all invaders of the body that can cause serious disease. Although Neptune itself is a *Johnny-come-lately* to the astrological scene, having been discovered in 1846, it has been pretty clearly established today that Neptune rules the body's *immune system* - it's defense against these Plutonian invaders.

However, lest we jump ~~too~~ easily from the above example to the conclusion that Pluto represents the *bad guy* while Neptune represents the *good guy*, let us never forget that Neptune represents *drugs and all unnatural substances introduced into the body*. Poisons - if you will. And what is the body's first defense against poisonous substances? The enzyme systems, especially those within the liver. And what rules these enzymes? Pluto, of course!

This latter example requires a bit more explanation however, but in doing so we

can learn a valuable lesson about Pluto.

As Garth Allen so graphically explains in his chapter on Pluto in "*TAKING THE KID GLOVES OFF ASTROLOGY*" (American Astrology Magazine - Publishers), Pluto is the ruler of all *replicative processes*. That is, all processes in which copies from an original design or master are produced.

Everytime you make a Xerox copy from an original, you are engaged in a Pluto-ruled activity. American mass-production processes are Pluto ruled, and incidentally had their origin at about the time Pluto was discovered. Many astrological reference books give Mercury as the ruling of printing. This is an error. The information being conveyed through the printed word IS Mercury ruled; however, the process itself is a Pluto-ruled process of reproducing copies from an original master. And printers are ruled by Pluto! For what does a printer do but make copies from an original. So is his printing press, which does the same thing as a xerographic copier.

Our bodies make xerographic-like copies too. Every time a cell reproduces itself, it makes a copy of itself. Thus, Pluto rules *cell division*. The cell goes through a *transforming process*, also Pluto ruled, in which two daughter cells are produced from the original cell, each an exact copy of the original! The biochemistry involved, a most recent discovery, is related to a genetic substance called DNA for short. DNA is the chemical from which the genetic material, the genes and chromosomes in the cell's nucleus, is composed. DNA is thus also ruled by Pluto. And, Pluto thus rules the genetic process by which life constantly renews itself.

The DNA acts as a kind of template in the cell by which certain protein-like chemicals combine to form a new substance, called RNA. Thus, RNA is also Pluto-ruled. And the RNA, in turn, acts as a template upon which certain other chemical substances combine - proteins, vitamins, and minerals - to form a very important group of substances, called *enzymes*. Thus, enzymes are also Pluto-ruled.

Enzymes act like the workers on an assembly line. They each do their part in maintaining the chemical production line within each cell. They do not become a part of the end product themselves, but they each add a specialized role and contribute to the end product. And, like all production workers, they become tired after awhile and have to be replaced. When they wear out they become a liability to the body, rather than an asset. And, as we shall shortly see, through a Neptunian process they are removed from the body before they can become harmful.

Certain of these enzymes are produced exclusively by the liver. Their sole *raison d'etre* (reason for being) is to convert toxic substances (Neptune-ruled) from getting into the general blood circulation and *poisoning* the body's vital enzyme systems. Certain substances that we normally ingest in our environment; e.g., alcohol, cranberries, asparagus, beans, broccoli, etc., though containing beneficial nutrients to the body also contain substances that are toxic to the body. It is the job of these liver enzymes to render the toxic substances harmless so that they can be easily eliminated through the kidneys in the urine. The point of all of this discussion being that neither Pluto-ruled or Neptune-ruled substances, or processes are either *good* nor *bad per se*. They just are, and astrology helps us to understand them better.

PLUTO - THE "ALPHA AND THE OMEGA"

From the very earliest days of astrology, Scorpio has been associated with death. The deadly sting of the scorpion. And thus, it was natural that when Pluto came along and got assigned as the ruler of Scorpio, it too became associated with death. "Birds of a feather, flock together." "A man is known by the company he keeps!" Pluto and Scorpio became fellow-travelers. And, because Scorpio had gained such an evil reputation through the centuries, representing everything underhanded and evil, Pluto was assigned the rulership of hell - a reputation reinforced by ancient mythology.

But, as modern-day astrologers learned more about Pluto, and as civilization advanced, no longer awed and terrorized by the religious threat of eternal damnation and hell in order to preserve the public order, a new concept of Scorpio and Pluto evolved. Mankind no longer fears death in the manner it once did. As the Age of Aquarius begins to envelope us, death is no longer seen as the end of everything, but rather as a transformation from one state of being to another. "Energy can be neither created nor destroyed," said the scientists. And Albert Einstein showed us, as we entered the Atomic Age, that matter and energy could be converted or interchanged from one state to another, but still not destroyed.

And, from this Truth, a new philosophy emerged - that death is but a transformation from one stage to another, and that through wrong living we can easily create hell for ourselves right here on earth! Astrologers began to observe that through Pluto's contacts with natal planetary positions, transformational processes seemed to take place in our lives, and these transformations did not necessarily mean physical death in the literal sense of the word.

Does a cell die when it divides into two daughter cells, or has it simply gone through a transformational process? It took no great leap of the imagination, once this process was understood, to reason that other Plutonian processes as well really meant "transformation" rather than the end of it all. And thus it was reasoned that, if the spirit entered the body either at the time of conception or the time of birth, this too was a transformational process. And thus our concept of Pluto has grown to the point where Pluto not only represents death, but also the exact point of conception, and of birth - all transformational processes. The Alpha and the Omega - the beginning and the end of our life process as we know it.

Plutonian processes are progressive. They represent the forward movement of our civilization. And as Pluto moves from one sign to the next it signals the border or dividing line between generations, or cohorts, as the statisticians and demographers like to refer to generational groups. This by contrast to Neptunian processes which are retrogressive - the psychological desire to return to the womb, or as Allen refers to it, the desire to return to the Garden of Eden where all of our wants and needs are automatically attended to.

Both of these processes - the Neptunian and the Plutonian - are essential to the maintenance of the life processes. Neptune dissolves boundaries; Pluto establishes new ones. Nutrients must be dissolved into solution before they can be absorbed by the cell in order to use them in the continuance of the life processes. Saturn is the cell wall, giving structure to the cell. Neptune ignores this boundary, penetrates it, in order for the substances it contains to be made manifest in the continuance of the life process - growth (Jupiter) - with the aim of procreation and maintenance of the ongoing process of life (Pluto). Here in essence,

the simplicity and the complexity of the ongoing life processes, revealed in the physical realm for any astrologer to observe - and understand.

No wonder Pluto is referred to as *the generational planet!* No wonder that when we engage in genealogical research we are engaged in a Plutonian process. A process dealing with the origins of life. What better sign than Cancer could any astrologer propose than Cancer for the exaltation of Pluto - or Capricorn for Pluto's fall position. For Capricorn is rigid, in that it promotes and maintains structural integrity, seeking perfection in the here and now, whereas Pluto is the evolutionary process, seeking to improve and maintain racial survival. Pluto is *the survival of the fittest* in the racial context with its bitter-sweet nature - the natural instinct to kill when attacked (its lower nature) or to rise its bestial context and soar with the eagles, capturing for a fleeting moment the infinity of time and space - sheer *ecstasy!*

Is Virgo the sign of perfection, seeking out the imperfect in order to perfect it as Virgo views perfection? Is Capricorn the sign of perfection, seeking out the perfect to start with and settling for nothing less? Or is Scorpio the true sign of perfection, sensing what true perfection is but never actually realizing or achieving it? But driving onward and upward to achieve it?

Why is Scorpio-Pluto the *natural sign of the healer, or doctor?* Why is the 8th house considered the sign of the surgeon - the most revered of the medical specialties? Why do we say that Uranus in the 8th house (natural house of Scorpio-Pluto, and exalted in Scorpio) signifies *healing hands?* Is healing not the true search for restoring perfection in the physical context?

PLUTO - AND IMPERFECTION

Alas, after our brief exploration of the infinite, we must again return to this earthly plane and also recognize that Pluto also represents perfection gone awry! For the Pluto processes are also less than perfect. They lack the ability to consistently maintain perfection in the physical sense, in the physical world.

To the medical astrologer, Pluto also represents malformation and malfunction in the genetic sense. What happens when one is born with imperfect or defective genes? Physical malformations occur - like club feet, webbed fingers, birthmarks, moles, malformed organs or limbs, or any of a host of other birth defects. And what happens when natural processes start to function unnaturally during the course of the life due to imperfect reproduction from the master model? We recognize the ultimate and most destructive form of Pluto gone awry as - *cancer!* Pluto also connotes *abnormal growths*, ranging from moles, birthmarks, and warts, to cancer. The cause is defective genetic material or the encroachment of other Pluto-ruled causes like viruses as the cause of warts and, potentially, certain forms of cancer. *Wherein lies the cure for certain of these defects?* In Neptune. The body's immune system, when functioning normally, destroys cancer sites as they manifest. Drugs (Neptune) are used to treat these problems. X-rays and photography (Neptune again). Enzymes and other Pluto-ruled agents to offset Pluto gone awry.

Pluto's two greatest planetary enemies are Neptune and Saturn. And, when in the horoscope we start to look for reasons why Pluto's natural processes suddenly begin to function unnaturally it is usually Pluto aspects to Neptune and Saturn that

are found to be the culprits. Saturn symbolizes the aging process, the wearing out of body tissues, structures and enzymes. Saturn symbolizes the process of crystallization or hardening whereby toxic substances, which must remain in solution to be eliminated through the kidneys, crystallize from solution and block various body tubes and passages. We said that Pluto was progressive and on-going; Saturn serves to block Pluto's progress. Neptune impedes Pluto's progress in a less obvious, more insidious manner. The cells of the body contain literally hundreds of enzyme systems, all of which must function efficiently if the body is to maintain good health and prevent disease. Neptune comes in the cloak of the deceiver, in the form of chemical substances that look normal to the enzymes but which, when brought into contact with them, poison or denature them, and render them useless. This is literally how all drugs work upon the body. Neptune comes as poisoner in the form of heavy metals (like lead, mercury, cadmium, aluminum), in the form of alkaloids (like opium, morphine, belladonna, quinine), and in the form of denaturants (like alcohol, caustic acids and alkalies).

In the treatment of certain diseases, modern-day medicine as currently practiced in the United States sometimes sees fit to purposely poison certain enzyme systems in the body temporarily in order to achieve some desired medical effect. An example of this would be the use of antihistamines to relieve the symptoms of the common cold, or the use of morphine to reduce pain.

In the charts of older persons we find Neptune either semi-sextile or semi-square to Pluto; in the charts of the younger generations we find these planets sextile. So, how then does the Neptune-Pluto combination in the chart signify potential medical problems? Usually through a third planet which is square to either Neptune or Pluto and inconjunct the other, or sometimes when this third planet occupies the Neptune-Pluto midpoint (with the younger generations) to form either a Yod or semi-sextile configuration. I should point out here that semisextiles are NOT half a sextile but instead the compliment of the inconjunct, and as such BOTH aspects in medical astrology can signify problems of a physical nature. Often, in signifying medical problems here, the third planet in this triumverate is Mars.

PLUTO'S HOUSE LOCATION IN MEDICAL ASTROLOGY

Not only must we consider aspects to Pluto in assessing potential medical problems in the chart. We must also consider Pluto's house location, too.

I previously pointed out that one of Pluto's major functions is transformation. It is in the areas of life associated with the house containing Pluto in the chart that transformation must be allowed to continually proceed and evolve. The minute that we consciously try to stop or block this on-going process we get ourselves into trouble medically. It is my view that no matter how well or ill-aspected Pluto is in the chart, to block its progress spells trouble!

Let's take, for example, Pluto in the First House. The First House represents the continuing process of discovering ourselves, who we are not only as a physical being but as a spiritual entity as well. With Pluto in this house there MUST be a continuing evolutionary process taking place. We are not the same person today we were yesterday, and tomorrow we will not be the same person we are today. To block this process brings on the symptoms of disease. For a

by-product of this transformational process is the constant production of toxic wastes, which if allowed to accumulate will eventually poison the entire system.

As a part of this transformational process there must be a continual sorting out of that which is valuable from that which is not, and then the elimination of that which is not. To ignore, or block, this continual process of elimination is to ask for medical problems.

The psychological blocks that we manufacture to impede this Plutonian process are also a function of Pluto's house location. For example, where Pluto is located in the Second or Eighth Houses, money and/or sex may be used to dam up the Plutonian evolutionary flow. Money, for example, is really a means to an end - not an end in itself, and if one becomes preoccupied by its accumulation and attempts to hoard it, then money becomes the toxin that poisons the system. For the more one accumulates the more one has to lose, and its protection becomes a primary motivational factor that colors the entire decision-making process.

Or, take Pluto in the Fourth or Tenth Houses, where the acknowledgement of personal worth - your own, as well as that of others - becomes a matter of primary concern. Here we come into direct contact with the "I'm Okay; You're Okay" process of the transactional analyst. There is a healthy need for balance here. If you want others to acknowledge your own personal worth, you must be willing to acknowledge theirs, too, in an on-going manner. The minute we adopt any of the alternative positions, we get ourselves into trouble - mentally and physically.

PLUTO'S HOUSE RULERSHIP IN MEDICAL ASTROLOGY

Pluto's house rulership cannot be overlooked either, for Scorpio rules some house in the horoscope. Even when Scorpio is an intercepted sign in some horoscopes its effect, though less obvious, remains to be dealt with. With Pluto as ruler of Scorpio, and thus the ruler of this house too, the transformational process must be allowed to proceed in this house too, in precisely the same manner that it must proceed in the house that actually contains Pluto. To block Pluto's expression in the house that it rules carries the same penalty described above.

In my view the way to use Pluto in your chart in its most positive sense, not only to prevent potential medical problems, is to consciously encourage this evolutionary and transformational process to be on-going, blending together Pluto's house location and house rulership as you attempt to better understand what it is that you ought to be encouraging in your life.

Take, for example, Pluto located in the Second House as ruler of the Tenth. Used in its most positive sense there must be an on-going process of separating out that which is of value from that which is not in the area of tangible possessions, an on-going acknowledgement of your own personal worth as well as that of others as growth continues to take place, and by blending together these two indicators, a recognition that both of these processes must take place in complement to each other - for to block one of them also blocks the other as well.

LOOKING AHEAD TO PLUTO'S FUTURE IN MEDICAL ASTROLOGY

We are just now beginning to see vaguely Pluto's future implications for the medical astrologer. In completing our examination of Pluto in the medical horoscope, let's consider in closing what some of these might be.

Cloning has very recently become a topic of medical interest. Based upon what we have said previously, is there now any question in your mind that cloning is a Plutonian process - the production of a facsimile from an original model?

Scientists now speak of *recombinant DNA* wherein the genetic makeup of certain bacteria are altered to cause that bacteria to produce chemical substances that are of value to mankind - like insulin and substances that enhance the body's immune systems. Doctors are starting to tamper with natural evolutionary processes, consciously producing mutations (also Pluto-ruled) for a distinct purpose. The United States Supreme Court has recently ruled that such mutations are patentible. Here, scientists are creating a new model from which to produce facsimile bacteria.

Abortion is also a Pluto-ruled process. And, certainly, this is a Plutonian matter that is occupying the attention and energies of many individuals within our society today. When does life begin? When does abortion become murder? Pluto also rules murder you know! Does life begin at the moment of conception, during the first trimester of fetal development, during the second, the third, or at the moment of birth?

When does life end? What is the legal definition of death? When the mind ceases to function? When the heart stops beating? When breathing ceases? Is it morally right to "pull the plug" on heroic medical measures designed to prolong basic life processes? Do each of us as individuals have the right to take our own life? Are these not Pluto-ruled questions?

Rape too is a Pluto-ruled act, and society today is vitally concerned with its treatment and prevention. The mandatory death sentence for murder also occupies and demands our attention. Prolonging our life span occupies the attention and energy of millions of Americans today who take time to jog daily. Hostages are a Plutonian matter. Sabotage and terrorism are both Plutonian matters. Open your daily newspaper, turn to the first section and ask yourself - how many of the headline stories are concerned principally with Plutonian matters? You'll be amazed at the high proportion that are!

Society, and astrology, are just beginning to deal with Pluto-raised questions. We do not yet have all of the answers because we are just beginning to ask the proper questions. However, the essence of Pluto's real meaning is in itself an evolutionary process containing within it a better life for all, or the total destruction of mankind, depending upon which course mankind chooses to follow. As a student of medical astrology, do not let Pluto discourage you in your attempt to discover its real meaning. Keep an open mind to this transformational process that **MUST** continue, try not to block this process in your own personal development, and attempt to understand this process as you see it working itself out in the charts of other individuals with whom you have close personal contact. We all still have much to learn about Pluto, but it **IS** worth the effort.