

Discover Proper Astrology

Beyond Your
Star Sign course



Francis O'Neill DFAstrology DMSAstrology | Some Inspiration Publications
<https://SomeInspiration.com>

Why “pop” is not the same as “proper” astrology

Course handout [PDF]

Contents:

The difference between the popular and proper versions of astrology 2

Here are the differences... 2

Length of time in use 2

There's a big difference in the data one needs to use each version 3

The number of solar system bodies included 3

The number of zodiac signs that are included 4

Pop astrology is generalised, proper astrology is individualised 4

It is not necessarily all about “prediction” 5

The difference between the popular and proper versions of astrology

Popular (or pop) astrology is the version you'll find in the media. The "stars" or "star signs" in newspapers, magazines and online. Proper astrology (or proper Western astrology to be more precise) is the ancient practice of astrology, used in the West, that astrologers spend a long time studying to be proficient at.

There is a huge difference between the two versions. And (in the words of Peter Sellers doing a Michael Caine impression), *not a lot of people know that* - and this does include a number of critics of astrology too.

Here are the differences...

Length of time in use

Popular astrology is less than a hundred years old

The type of astrology you'll find in newspapers and magazines is not that old. Newspapers began using it back in the 1930s. Initially begun (using proper astrological charts) as a topic of interest for some readers, covering events and people in the public eye. It was later adapted to the format we see today, to make it appeal to the interest of a wider audience, and importantly to help sell newspapers and magazines to that audience. It provided then (and still does) interest and titillation for the reader. A bit of intrigue for people during their coffee-break.



Proper astrology is ancient

It might surprise you that what I'm calling proper astrology is generally accepted to have had its beginnings around the 3rd to 2nd millennium BC - in the Fertile Crescent

area of the Middle East. I'd argue it is even older. The astrology we use in the West, with its tropical zodiac (based on the Earth-Sun seasons, not star constellations), is essentially Greek in design. Popular astrology draws on some of the features of proper astrology in using the tropical zodiac and the position of the Sun.

There's a big difference in the data one needs to use each version

Popular astrology only requires you to know your birthday

To take part in looking at one's star sign you only need to know your birthday. Most of us will know what day our birthday is on, and what sign that falls in. It doesn't require a lot of effort to find out. No wonder it is popular. Anyone can do it (and that may include the person or software writing the predictions too). And, of course, the simplicity of it is also a reason for why it is so attractive to the media.

Proper astrology requires three essential pieces of information – your birthday is only one of them

Date, time and place of birth are essential requirements to build a complete horoscope (birth-chart). It draws on the rotation of the Earth, and longitude and latitude of the place one is born in.

The number of solar system bodies included

Popular astrology only involves the Sun

Pop astrology only involves looking at the general position of the Sun in each of the twelve signs.

Proper astrology incorporates the exact position of the Sun and nine planets (at least)

Modern astrologers look at the position of the Sun and a further nine planets (plus, they will normally include other components too) when drawing up a horoscope.

The number of zodiac signs that are included

Popular astrology places us in one of the twelve zodiac signs

Because it only looks at the position of the Sun, popular astrology inevitably places each of us in only one of the twelve zodiac signs.

Proper astrology places each person in all twelve zodiac signs

Proper astrology places each of us within the whole zodiac, not just a bit of it.

Pop astrology is generalised, proper astrology is individualised

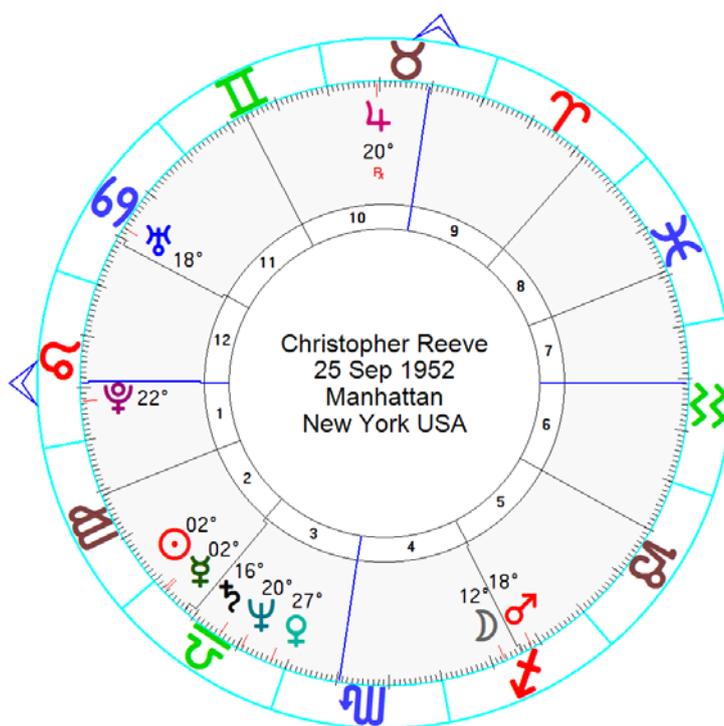
Popular astrology implies that those of us of the same sign, are also the same in our interests, temperament and behaviour

If you think about it, what popular astrology does is split the world into twelve groups of people - and assumes each group is made up of people with the same nature and tendencies.

While, by the law of averages, some people will fit this generalised star sign mould, others won't. It is no wonder that people treat it as little more than entertainment - that is precisely what it is.

Proper astrology provides a horoscope (birth-chart) that is, unique to each individual - no two star signs will be the same

Drawing upon date, time and place, proper astrology uses precise geocentric astronomical data to produce a horoscope (birth-chart). The resulting chart will be unique to each individual - as with Christopher Reeve. It will involve all the zodiac signs, planets, angles, houses and aspects.



It is not necessarily all about “prediction”

Popular astrology is all about prediction

Whether it is today, this week or this year, popular astrology is really only about predicting outcomes for a period of time. If you closely identify with your star or Sun sign this may be helpful (it is usually intended to be encouraging), but in other respects the predictions can be so broad that someone somewhere is bound to experience, or identify with the outcome.

Proper (natal) astrology provides insight and trends

Proper astrology can be used to make predictions, and astrologers do seek to do so in areas such as business or the stock market. However, if you have been led to believe that astrology is only about making predictions it might surprise you to learn that Western natal astrology does not make predictions per se.

Natal astrology provides insights into the potential that a person is working with. It does not treat this potential as fixed and static but dynamic. It is not fixed whereby planet A must equal outcome X in a person's interest or behaviour. Professional astrologers really only talk of “tendencies” in this regard. Each sign, planet and house can symbolise a range of variables, possible expressions. The actual outcomes are led by person's conscious or unconscious choice in the matter.

Trends or forecasts, as opposed to predictions, provide likely outcomes - rather than predictions. It involves our making choices. For example, a transiting Saturn square to Venus in a person's chart will symbolise challenges in that person's love life - indeed their sense of self-worth, tastes and relationships are likely to be tested. It could lead to serious difficulties for the latter. If married it could even lead to divorce. But forewarned is forearmed and the person, being made aware of this trend, can choose to handle their personal relationships differently during the period of time given with the forecast.

They could perhaps, decide not to expect too much of others during the time period, or equally decide not to take things too personally during the period, or decide that spending more time alone in contemplation might be a good thing - during the trend.

Philosophically one has opportunity to learn greater tolerance and patience in relating to others, during the length of time of the trend.

That said, it takes two to tango and relationships that aren't working would likely be highlighted during such a period. And in which case "the writing may be on the wall" with one or the other party making the choice to end it. Then the opportunity would be to end things in a mature fashion.

Ends.

Visit [Some Inspiration](#) for astrology books, and Q&A blog questions on astrology