

Stories in the Sky: An Interview with Wendy Ashley

by Kelley Hunter

Wendy Ashley is one of the most original mythic voices in the astrology world today. Rather than a psychological or Jungian perspective, her approach is drawn from experiential life story as well as the birth chart. She seeks to uncover the one particular myth that is a metaphorical parallel to the client's life, and to witness how it unfolds through outer events and other persons.

Born in New York City, Wendy has lived most of her life in Maine, where she began to develop her astrology practice in the 1960s. Talks by Joseph Campbell stimulated an interest in mythology. She soon discovered the archetypal psychologist Charles Ponce closer to home in Maine. He encouraged her to commit to a mastery of classical Greek myth to enrich her astrology work. She went on to study Celtic, Native American, and Chinese mythologies, as well as naked-eye, whole-sky astronomy.

Wendy's publications include *Paleo Skies: Astronomy and Astrology of the Distant Past* (2010) and *The Imaginal Sky* (2009), a workbook/CD combination of cross-cultural star myths. She has contributed to two anthologies: *Communicating the Horoscope*, edited by Noel Tyl (Llewellyn, 1993), and *Under One Sky*, edited by Rafael Nasser (Seven Paws Press, 2004). She

is currently writing *Goddess in the Sky: Star Mythology in the Lives of Women* to illustrate how mythic astrology works in the lives of famous women.

In 1985, I found Wendy listed in a New England holistic magazine as a practitioner of "Astro-Mythology." I was then working on my master's thesis entitled "Astro-Mythology and the Psychological Value of Symbolic Language." I thought I had invented that term. Here was an example of two Sagittarians thinking alike. I went to Maine to meet Wendy. Over the years, we worked together at the Roots of Astrology experiential conferences in Vermont (see my article in this issue), and I visited Wendy's annual Mythic Astrology Summer School on Peaks Island, a quick ferry ride from Portland.

I ferried over to Peaks Island again for a few days last summer, spending afternoons amidst a pile of books, with fingers poised to Google various references. But it was Wendy's huge mind full of mythology that we mined the most. Talking with Wendy is like entering a cosmic story land, punctuated with awe and humor. Please enter this mythic dream world and wander with us. For further journeys and more about her work, visit her Web site: www.wendyashley.com



Kelley Hunter: Wendy, let's begin with one of my favorite questions for astrologers: How did you discover astrology?

Wendy Ashley: My mother was studying astrology with Barbara Watters when she was carrying me. Some might remember Barbara as the author of *The Astrologer Looks at Murder* and *What's Wrong with Your Sun Sign?* It was 1942 and my father was in the Navy, so Barbara came to the hospital with her for my birth and wrote down my birth time. The time she noted wasn't, by the way, the official time noted on my birth certificate. It was two hours off. They must have had a busy night at New York City Hospital.

Using the hospital time, I have Saturn rising on a Gemini Ascendant, but I feel that Jupiter rising in Cancer is a lot more descriptive of me. I'm definitely a Jupiterian and I'm definitely a Cancer Ascendant. I weep at the drop of a hanky, which is the Moon in Pisces, the chart ruler. (See **Chart** on page 60.)

With an astrologer attending my birth, it felt like I was destined to become one. I received lessons through the uterine walls. My mother taught me the basics, and I learned advanced astrology from Dorothea Lynde of Massachusetts. Astrologer Marcia Moore

lived down the street from me in Maine. I've loved being an astrologer, and I've been very lucky on this path. I've had wonderful friends and teachers, including Joseph Campbell and Charles Ponce.

KH: Now there's some Sagittarian luck to have two great teachers. How did you begin to blend myth with astrology?

WA: There were times in my astrology practice when it seemed that the charts weren't meaningful for my clients. I would talk about the sign of Leo to a Leo Sun sign or the sign of Pisces to a Pisces Sun sign, and my client wouldn't relate to what I was saying. It wasn't feeling relevant to their lives. Then I had an experience that caused an epiphany.

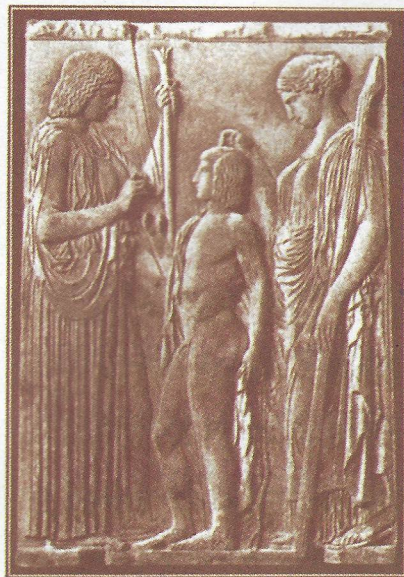
As you know, I studied mythology for ten years with Charles Ponce. One day, while in his dream interpretation class, a classmate related a dream in which she had picked up a hitchhiker in a new van her father had just given her. The hitchhiker showed her a golden button on the dash and told her she did not have to drive on the ground. When she pushed the button, the van flew off into the air! Dr. Ponce said, "Aha! You have dreamt of a god. Hermes is the god of the open road! It is apparent he will travel with you for a while!"

I had just done this classmate's chart. Of course, she would pick up Hermes, I thought — she's a Mercury-ruled Gemini. Hermes is the Greek equivalent of Mercury. Two weeks later, this woman began stealing from department stores and giving the goods to people who could not afford to buy them. She stole winter coats and Christmas toys for kids, mechanic's tools for guys out of work, and cooking pots for moms. That year, her secondary progressed Sun had conjoined the degree of her Cancer Ascendant. Meanwhile, I had just read a book on the "heroic Sun," so I determined that she had become the "Heroic Thief" — Robin Hood! Hermes is sometimes called the "Sacred Thief." I had the realization then that myths are embedded in horoscopes. Charles encouraged me to begin a serious study of Greek mythology. I also learned to identify the constellations and individual stars in the night sky.

One aspect of Demeter's teachings was the art of planting and cultivation, and the second message, equally important, was that we all have eternal life.

What I learned then and now teach is that mythic astrology is not an airy-fairy glamorization, but instead portrays life's actualities. For instance, I once read a chart for a client with a dominant Pisces Moon, which suggested a Dionysian mythology. Sure enough, her family owned a vineyard in northern California. "Oh, yes," she said, "we make wine." There was the actual presence of Dionysus, the god of wine, in her life. The myths actually identify personal experiences.

KH: So, to make this a bit clearer, you are using a whole-sky approach, in which the constellations and particular stars surrounding the zodiac constellations contribute to their meaning. Give us an example using the sign of Virgo, a sign associated with the Greek goddess Demeter.



Demeter, Triptolemus, and Persephone

WA: Well, the sign of Virgo is often thought to be connected with health and healing, but healing wasn't really Demeter's forte. Underneath the constellation of Virgo, and lending its meaning to the sign, is the constellation of the Centaur, Chiron, the teacher/healer. Some astrologers argue that Chiron should be associated with Sagittarius, because Chiron is a teacher, but in my opinion, all of the mutable signs are teachers of some sort.

The Centaur of Sagittarius is Crotus, king of the wild centaurs. Some of the wild centaurs are like a motorcycle gang, a bunch of guys who come into town and stir up trouble.

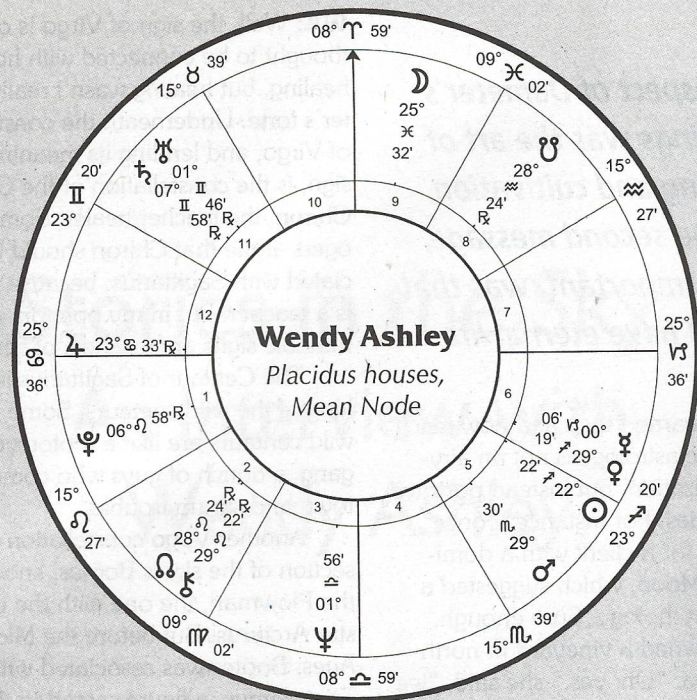
Another Virgo constellation in this section of the sky is Boötes, known as the Plowman, the one with the bright star Arcturus. But before the Middle Ages, Boötes was associated with Triptolemus, a figure sacred in the mythology of Demeter. This version of Boötes stands with a big stick in one hand, an agricultural stick used for planting. An early planting method involved piling up a mound of earth that had been raked through to make it friable, and then poking a hole in the mound and dropping the seed in.

In Demeter's mythology, Triptolemus was one of the four kings of Ephesus. Each was given a task to spread the goddess's teachings. One aspect of Demeter's teachings was the art of planting and cultivation, and the second message, equally important, was that we all have eternal life. The spreading of Demeter's teachings thus became a religious task, as well as an agricultural one. John Chapman, better known as Johnny Appleseed, illustrates this myth. He traveled far and wide across the United States planting apple orchards, while also distributing books by Emanuel Swedenborg, the Swedish mystic, whose interpretations of Christianity inspired many thinkers, including Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau.

KH: How about another example of connecting specific myths with a particular sign of the zodiac.

WA: Right now, I'm working on a chart for a Gemini, so I want to know the active mythology for the sign of the Twins in this chart. Is it the Dogs, Orion,

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Looking for the myth in the horoscope:

1. Take note of any planet within 15 degrees of the angles on either side.
2. Check out the strength of that planet. Is it in exaltation, fall, rulership, etc.?
3. Note whether the planet gains further importance by having its sign or house inhabited or by ruling an angle.

In Wendy's **Chart**, we see the Moon in Pisces elevated in the 9th house. Jupiter in Cancer on the Ascendant disposes both the Pisces Moon and the Sagittarius Sun. The Moon and Jupiter are both angular and in mutual reception. The Moon in Pisces and in the 9th house, as well as Jupiter, indicate religious, sometimes mystical experience. We note that Neptune, the modern ruler of Pisces, is also angular, close to the IC. Wendy relates:

"I have, in the course of my life, been instructed in five religions. My mother, the astrologer, was a Buddhist and also played the piano for the Spiritualist Church. She took me as a girl to spiritualist campgrounds and taught me prayers, mantras, and meditation from her Buddhist beliefs. My sister and I also spent seven years in a convent school. Although not Catholic, we went to Mass every morning, studied our catechisms, and said our rosaries with the nuns and 60 little girls every day. My father's family are reform Jews. We lived for a time in a Jewish community where I learned the beautiful prayers and rituals practiced in Jewish homes. My father is also an avowed believer in Confucianism.

"When I was 12, my sister and I went to live with my mother's parents in rural New Hampshire. There was an evangelical Baptist Church there, where I was "saved" three times. My grandfather was a linguist and knew the Abenaki language. Members of the Abenaki tribe from St. Francis, Quebec, would come down to the house. I was instructed in Amerindian Ways and beliefs through stories, woodcraft, and jokes, and being taught respect.

"Finally, at midlife, I joined the American Zion Church. The minister spoke so profoundly about god and what he had done for you and me. (Alcoholics Anonymous required those in recovery to have a spiritual practice to help us stay clean and sober.) At the same time, I hung out with a dear medicine woman friend and joined a prayer community under the leadership of some native women. These gatherings have been the richest religious experiences of my life."

Mythically, the Moon in Pisces with the Sun in Sagittarius is an indicator of Dionysus's place in the Sun god Apollo's realm. Every year, Apollo and his

continued next page

Columba, the Hare, or the Little Bear? Which of the Gemini stories from the constellations surrounding the zodiac constellation will I discover in this person's life? Which solar Gemini will he be?

In the case of Gemini native John F. Kennedy, his solar Gemini is the Little Bear, the He-Bear. The Big Bear is female. In Welsh, the word for bear is "arth," which gives us the name Arthur. King Arthur was associated with this bear. Kennedy was a youthful war hero and a great speaker. His inspiration as president, partnered with his stately "queen," Jacqueline, held the promise of the Arthurian mythic world of Camelot.

This connection was made clear by his widow in an interview shortly after his death, in which she quoted his favorite lyrics from the *Camelot* musical of 1960: "Don't let it be forgot / that once there was a spot / for one brief shining moment that was known as Camelot." In the collective imagination, his death was likened to the fall of King Arthur and the death of the dream of Camelot.

Arthur was also Pendragon, referring to the head of the dragon, or sometimes the son of the dragon. Astronomically, the Little Bear is in the coils of the Dragon. In the sky, you can see Draco the Dragon winding around the brightest stars in the Ursa Minor (Little Dipper) constellation.

Kennedy had his Sun in the 8th house of death. Since JFK was a Gemini, his brother, Robert, is also an 8th-house figure, as his "twin" and political partner, who was assassinated shortly after him. According to Celtic mythology, hero kings die young. In this myth, we start to see John Kennedy's story as the hero king who lives on in the memory of the people, becoming larger than life.

KH: How do you incorporate all of this information into your readings? How do you actually find the person's myth in the chart?

WA: I use synthesis, rather than analysis — combining many factors. First, I identify the stars connected to the planets in

the chart, which also suggest the relevant constellations.

(Interviewer's Note: As an example of how she prepared for a consultation, Wendy put fixed stars around my chart and mentioned particular themes, phrases, and some of the larger mythologies they are part of, to start weaving my star story. To illustrate this, you can see Wendy's chart printed with a list of key stars in the **Sidebar**.)

When I first started, I would tell my clients all of the possible mythologies that could be shown by their chart, letting them know which myth was most likely to be theirs. I ran into problems with that approach, since most people don't know much about mythology. It was like offering a fruitcake, almost too rich to eat. I then started to elicit personal stories from my clients. We really only remember those episodes in our lives that have to do with our personal mythologies. Two children of the same mother will remember their mother differently, each evoking the experience of the mother that fits their mythology.

The analytic component of my work involves noting the planets on the angles, which tend to be more significant. I look for a dominant planet, one that rules a well-occupied sign or the Sun, Moon, or Ascendant, or is strong by house placement. I ask myself which is more likely to tell the story, the planet or the sign? Then I start to verify my initial intuition. I ask clients to tell a story or two, a remembered event told in narrative form. This will most often confirm the mythic motif.

For instance, a client might say, "When I was a little girl, I had a pig named Petunia." That's a lot of information right there. Pigs are used in rituals connected to Demeter. Giving the pig a flower name like Petunia reflects Persephone, Demeter's daughter, who was a flower gatherer. In the myth, Persephone is picking flowers when Pluto abducts her. So, we home in on Demeter-Persephone mythology and see where it takes us. Pigs are also sacred in both Egyptian and East Asian mythologies.

Another kind of pig story might suggest the Celtic culture, in which pigs were the prized sacrificial animal served

SIDEBAR continued

priests left Delphi, and the precinct was taken over by the followers of Dionysus, the god of ecstasy, who made grapes into wine. He is a Moon god and is associated with Pisces and the month when the previous fall's wine was uncasked and drunk, as well as the month of the Mardi Gras carnival and other such Bacchanalian events. Sagittarian, or Apollonian, religion follows God's laws, whereas Dionysian religion (or mysticism) is outside the law, seeking more of a somatic experience of God, connecting the mundane world with the ecstatic world of the divine.

With research and cross-referencing, the Dionysian myth continues to unfold in Wendy's chart. For instance, the constellation of the Southern Crown, placed beneath Sagittarius, her Sun sign, is known as the crown of Semele, the mother of Dionysus. That constellation in the larger Sagittarian star field reinforces the myth in some personal way.

Adding stars to the chart offers even more dimensions. As an example of Wendy's chart preparation for a mythic consultation, here is a listing of stars located at the zodiacal longitudes for Wendy's Sun, Moon, planets, and angles. Greek letters refer to the star's relative brightness in the constellation, a designation used by astronomers. In this case, we would first look to stars connected to Jupiter, Sun, and Moon, which have already opened a mythic window. Other individual stars may open up other levels of investigation. An in-depth interpretation requires a serious study of fixed-star lore and mythology, explored in relation to the personal narratives of life memories.

Looking for the myth in the horoscope:

Ascendant at 25°36' Cancer: **Procyon**, alpha Canis Minor, the brightest star in the Little Dog

Pluto at 6°58' Leo: **Praesaepe**, star cluster M44 in Cancer, known as the Beehive Cluster or the Manger

North Node at 28°24' Leo: **phi Leo**

Chiron at 29°22' Leo: **Regulus**, alpha Leo, the brightest star, marking the heart of the Lion

Neptune at 1°56' Libra: **Ascelli**, theta and iota Boötes, two stars in the upraised left hand of the Herdsman or Plowman

IC at 8°59' Libra: **Vindemiatrix**, epsilon Virgo, major star called the Grape Gatherer

Mars at 29°30' Scorpio: **Bungula**, alpha Centauri, the closest star to our Sun, marking the front left hoof of the Centaur

Sun at 22°22' Sagittarius: **Rasalhague**, alpha Ophiuchus, the brightest star in the head of the Snake Charmer

Venus at 29°19' Sagittarius: **M7 Scorpio**, large open star cluster

Mercury at 0°06' Capricorn: **theta Ara**, the Altar

Descendant at 25°36' Capricorn: **Terrabellum**, omega Sagittarius, a small quadrangle of stars on the hindquarters of the horse

South Node at 28°24' Aquarius: **iota Aquarius**

Moon at 25°32' Pisces: **Matar**, eta Pegasus, double star (Arabic meaning: "Fortunate Rain")

Midheaven at 8°59' Aries: **Algenib**, gamma Pegasus, marking the extreme tip of the horse's wing

Uranus at 1°46' Gemini: **Marphak** (Marfik), alpha Perseus, the brightest star in his side

Saturn at 7°58' Gemini: **Ain**, epsilon Taurus, one of the six stars in the Hyades, the V-shaped head of the Bull

Jupiter at 23°33' Cancer: **kappa Gemini**, in the upper arm of Pollux

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at feasts for warriors. Whoever got the ham was the head honcho, so to speak. But that is not the mythic context suggested by this hypothetical client.

KH: In addition to the mythology of the constellations, then, you also bring the mythology of individual stars into your consultations.

WA: The stars can be very telling. Since the earliest writers — Ptolemy, specifically — aligned the stars with the degrees of the ecliptic, I thought I might try it out. This became necessary when a few clients began to exhibit motifs in their lives that corresponded to myths of specific stars associated with their planetary degrees rather than through the signs themselves.

The star positions I use are the same ones Diana Rosenberg used. Michael Munkasey prepared that list from a German source. Diana and I talked quite a bit about whether we should do sidereal or tropical charts. There isn't any firm answer. Some charts work better tropically and some sidereally. I make sure that I have both the tropical and the sidereal positions of the stars and planets. If you make a tropical chart and put the stars on it, you basically have both.

KH: Wendy, I know you have quite a strong background in Native American mythology. What stimulated your interest in that area?

WA: As I moved further into mythic interpretation, it became apparent that not everyone lived a Greek myth. I began to widen my mythic horizons, first into Native American mythology.

The problem with studying Native American mythology is that most of the published material was written by anthropologists in the late 19th century or early 20th century. Unfortunately, they didn't know much about the stars and were limited to just a few constellations at best. The books written on the reservations are more complete, but not available to the general public. One excellent book, accessible through



Animal images from the caves at Altamira

In the caves of Lascaux and Altamira, and in some others in southern France and northern Spain, there are star images painted on animal depictions from 15,000 years ago.

the Lakota reservation, is called *Lakota Star Mythology*. The Lakota people have kept their rituals and religion very much alive, so this book is a wonderful resource.

I am of the opinion that the animal sky images are the earliest and the longest-lasting depictions of the constellations. "Zodiac" means "circle of animals." My book, *Paleo Skies: Astronomy and Astrology of the Distant Past*, discusses how probable it was that ancient peoples knew the sky. In the caves of Lascaux and Altamira, and in some others in southern France and

northern Spain, there are star images painted on animal depictions from 15,000 years ago. On the face of a bull, for instance, are drawn the Hyades, the stars of the Bull's V-shaped face.

The Bear constellation is one of the oldest, going back 60,000 years, during the times when the bear was worshipped by peoples in the darkness of a cave, where bears would go to hibernate — magically, it seemed. The Great Bear constellation, now often called the Big Dipper, has a box pattern. This sky box represents the mama bear's uterus and belly, a cave-like place. Perhaps the human construction paralleled the construction in the sky. In Native American mythology, when the bear emerges, you follow the bear around the seasons to find out what to eat. Thus, the Bear contributes to the eating motif in the sign of Cancer, in which it is largely located.

The natural history of the animal is what's behind the constellation's meaning and mythology. This is very important to know as an astro-mythologist.

KH: You said you often ask for a personal animal story as one of the keys to your consultation work. How do these animal mythologies inform your work?

WA: When we are very young, we think archetypally. It's a natural way to think. We don't think rationally. It happened for many of us that our parents took great pains to disprove and dispel that irrational stuff, but it's still there, and animal encounters often evoke this archetypal realm of experience. The animal story is often the key clue that helps to confirm the personal myth, like the pig story mentioned earlier.

One year, when I was teaching with you at the Roots of Astrology conference, everyone had to tell an animal story. I remember one very quiet man whose Gemini planets were lined up with the sign of the Bull, sidereally. He talked about a time in his life when he was either in a pasture with a bull or a bull broke through a fence. It didn't hurt him, but he became terrified of bulls as a little boy. One of the things that was really unusual about him was a patch on his arm. It looked like a mole, but it was furred, with short fur maybe half an inch long, chocolate brown, very much like a bull. It was like there was a piece of him that was a bull. These things are so mysterious. What do you say about that? That inside this very quiet person there is a wild man?

Occasionally when I'm doing a reading, it's like the walls between reality and mythology — the dream world and the rational world — dissolve. Strange things happen. A truck will go by that is painted with a picture of a chicken and eggs after we've been talking about birds. The synchronicities seem to mount up. When you know myth, you see more of these synchronicities. If you don't know myth, you don't see the signs.

KH: Wendy, in addition to the awareness of living your mythology that comes through consultation, another experiential way of tuning into your own sky mythologies is what you've done with Mary Thunder at her Native American women's dance. We were both there one year, when it was in upstate New York on the property of The Abode, the Sufi retreat center. That whole weekend was so incredibly experiential.

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WA: Exactly, and the experiential aspects of it are more than one. There is an arbor made out of cedar where the women are dancing. A tree is ceremonially chosen and cut to be put in the center of the circle, as the axis of the Earth connecting to the heavens. As the astrologer, the sky priestess, the sky walker, you are attuned to all of the sky movements. When you step into the dance circle, you know where all of the planets are and how they are moving during the three days of the dance. When I point out celestial patterns, either of planets or stars, the dancers dance those patterns. When I am mindful of the stars, both the dancers and I are in a sort of altered state, where the connection between the sky and the Earth is quite obvious. The circle is, of course, amenable to the idea of that.

They danced the dragon one year, with its coils. Draco the Dragon is overhead in the northern sky, winding around the Little Dipper. The last star on the handle of the Little Dipper is Polaris, the Pole Star. The dancers wind around the pole in the center of the circle, as Draco winds around the Pole Star. The physical experience of the star material is so transcendent. It is spiritual, of course, but it's also very physical, as are such ceremonial events as the sweat lodge and the Lakota Sun Dance.

KH: The Greeks talked of our star bodies, the astral body, which, of course, means star body.

WA: Even as we're talking about it, I'm getting goose bumps. It was such an extraordinary experience. I have a couple of students who have continued

dancing with Thunder on her ranch in Texas.

KH: Another thing you did at the women's dance was to put markers for specific stars around the whole circle. Each dancer identified the star that was meaningful to their birth date.

WA: Yes, we placed a star at every third degree, a total of 120 stars. We then divided the circle into quarters, because there were gates in the four directions. Starting with the North Star, Polaris, at the north gate, we went around the whole circle, putting the biggest star within those three-degree areas using the sidereal, longitudinal positions of the stars. On the back of each star marker, I wrote a little something about the star's myth, as a beginning into our personal astro-mythology. It became a way for people to understand each other as well.

At my summer school on Peaks Island, I teach people how to find the four directions and how to see the sky in the chart, rather than just looking at a piece of paper. One of my students had a houseboat in Maine with a platform attached. We would lie all night in the bay watching the sky. When we are stargazing, telling the stories will bring many memories to light. With the telling of a story, the oral quality is somatic. There is something deeply and physically powerful about seeing the stars and hearing the words simultaneously. Telling a story brings the divine right into you. Myth is much more accessible experientially.

I want my students to really see what is there in the sky. When they see the slender crescent Moon appear in the sunset twilight, then run into the house and print a chart of that moment, sure enough, the Crescent Moon is there. The awesomeness of the personal, visceral experience is an inherent part of such training that you can't get from a book or even from listening to a teacher. Personal experience is very potent.

KH: There is no substitute for stargazing, for communing with the light of the stars. There is a whole library of stories in those stars. As you say, telling the stories is

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very powerful. It wakes something up in one's soul. Your approach to mythic astrology does this: It touches something very deep.

WA: It can be a real job to figure out the particular myth of the chart, and it can be difficult to get it across to clients. If I'm doing someone's chart and relay their myth, most people can understand its relevance in their lives, but they don't have anyone else's myth to consider, to get a better sense of how it works. That's what led me to write about the mythologies of famous individuals.

KH: Is that the book you're working on now?

WA: Yes. The working title is *Goddess in the Sky: Star Mythology in the Lives of Women*. I use examples of famous women, such as Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Shirley Temple Black, and Marie Curie, among others — showing their charts and discussing how their myths play out in their lives. Along the way, I describe the wider sky of constellations that contribute to the basic twelve zodiac constellations.

I'm working on the horoscope of Audrey Hepburn at the moment. One of the stars lined up in her chart is Procyon, the brightest star in the Little Dog (Canis Minor). The Greeks wrote that to give a middle-aged woman a little dog was good for her health. They believed that if you set a dog on a woman's lap, the dog would absorb whatever uterine

It's not just that a mythic figure describes a single experience or a single facet of our lives. A person's entire life will follow their myth.

difficulties she might have and heal her of them. Audrey Hepburn loved little dogs and carried her own, called Mr. Famous, almost everywhere with her.

KH: The greatest facet of experiential astrology is the experience of your own life, living the myth that is yours. When we are informed of that myth and see how cosmically connected we are, that is incredibly powerful.

WA: In my experience, what I call "conventional Western psychological astrology" can sometimes be insufficient to the task of uncovering the living archetypes in a client's experience. A person's entire life will follow their myth. It's not just that a mythic figure describes a single experience or a single facet of our lives, as astrologers tend to interpret the meaning of the planets. Your essential myth is more fully descriptive of your entire life experience in a particu-

lar, very personal way. The myth reveals archetypal meaning as expressed in specific details of key incidents and relationships. Every sign can be embodied through a variety of story lines within a different mythic context.

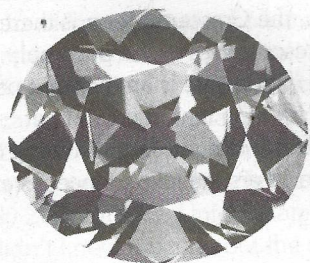
As astrologers, we need to understand the mythic underpinnings of our art. And we need to understand the variety of effects of a given symbol, both its bright shadow and dark shadow, its place in a culture and in a history. And we must be careful always to present the symbol as having many possible manifestations, rather than attempting either to concretize its meaning or to presume its form.

If your myth is accurate and rich, as all myths can be, then when you know the myth and all the elements of it, each of the elements comes up in your life. We don't live the myth precisely, and we're not gods. It's as if the gods have someone on Earth to manifest what they are about, and that brings the god alive. The myth lives again, it's a rewritten story, and all the themes and all the characters are there in your life.

KH: Wendy, thank you so much for this stimulating conversation. It has been a great pleasure visiting with you. I feel that we could go on for hours exploring how we live the myths of the stars. I'm sure I speak for many readers when I say I look forward to more of your work.

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(Editor's Note: Kelley's bio can be found on p. 39.)



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