

Parallel Lives

By

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One of the most fascinating things I have found is the discovery that someone is born on the same day and the same year I was. Even before I started my journey through astrology, the curious notion that someone else 'shared' my bit of time has intrigued me. Over the years, I have always promised myself an opportunity to study the charts of famous people who share, by an accident of birth, a 'twin' -- someone who shares planetary placements and configurations. This article presents me with that opportunity. Scrolling through databases we will find unusual pairings but for the purposes of this article I wanted to explore these 'astrological twins' from the perspective not so much of similar lives but what similar vein connects them and how they have contributed to the shape of the world they inhabited.

By nature of their births, these people will have planets in the same signs and so the personalizing of the expression is down to house placement and angles. For the purposes of this I am also using the Whole Sign House system giving a clearer and crisper view of these planetary placements and their rulerships.

Patriots: George W Bush and Sylvester Stallone

George W Bush was born 6th July 1946 at 7:25 am in Hartford, Connecticut USA¹ and served as the 43rd President of the USA; his 'twin' is Sylvester Stallone, born 6th July 1946 at 7:20pm in New York, New York, USA², an actor, writer and producer best known for his on-screen personas, Rocky Balboa and Rambo. On the face of it, we cannot imagine two more disparate persons however these two have more in common than we realize.

Both men, born a few days after the USA's Independence Day (4th of July), have developed a profile of patriots. Both Suns are conjunct the USA Sun at 13-14 Cancer. In George Bush's case his Cancer Sun in the 12th house rules the Leo Ascendant and squares a Moon-Jupiter

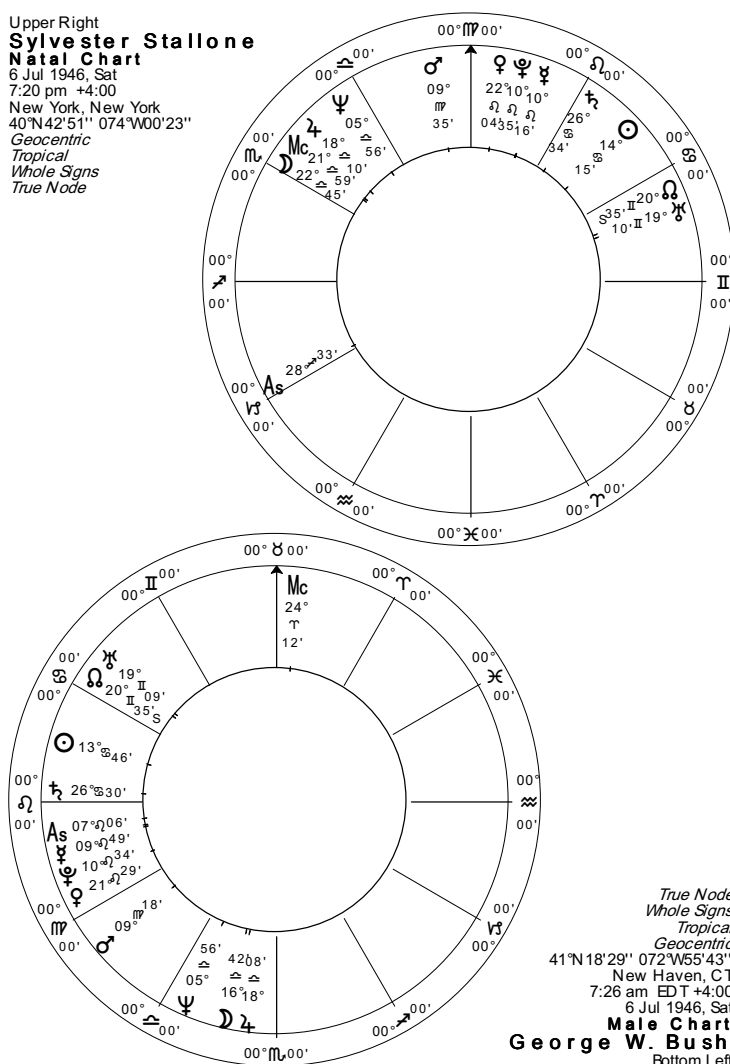


¹ From the Solar Fire Data Base: Sy Scholfield quotes Bill Minutaglio's book, *First Son: George W. Bush and the Bush Family Dynasty* (NY: Three Rivers, 1999), p. 24, quoting official records: "on July 6, 1946. At 7:26 A.M., with Dr. Margaret Tyler as the attending physician, George Walker Bush was born.

² From the Solar Fire Data Base: From Stallone's astrologer-mother (A)

conjunction in the 4th house. Stallone's Sun is in the 8th house and also squares the Moon-Jupiter conjunction, which in turn conjuncts the MC. Both Sun's have strong connections to the angles of their respective charts and in turn, echo the Sun-Jupiter conjunction of the USA chart.

Both men were immensely popular, not necessarily because they achieved extraordinary things but because they embodied the *patriotic* persona which endeared them to the American collective. They both fought wars: Stallone on the big screen as army veteran, *Rambo* and in the boxing ring as the underdog fighter, *Rocky*, while Bush took the USA to war in Afghanistan and Iraq. Both waged war on those who would undermine freedom and democracy. People love a war, as long as they are winning and it is this warrior look that endeared both men to the populace.



Bush and Stallone both have Mars in Virgo but the important point is that in Bush's chart, Mars rules the MC and in Stallone's chart, Mars is in the 10th. Mars in both charts is associated with the 10th and the MC suggesting that what they aspire to and their status is associated with the Martian nature of "valour, fortitude and courage". In Stallone's films, violence and hardship and his characters' abilities to overcome and triumph are key story elements.

In Bush's chart, Mars rules the 9th and the 4th houses suggesting that Mars's role is to express his world view (9th) and his heritage (4th) in a Martian and public way. It is realized in the 2nd house of wealth and resources and is in a wide sextile to the Sun bringing a connection of the warrior to the sense of identity. Bush saw himself as a warrior staring into the face of enemy as personified in his statement 'the Axis of evil'.

When Bush was elected for the first time in 2000, he came to the Presidency with the one of the smallest margins and amidst some great controversy. Bush won the vote in the state of Florida by a margin of only 537 votes out of six million cast. Although he received 543,895 fewer individual votes nationwide, Bush

won the election, receiving 271 electoral votes to Gore's 266.³ The September 11 terrorist attacks in New York were a major turning point in Bush's presidency. In an address to the nation, Bush said,

*"...we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger and anger to resolution. Whether we bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done."*⁴

With this rallying cry, Bush brought together his nation as well as a coalition of allied forces and declared a global War on Terror. He ordered the invasion of Afghanistan in his January 29, 2002 State of the Union Address, he asserted that an "axis of evil" consisting of North Korea, Iran, and Iraq was "arming to threaten the peace of the world" and "pose[d] a grave and growing danger". He asserted both the right and the intention to wage preemptive war, or preventive war.⁵

Stallone has echoed similar statement via the characters he has portrayed namely, Rocky Balboa, the boxer and John Rambo, the war veteran. In a memorable quote, Stallone's character, John Rambo says,

*"...this is what we do, who we are. Live for nothing, or die for something".*⁶

Stallone's Mars rules the 5th and the 12th suggesting that his portrayal of the armed veteran looking for revenge is a creative (5th) pursuit as well as an expression of his own fears as a mirror of collective ones (12th). Like Bush, the sextile to the Sun brings a connection of the warrior to the sense identity as described by the Sun.

Like Rocky, Bush was an underdog, who triumphed (in the 2000 presidential election) without actually outscoring his opponent; and like Rambo, he has been keen to settle old military scores.

Looking at the charts we also see a Mercury-Pluto conjunction in both charts: Bush has the conjunction in the 1st house conjunct the Ascendant and Stallone has it in the 9th house. Pluto-Mercury combinations describe someone who likes to be right or, who wants to prove others wrong. There is in this another facet of a combative nature albeit through the spoken or written word. Both men have been criticized for what has been perceived as a lack of oratorical skills, yet at their peaks, both were immensely popular, being seen by the collective as speaking the 'truth' or at least being persuasive enough to turn public perception. Both Bush and Stallone made use of strong opinions or ideas to provoke or create conflict – creating an 'us and them' situation in which they painted themselves as leading a conquering army in the name of 'truth and justice'. What is interesting of course is the manipulation of words or 'truth' in order to elicit the response that was sought. For both, it was a rallying cry to fight: either in real life or on the silver screen. While Bush led the 'coalition of the willing', Stallone's films, ironically were used also by the militants Bush opposed, to inspire their members.

Both Bush and Stallone carry the Uranus-North Node conjunction suggesting that they see themselves as rebels or championing the greater good and yet there is a strong sense of unpredictability to both their

³ "2000 Official General Election Presidential Results". Federal Election Commission. December 2001. Sourced at: <http://www.fec.gov/pubrec/2000presgeresults.htm> [accessed 22/7/2012]

⁴ Transcript of President Bush's address, CNN, USA Sourced at: http://articles.cnn.com/2001-09-20/us/gen.bush.transcript_1_joint-session-national-anthem-citizens?s=PM:US [accessed 22/7/2012]

⁵ "Transcript of President Bush's address to a joint session of Congress on Thursday night, September 20, 2001". Sourced at CNN. September 20, 2001. <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html> [accessed 22/7/2012]

⁶ *Rambo*, 2008.

actions and consequent outcomes. Bush's Nodal axis is across the 5th -11th houses suggesting that his struggle between the instinctual (South Node) and the learned processes (North Node) consist of having to develop ways which bring about group involvement and an awareness of collective concerns (11th) versus habitually relying on his own self-interest or concern to the exclusion of everything else.⁷ We can see how Bush has walked this fine line in his actions concerning not only the war on terrorism but also in maintaining his position within his political party.

Stallone on the other hand has the Nodal axis straddling the 1st -7th houses suggesting that his struggle between the instinctual (South Node) and the learned processes (North Node) consists of having to develop cooperation, companionship and healthy competition (7th) versus habitually falling back on aloofness, isolation or an overt sense of independence.⁸ Stallone has enshrined his Nodal axis in his characters: they are portrayed as individuals who have been betrayed and are only getting their own back or finishing off what they started. Both Stallone's characters are also portrayed as loners and individualists who have problems relating to others.

Bush and Stallone, although seemingly poles apart professionally and socially share the chart that they have both lived out in their lives as unashamed patriots standing tall in the face of an unforgiving enemy.

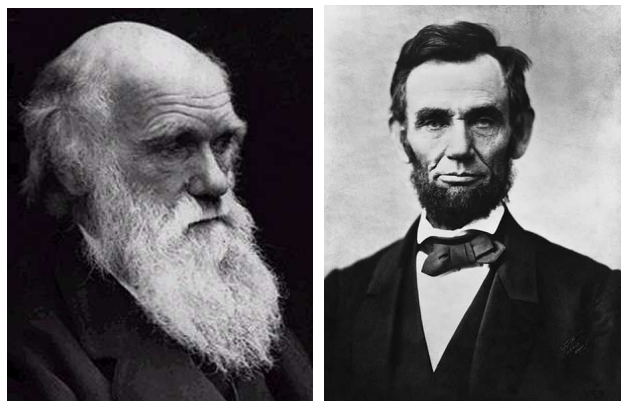
Emancipists: Abraham Lincoln and Charles Darwin

From another century we have the parallel lives of two of the outstanding figures of the 19th century: Charles Darwin, born 12th February 1809 at 3:00 am in Shrewsbury, England⁹ and Abraham Lincoln, born 12th February 1809 at 6:54 am in Hodgekenville, Kentucky, USA.¹⁰

Both men taught themselves to rise to the peaks of their professions, embraced change and detested slavery. They both personify the Saturn-Neptune statement as both struggled with

frequent mood changes and physical suffering as a result of recurring illness. Darwin has the Saturn-Neptune conjunct his Ascendant exacerbating and amplifying its manifestation as a health issue. Darwin was often incapacitated by an uncommon combination of symptoms, leaving him severely debilitated for long periods of time. In some ways this may have helped his work and later Darwin wrote,

"Even ill-health, though it has annihilated several years of my life, has saved me from the distractions of society and amusement."



⁷ Garcia, M, "The Dragon's Path: the Moon's Nodes in Astrology" in *Scala Coeli: the Ladder of Heaven*, M Garcia & J Usher, (Adelaide: Astro Mundi, 2012).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Astro-Data Bank

¹⁰ Astro-Data Bank

Darwin found that his illness often followed stressful situations, such as the excitement of attending a meeting. These circumstances are today considered symptomatic of social phobia (fear of social contact)

and agoraphobia (in the sense of fear of social gatherings or visitors outside a defined space they feel in control of). It was reported that as a young man, Darwin had “episodes of abdominal distress, especially in stressful situations.” He had a “premorbid vulnerability” which in his youth was referred to as “sensitivity to stress of criticism in his youth” and that “variable intensity of symptoms and chronic, prolonged course without physical deterioration also indicate that his illness was psychiatric.”¹¹

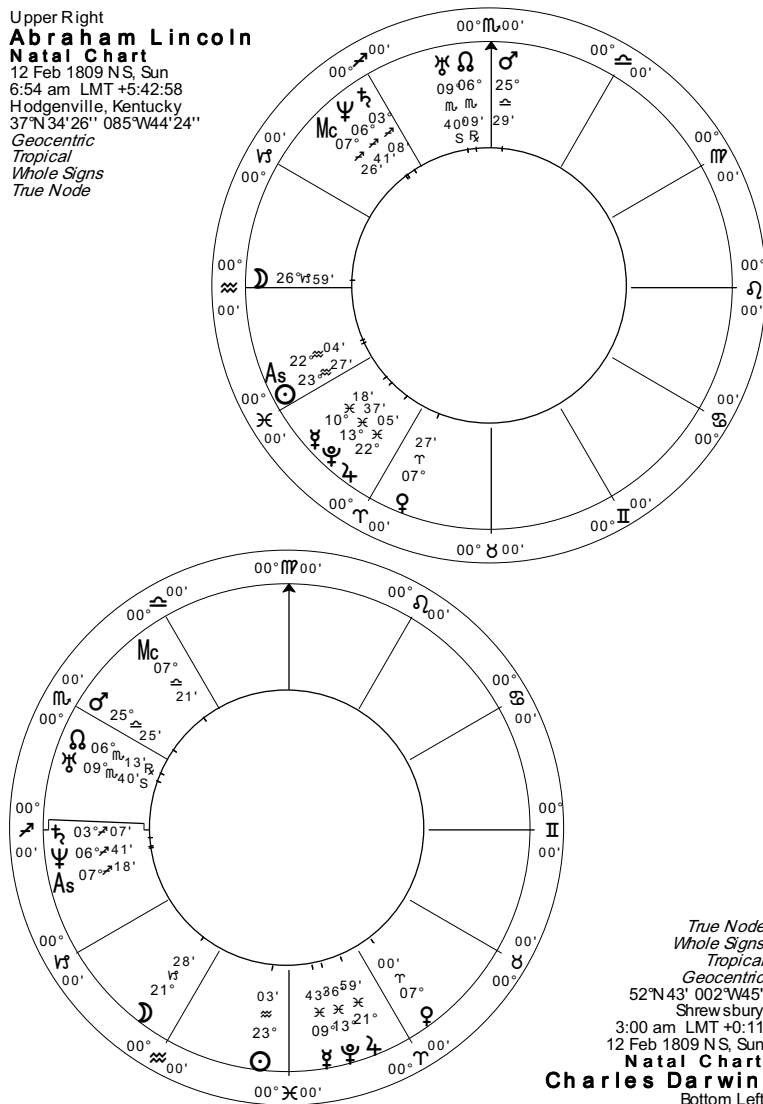
Lincoln, on the other hand, carried the Saturn-Neptune conjunction on the MC and this has echoes of the renunciation and denial which were such a feature of his public life. He took charge of caring for his siblings when his mother died until their father remarried; he willingly took responsibility for all chores expected of him; agreed with the customary obligation of a son to give his father all earnings from work done outside the home until age 21; and he educated himself, often by the flame

of a lone candle. Saturn rules Lincoln’s Ascendant and we see the ascetic and lean look of Saturn in his visage. Al-biruni tells us that Saturn in relation and connection to figures and face describes one who:

“...ugly, tall, ...large head, eyebrows joined, wide mouth, awkward figure... big feet”¹²

Both men had certain shyness but most telling and I believe a marker of the prominent Saturn-Neptune in both charts, was the shared quality of humility.

Lincoln’s humility can be seen in his speeches and writing. From humble beginnings, he was painfully conscious of the great divide between what he had come from to what he achieved with none of the usual requirements of birth, breeding, education, or fortune. One can say that Lincoln is the epitome of



¹¹ “Charles Darwin’s Health”, Wikipedia sourced at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Darwin%27s_illness#Continuing_illness [accessed 23/7/2012]

¹² Al-Biruni, *The Book of Instruction on the Elements of the Art of Astrology*. (London: Luzac, 1934) Chapter 427.

democracy in action: a great man whom no one suspected of being great until he became one. Saturn also rules Lincoln's 12th house suggesting that fears and insecurities (the Moon is also in the 12th) fire his drive to define and give form to his ideals (Saturn-Neptune conjunct MC).

Darwin on the other hand had the advantages that Lincoln lacked. Yet he did not take that and use it to fuel his superiority. Instead he undertook arduous work in the interest of learning, and submitted his findings to an often hostile world for examination. He was not a propagandist or zealot, but simply tried to explain how the natural world behaved from what he had observed. In Darwin's chart, Saturn is in the 1st house and rules the 2nd of wealth and resources and the 3rd house of personal truths, knowledge and siblings.

Both men have the Sun in Aquarius in detriment: Lincoln's is in the 1st house conjunct the Ascendant and ruling the 7th. Lincoln defined himself (Sun) by his actions and as a consequence brought into his life those that supported him and also hated him. Darwin's Sun is in the 3rd and ruling the 9th suggesting that he defined himself by his quest for knowledge (3rd) and an overarching world view (9th). Both Aquarians came to express the essence of the sign in different ways: Darwin believed in the power of the human intellect; and at the same time he acknowledged its weaknesses. Lincoln was extremely aware of the human capacity for sin and yet he sought to prevail through forgiveness (of others).

Neither man was overtly religious and yet both had been raised in religious households. One could say that both men sought an Aquarian 'ideal' in their ability to see beyond human frailties and to reach, for want of a better word, towards the greater good. Both men challenged the status quo – they changed the world and as a consequence also made enemies. Darwin was denounced from the pulpits of churches and the lecterns of science while Lincoln was assassinated.

It is interesting to note that the events that brought both Lincoln and Darwin to prominence were just a year apart. Darwin's work, *On the Origin of Species*, was published in 1859 and Lincoln was elected President in 1860. These events catapulted both men into the limelight of history.

Both men also carry a Mercury-Pluto-Jupiter conjunction with the Mercury-Pluto describing the ability to use strong opinions or ideas to provoke discussion, or create conflict and influence thought and opinion. The Jupiter-Pluto is the desire for success and adulation as a consequence of achievement tempered with humility and through hard work. Lincoln's Mercury-Pluto-Jupiter is in the 2nd house suggesting that the realization of his efforts have some level of financial reward. With Mercury ruling the 8th of crisis and other people's money and the 5th of children and creativity, we may surmise that Lincoln paid a high price for his learning, erudition and adulation. Jupiter rules the 11th and the 2nd suggesting that the desire to realize his ideals for the greater good (11th) as well as the drive for financial reward (2nd) underpin his achievement.

Darwin, on the other hand has the conjunction in the 4th house, describing the realization of efforts through the home and family. His Mercury rules the 7th and the 10th suggesting that his ideas and opinions bring him both success and status (10th) as well as enmity (7th). In Darwin's chart, Jupiter rules the 1st and the 4th suggesting that his own desire and motivation (1st) as well as his heritage and family (4th) underpin his drive

to achieve some level of success. It is interesting that Darwin came from an educated family and was destined for a career in medicine but deviated into natural history where he found his niche. Lincoln came from an impoverished background and it was his first entrepreneurial endeavour that brought him face to face with slavery and he became an ardent opponent. Both men achieve adulation because they voice an opinion which goes against the establishment (Mercury in Detriment and Fall). As a consequence, both define their place in history as a result of the expression of their ideas.

On another level, the Jupiter-Pluto with Jupiter in rulership does underpin both men as emancipists: Lincoln freed America of the institution of slavery although he did not eradicate racism; Darwin freed science from the shackles of religious morality but did not minimize the rift between science and religion, a conflict which had its roots in the 16th century.

In summary, what this article has sought to do is describe how those who are born on the same day carry a similar theme across their lives, personalized by the Cross of Matter and the houses. These two examples show how seemingly disparate lives carry a common thread, tied together by the accident (or intent) of birth.

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Copyright Mari Garcia 2012. Mari Garcia is a consulting astrologer who has been involved with astrology since 1990. She has lectured widely both in Australia and the USA and has published articles in Australia and overseas and writes for several local and national publications. She runs a consulting practice in Adelaide and is co-principal of ASTRO MUNDI, which offers a four year course in astrology, a Traditional Astrology course as well as special interest workshops and Master Classes. Mari can be contacted on 08 8563 9182 or check out the website at www.astromundi.com. Keep abreast of developments at Astro Mundi on Facebook.