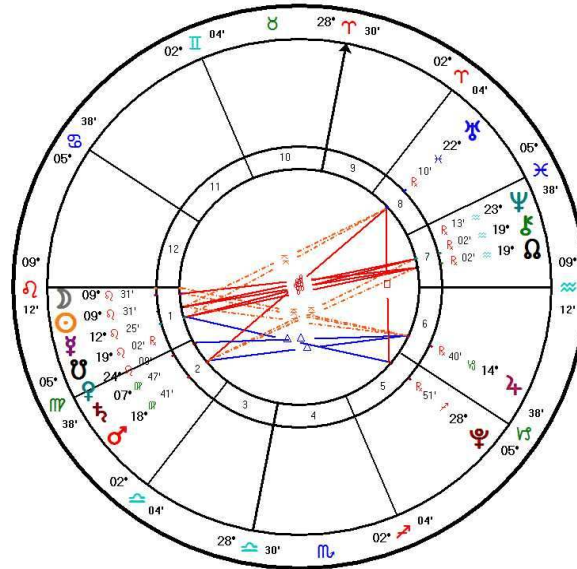


Chart A. Solar Eclipse
Natal Chart [7]
Aug 1 2008
6:12:31 am EDT -4:00
Washington, DC
38°N53'42" 077°W02'12"
Geocentric
Tropical
Placidus
Mean Node



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More Wiggle Room

The August 2008 Forecast

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A few days ago, I attended a lecture given by Steven Koonin, Chief Group Scientist of British Petroleum, sponsored by the Scripps Institute of Oceanography. He was speaking on "Energy Trends and Technologies". Quite an articulate speaker, he had an impressive array of statistics that made the energy future of the planet look both better and worse than it appears now. Although his statistics might be challenged (I haven't fact-checked him), several undeniable factors stood out: First, the problem with availability of energy and the fuels that bring it from existing fossil supplies isn't below the ground — it's above-ground, in the form of delivery and cost issues (below-ground problems are not far off, though). (In other words, the market is being manipulated in many ways.) Second, while there are reserves to last for many years into the future (enough time to switch to alternate sources), the planet can't afford for us to continue with, as he put it, "business as usual". We need to reduce our current usage by at least half worldwide, and at present the rate is going up 2-3% per year (worldwide). Third, it is unlikely that governments and politicians have the intestinal fortitude to do what it takes to create the climate for the necessary changes, so the people must spearhead the effort.

This had the effect of reducing my energy angst. This is not because the situation is not serious, because it is; rather, it is because somebody could put boundaries on the problem. It's not a bottomless, unsolvable, dire, and immediate problem with no solution, as it may seem by listening to the media or watching gas prices go up with no ceiling in sight.

My point is that “knowns” are always easier to deal with than unknowns. Even if I know that something is pretty bad, the facts are probably way better than what I can dream up in my head. This is a theme I can detect in the planets this month. By putting boundaries on our perceptions and experiences, we can come to terms with whatever we face. In fact, this is a major step in the healing process recognized and used by many energy healers.

In astrology, we can associate the fog of an unbounded situation with Neptune, while setting a boundary is always tied to Saturn. We need to use these two planets in tandem to keep our balance in life, and while they are not tied mathematically (by aspect) to each other in the heavens right now, they are tied by reception, a subtler bond. In addition, both are highly activated this month. All we really need to know is that they are tied and foregrounded in August. As a result, we will stretch our mind to accommodate the lessons of each planet, and to tie them together with the threads of our lives.

The theme is *putting boundaries on situations that have seemed insurmountable, or finding a way out*. This is something we all need right now, after the past few months of economic and energy shock.

If you recall, I described July as a month “in between”; August brings us a transition to more substantive experiences — in part by being able to put a boundary on our difficulties. I don’t know anyone who likes life to be vague and undefined. We hate ambiguity because it implies a lack of boundary. August brings a clearing of the fog.

There’s plenty of fog to clear. There are other planetary factors that conspire in this clarifying process, and if it seems that every time something new comes out, it’s bad news, it’s better than what we can conjure in the absence of facts.

So, this is truly one of those times when bad news is good news. Yes, we’re discovering the truth about the economy, about the economic policies that have led to where we are now — but would it be better to remain unaware of how wrong those policies have been, to continue down the wrong path? It’s better to take a tablespoon of bitter medicine now than a cupful later.

Although it may be hard to see it, there *are* some factors operating in our favor. Not everyone is suffering directly, but most people (in the US) are in economic shock. We’re witnessing a shift in the world of business and corporations, and it’s playing out as, “the bigger they come, the harder they fall”. General Motors, Indy Mac, Fannie Mae, Freddy Mac — all mega-business entities whose infallibility has been questioned (sound like Martin Luther challenging the infallibility of the Pope?). The latest is that there’s a major human factor involved, in the form of unregulated naked short-selling. It’s likely that a trader floated a rumor that Fannie and Freddy were weak to drive down the stock price artificially. This stimulated their market, but it created a great worldwide panic. The core issue here and with the entire economic picture seems to be a lack of boundaries (regulation) as well.

All these are part of the transformation on a grand scale represented in the solar system by Pluto. Pluto brings the big changes, and at no time is that more felt than when it is in Capricorn. Now, Pluto is not currently in Capricorn, if you want to get picky about it; but it has been there this year, and it is soon to return (December 31) to remain for 16 years. If you go to a party and leave the room for a short time and then return, you didn’t really leave the party. This is how we should think of Pluto in Capricorn. He hasn’t left the Capricorn party, he’s just taking a break in the next room.

Stepping Stones

Last month was full of quincunxes, overwhelming us with ambiguity, making us hunger for something definite. The one concrete event we could hang our hats on occurred on July 9, and that's when the news about Indy Mac, and the other financial giants came out.

This month continues the string of these awkward contacts, which are neither this nor that, but they involve other planets. The quincunxes involve different planets and signs, so the themes are different. However, this could be lost on us when it's just another vague feeling of discontent. But, as I said a little further up on the page, we are in a clarifying process, and this brings development. We know what to do, so the vagueness of last month is reduced substantially. Most may explain it as preparing for the fall after a long summer. I call it overcoming generalized angst associated with multiple planetary crisis points.

So, what are these crisis points? How can we make sense of what they're telling us? Right now, they may be felt much like the cacophony we hear when we enter a roomful of people. However, as we get acquainted with the individuals at the event, the din fades as we learn to hear the voice of the person we are attuned to.

It's this way with the planets as well. Let's meet each of the main players: First there are the heavies: Jupiter, Chiron, Uranus, and Neptune. Then there are the fast-moving trigger planets, which carry water for the heavies: the Moon, Sun, Mercury, Venus, and Mars.

Last Month: Jupiter Peaking, Chiron-Neptune on the Rise

If you recall last month, Jupiter was the star, giving us the benefit of its full expansiveness in the form of optimism and magnification of everything it touches (both joys and sorrows alike). We felt a build-up of anxiety about the unknowns in our life as Chiron and Neptune were contacted via quincunxes to the fast-movers prior to the peak of their yearly cycles. Meanwhile, Uranus was lurking in the shadows getting ready to become a significant factor.

This Month: Jupiter Releasing, Chiron-Neptune Peaking, Uranus on the Rise

In August, Jupiter is past its prime, while the Chiron-Neptune dance is reaching its crescendo, with Uranus waiting in the wings for its time in the spotlight next month. Jupiter brought us expansion and magnification; Neptune will bring us clarity.

What about Chiron? Chiron is the Wounded Healer. He knows how to heal because of his own experiences with pain and woundedness. Wherever he is in the heavens is where our efforts at healing are focused. Because he is dancing with Neptune, we are looking at the most hidden and vague — some would say spiritual — of wounds. They exist only on the unseen level, which means that for some people they don't exist at all.

Neptune also rules liquid and gaseous substances — oil and natural gas come to mind. So, we could say that we are discovering our woundedness where these fossil fuels are concerned. This is felt on all levels, from the personal to the global; whether it is the limitation of not being able to drive wherever you want or the concern about how we are contributing to global warming, Neptune and Chiron are being felt.

This suggests that, this month, these issues will be key in our consciousness. It also means that, while prices may peak in mid-August, there will also be many solutions proposed, some of which will actually be helpful. One bill has already been introduced to close the loopholes that have allowed unfettered speculation in oil futures, and the price of oil has already dropped substantially (but will probably go up again by mid-August).

They're All Linked.

What we learned around July 9 (Jupiter's peak) is supporting the actions we decide to take during August. The events of September (at Uranus's peak) will also support the resolution of the issues we face. All the planets are linked in our consciousness, and their connections are reflected in our lives as situations that are related to and dependent on each other. Oil prices are related to the real-estate bust because speculators are looking for a place to put their money to make more money at the highest rate possible. Oil prices are high because they are pegged to the US dollar, which is weak against other currencies because of the huge debt the US is carrying. We are carrying huge debt because (in part) of the occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

What About Us?

We can find corresponding events in our own lives — places where all the circumstances we think about every day converge into a single situation of complex interdependencies. For the thread of experience in our lives related to Chiron-Neptune, events occur around February 5-10, May 11-14, August 10-15, October 25-31, and November 7-13. Think about what you were doing in early February (I had to check my appointment diary.) to discover what the thread in your life is.

More Excitement

The culmination of the Chiron-Neptune cycle happens when the Sun opposes each of them. This year this event is made all the more exciting because they are commingled with eclipses. Eclipses often bring short, sharp shocks to our experience that abruptly change our focus. These may be subtle but moving, or quite explicit. An example of this was the Oklahoma City bombing, which occurred on the day of a lunar eclipse. They are not always negative events, such as the woman who finds herself pregnant near the day of an eclipse after years of waiting to have a child.

If you recall your grade school science class, you know that an eclipse occurs when one body blocks our view of another body, casting a shadow on the Earth. While this is most noticeable with the Sun and Moon, eclipses of other bodies occur from time to time (also called occultations). An eclipse of the Sun (a solar eclipse) and one of the Moon (lunar eclipse) are always paired two weeks apart.

An eclipse means that something is missing — the expected light of the Sun (or Moon) is temporarily interrupted. This permits us to see the world in a different way and open a new chapter of life.

The eclipses this month are on August 1 and 16, and of the two, the second seems more important. First, lunar eclipses seem to produce more external events. (Solar eclipses seem to bring internal changes.) Second, the peaks of the Chiron and Neptune cycles happen very close to the lunar eclipse (Neptune's within hours). This means that we will be working through areas where we need greater clarity in our lives. We'll be answering the questions, "What do I really want? Where am I headed? What is my purpose and direction in life? Where can I find meaning? What must I surrender to?" We have been coping with what we don't know but feel we need to.

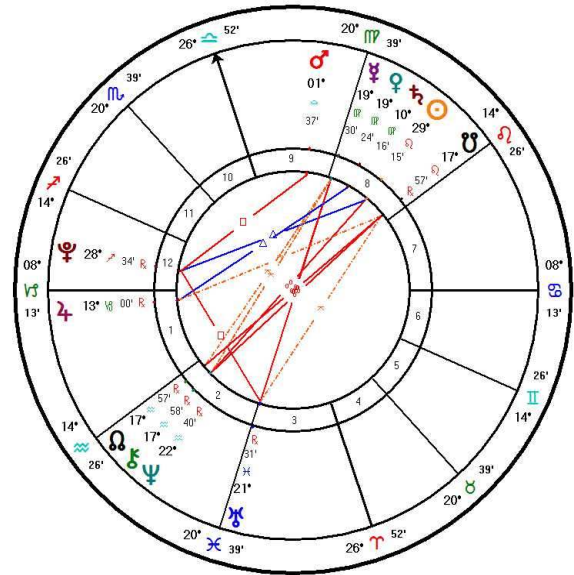
The good news is that we begin to see what the answers are to all these questions at the time of the peak. However, the eclipse will sharpen what we experience. It will go deeper, and the answers (and anticipated relief) may trickle in over time instead of come all at once. However, the answers we get and the relief we gain will be more profound and long-lasting.

This will be true in the world around us as well. Look for mid-August to be a “swift-boat” period in the US campaign season. There will be many lies and illusions floating at that time, even as some astounding truths will be revealed.

Activators Unite!

Mercury and Venus orbit the Sun within the Earth’s orbit, and from our perspective they are never far from the Sun in the Zodiac. The Sun, Mercury, and Venus frequently trigger the slower moving planets in rapid succession, giving us 3 contacts to work with a major process in our lives. Although we can generally say that the Sun activates, Mercury brings awareness, and Venus brings action

Chart B
Natal Chart [3]
Aug 21 2008
4:25:11 pm PDT +7:00
Washington, CA
32°N44'41" 118°W59'53"
Geocentric
Tropical
Ephemeris
Mean Node



through attraction, each can be a powerful activator in its own right. Watch what occurs on the dates that each planet makes its contact with Chiron and Neptune (see the Planetary Events at the end of this report).

Mercury and Venus are close traveling companions this month, so their contacts with anything will be in rapid succession, even simultaneous, as in the case on August 20. They are far ahead of the Sun at this time, so awareness and attraction precede the Sun’s challenge to take action. This means we are not so tied to our instincts, but instead will do things based on conscious decisions.

Saturn Supports

Saturn is the planet that makes us work (or suffer if we don’t). Yet, it also gives us definition and is the source of the most robust and rewarding successes of our life. Saturn has plenty of contacts this month, with Venus and Mercury in mid-August, then with the Sun in September. This will give us more definition in life. We’ll know what we’re dealing with and how to resolve our difficulties. It will be a relief, even if we have to put in the usual hard work to get at Saturn’s benefits.

Change Is Good.

Change is good; change is good. This mantra must have been invented during a Uranus contact. Uranus is the Great Surpriser. It also corrects our course. If our course does not need correcting, it is kind to us. If we need moving, we get a bit more of a jolt. The less stuck we are, the easier it is.

We’ll find out about our stuckness on the 6th and 23rd as Mars, then Mercury and Venus, connect with Uranus. These are events of culmination (oppositions), so we can expect to be freed

of confinement and limitations in some way around these dates.

If you have placements in the mutable signs (Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius, Pisces), you will be most affected by these contacts.

The Big Picture

On a grander scale, Saturn clears its retrograde zone on the 6th. It is still moving toward a trine (harmonious) contact Jupiter (September 8 and November 21), suggesting that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. We can still set up a million-dollar lemonade business with the lemons life is handing out now.

There's an even bigger process at work now, one that we are beginning to experience in August. This is the opposition of Saturn and Uranus. Their cycle is one of the most critical to human development, representing the struggle to find balance between structure/responsibility and chaos/freedom. These planets have a relatively long cycle — about 45 years. Halfway through their cycle they oppose each other, bringing a crescendo in our efforts to find balance between these two vital elements of life.

We start to feel their uneasy alliance as Mars, Mercury, and Venus move through Virgo and contact first Saturn then Uranus. Each of them carries the energy of Saturn to Uranus in anticipation of their actual contact on November 4 (US Election Day). This is the first of five contacts between these planets, and it will make its small beginnings on the 6th. Some of the ways we may experience it are: young versus old, new versus established, progressive versus conservative, innovative versus status quo. (In each, the Uranus concept is mentioned first.)

With oppositions, competition and separation are frequently emphasized, and we can expect the US presidential election to typify these energies.

In our personal lives, we are challenged to let go of some old ideas about how things (should) work in favor of innovative approaches. For instance, after receiving many publications in print for many years, I have been surprised with how many are switching to on-line only availability in the coming months. This is one small change that I can cope with, but there are others that are more systemic and may require more adjustment. Again, this pattern affects the mutable signs most (Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius, Pisces). The question we must answer is: What must I give up to follow my true path?

Finishing Up

With Pluto now in Sagittarius again, it gives us a chance to rethink our experiences of the past 15 years. One of things I've been thinking about is excesses — my own and those of Western societies. Sagittarius is a sign of extremes, and Pluto's turn through Sagittarius this time ended with quite a bang, since Jupiter was there in its final year. Jupiter's natural tendency toward excess is emphasized when it is in Sagittarius (one of the signs of its rulership).

What Can We Do?

Not all of us are affected equally by the events that fill the news. Some of us have prepared well for such swings in the cycles, while others are more exposed. It challenges us to return to basic values and let go of shallower desires. It raises our conscience and requests that we join the rest of the world in knowing that all of us must be brought along on the path to a better life, or none of us will live well. When much of the world's pollution comes from burning biomass (wood, cow dung, etc.) for light, heat, and cooking; and a simple solar system for each

village provides a stunning life change in such regions of energy poverty, it is impressed upon us even more acutely that we are all in it together.

The message I heard in listening to Steven Koonin talk about our energy future is that life will go on, and there are people who have a pretty good idea of what will and won't work. There must be changes, but we have time if we start now and take it seriously. So let's get those adaptive juices flowing and carry on!

Significant Planetary Events

Jupiter, Chiron, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto are retrograde. Sun is in rulership. Jupiter is in fall.

New Moon Solar Eclipse (Total)	9°32' Leo	August 1
Mars quincunxes Chiron/ Lunar North Node	19°01' Virgo/Aquarius	August 1
Mercury quincunxes Jupiter	14°34' Leo/Capricorn	August 2
Mercury conjoins Lunar South Node	18°52' Leo	August 4
Mercury opposes Chiron Rx	18°523' Leo/Aquarius	August 4
Venus trines Pluto Rx	28°48' Leo/Sagittarius	August 4
Sun quincunxes Jupiter Rx	14°11' Leo/Capricorn	August 6
Venus enters Virgo (Fall)	0°00' Virgo	August 5
Mercury quincunxes Uranus Rx	22°03' Leo/Pisces	August 6
Mars opposes Uranus Rx	22°02' Virgo/Pisces	August 6
Mercury opposes Neptune Rx	23°05' Leo/Aquarius	August 6
Mars quincunxes Neptune Rx	23°02' Virgo/Aquarius	August 8
Mercury trines Pluto Rx	28°44' Leo/Sagittarius	August 9
Mercury enters Virgo (Rulership)	0°00' Virgo	August 10
Sun opposes Chiron Rx/conjoins Lunar South Node	18°33' Leo/Aquarius	August 10

Venus conjoins Saturn	9°15' Virgo	August 13
Sun quincunxes Uranus Rx	21°48' Leo/Pisces	August 14
Sun opposes Neptune Rx	22°51' Leo/Aquarius	August 15
Mercury conjoins Saturn	9°31' Virgo	August 15
Full Moon Lunar Eclipse (Partial)	24°21' Leo/Aquarius	August 16
Venus trines Jupiter Rx	13°19' Virgo/Capricorn	August 16
Mars squares Pluto Rx	28°32' Virgo/Sagittarius	August 17
Mercury trines Jupiter Rx	13°15' Virgo/Capricorn	August 17
Mars enters Libra (Detriment)	0°00' Libra	August 19
Venus quincunxes Lunar North Node	18°01' Virgo/Aquarius	August 20
Venus quincunxes Chiron Rx	18°02' Virgo/Aquarius	August 20
Mercury quincunxes Lunar North Node	18°00' Virgo/Aquarius	August 20
Mercury quincunxes Chiron Rx	18°01' Virgo/Aquarius	August 20
Sun trines Pluto	28°35' Leo/Sagittarius	August 21
Sun enters Virgo	0°00' Virgo	August 22
Mercury conjoins Venus	19°19' Virgo	August 21
Mercury opposes Uranus Rx	21°29' Virgo/Pisces	August 23
Venus opposes Uranus Rx	21°28' Virgo/Pisces	August 23
Mercury quincunxes Neptune Rx	22°37' Virgo/Aquarius	August 23
Venus quincunxes Neptune Rx	22°36' Virgo/Aquarius	August 24
Mercury squares Pluto Rx	28°32' Virgo/Sagittarius	August 27
Mercury enters Libra	0°00' Libra	August 28
Venus squares Pluto Rx	28°32' Virgo/Sagittarius	August 29

Venus enters Libra (Rulership)	0°00' Libra	August 30
New Moon	7°48' Virgo	August 30

All dates are based on Pacific Time.

Blue = harmonious/Red or orange = challenging/intense

Events in **bold** are more significant.

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