

20th Century Pioneers of Consciousness Expansion:

Hofmann, Grof,
Leary, Ram Dass:

Astrological Connections
and Intersections

By Cathy Coleman



Consciousness expansion is the widening, or expansion of states of awareness. Many states are involuntary and without insight; however, state changes can be intentional and purposive. Shamanic journeying, holotropic breathwork, yoga, and meditation are among the many practices of consciousness expansion, as is the intentional use of entheogens, or psychedelics. Discovered in 1943, the intentional use of LSD to expand consciousness caught fire in the early 1960s in the Western world through the experimentation at Harvard with mind-altering substances, conducted by Timothy Leary, Richard Alpert (Ram Dass), and others. This was during the Uranus/Pluto conjunction in Virgo from 1961-1970 which triggered revolutions and breakthroughs in many aspects of personal and community life, including the expansion of consciousness.

Jeffrey Mishlove, in his book *The Roots of Consciousness*, outlines the history of consciousness exploration including shamanic traditions, the discipline of yoga in ancient India, and mystery traditions such as Taoism, Christianity,

and Islam, Hermeticism, and the Age of Enlightenment.¹ Stephen Dinan created a consciousness timeline for more recent times starting with the founding of the Theosophical Society in New York in 1975 and through 1999 when important works of Stanislov Grof, Willis Harman, Andrew Harvey, Barbara Marx Hubbard, Ken Wilbur, Ken Ring, and others were published. Dinan's timeline was influenced by three primary sources: Jorge Ferrer's unpublished chronology of the East-West encounter; Richard Tarnas' timeline in *Passion of the Western Mind*; and John David Ebert's timeline in *Twilight of the Clockwork God: Conversations on Science and Spirituality at the End of an Age*. Dinan noted, "The last hundred years have witnessed the gradual creation of a new world philosophy, one that sees human beings engaged in an evolutionary process to access a deeper, richer, more playful consciousness and to manifest the fruits of that work in the world. This new amalgam of ideas and practices has drawn from thousands of books and experiments, and millions of collectively focused lives."²

Along this timeline are some pivotal events shaped by the explorers of consciousness whose horoscopes will be discussed in this article. On April 16, 1943, Swiss scientist Albert Hofmann accidentally ingested LSD-25, a mistake that led to the widespread use of psychedelics as a powerful catalyst for the expansion of consciousness. In the summer of 1960 Timothy Leary took visionary mushrooms in Cuernavaca, Mexico. When he returned to Harvard, he and faculty members Frank Barron and Richard Alpert and several graduate students initiated research projects with psilocybin. This group first formulated and published the “set and setting” hypothesis. In 1964 Timothy Leary, Richard Alpert, and Ralph Metzner co-authored and published the seminal book, *The Psychedelic Experience, an adaptation of The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, a pivotal guide for the Western use of psychedelics.

While there are numerous people who contributed to the field formation of the expansion of consciousness in the twentieth century, this article focuses on four icons who played big roles in the scientific study and safe and productive use of psychedelics: Albert Hofmann, Stanislav Grof, Timothy Leary, and Richard Alpert (Ram Dass). In addition to being stand-out contributors to the field, they have been colleagues and friends. Their horoscopes will be explored, both individually and in synastry with each other. Astrological correlations to major events in their lives will be noted.

The psychedelic movement was birthed in the early 1960s against the backdrop of the Pluto/Uranus conjunction. The conjunction was first within 10 degrees in October 1961, and exact in 1965-66. The conjunction waned to ten degrees difference in 1970. Qualities associated with the planet Uranus are freedom, rebellion, revolution, experimentation, invention, and unpredictability. The planet Pluto was named after the god of the underworld, and is associated with qualities of power, explosiveness, depth, intensity, regeneration, transformation, and the cycle of death and rebirth. The combination of these planets in the sixties fueled revolutions and socio-cultural transformation that profoundly changed Western society, and more indirectly, other cultures in the world as well. There were profound changes in civil rights, women’s rights, reproductive rights, the environmental movement, and the expansion of consciousness through mind-altering psychedelic substances. New forms of expression in music and the visual arts emerged as well.



Albert Hofmann

(January 11, 1906, 3:00 PM, Baden, Switzerland)

Rodden Rating A –from memory

Horoscope Features:

- Gemini Ascendant
- Mercury (ruler of Ascendant) conjunct Uranus
- Saturn on the Midheaven—exactly sextile the Mercury/Uranus Midpoint
- Sun trine Jupiter
- Neptune in the 1st house opposite Mercury/Uranus (exactly opposite the conjunction midpoint)
- Yod from the Moon to the sextile of Saturn to Mercury/Uranus
- Pluto in the 12th house
- Neptune in the 1st house

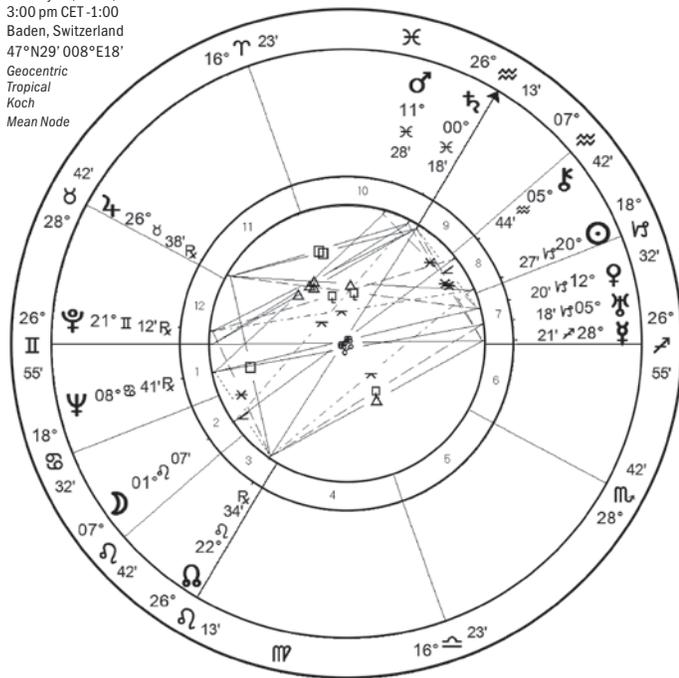
Albert Hofmann was a Swiss chemist who accidentally learned of the psychedelic effects of lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), and then synthesized the substance in the pharmaceutical-chemical department of Sandoz Laboratories. Prior to his discovery of the effects of LSD, he worked to study squill, a medicinal plant, and the fungus ergot. Hofmann had set aside his research on lysergic acid for five years before he decided to re-examine it that fateful day April 16, 1943. While working in his laboratory, he touched his hand to his mouth or nose, and unknowingly ingested a small amount of LSD. Three days later, on April 19, 1943, he intentionally ingested 250 micrograms of LSD in his laboratory. He rode home on his bicycle after he

started to feel the effect of the substance. This day is known as “Bicycle Day.” Hofmann also went on to study the hallucinogenic substances found in Mexican mushrooms which led to the synthesis of psilocybin.

Hofmann was known for his deep love of nature from early childhood throughout his life. He had a powerful mystical experience at age eight while walking in nature, and from that experience decided to become a scientist. At this time both transiting Saturn and his Solar Arc North Node were conjunct his Ascendant. Transiting Saturn was opposite his Mercury/Uranus conjunction.

Albert Hofman

January 11, 1906, Thu
 3:00 pm CET -1:00
 Baden, Switzerland
 47°N29' 008°E18'
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 Koch
 Mean Node



The planetary line-up on the day of discovery of the hallucinogenic effects of LSD included a Venus/Saturn/Uranus conjunction in early Gemini, symbolizing breaking out of structures. The Moon was in Virgo that day around the same degrees as the Pluto/Uranus conjunction of the 1960s when the Harvard experiments with the substance began and the use of LSD quickly spread into popular culture.

In Hofmann's own horoscope the transiting conjunction of Venus/Saturn/Uranus was square to his natal Mars/Saturn conjunction. Transiting Jupiter was opposite his Sun, serving to expand his essence and give him courage. Transiting Neptune was inconjunct his natal Saturn. By Solar Arc, the Sun sextiled his natal Mercury, an important correlation with the timing of this discovery. This invention defined him as the brilliant researcher that he was, and became a signature accomplishment and foundation for exploration for the rest of his life. Solar Arc Sun was near his Midheaven—off by 2 degrees. A birth time of 3:07, rather than 3:00, would put the Solar Arc Sun exactly at his Midheaven on the day of the LSD discovery. This makes us wonder if his birth time might be rectified to 3:07 PM. Solar Arc Saturn was exactly square natal Neptune, perfectly symbolizing the scientific discovery of a mind-altering substance. Transiting Pluto was exactly conjunct his Solar Arc Ascendant, and near (within three degrees) of his natal Moon. Mars, often a trigger for events, was transiting his Midheaven, conjunct his natal Saturn, and his progressed Sun. The transits, progressions, and Solar Arc correlations highlighted this important scientific discovery in his

laboratory that would define Albert Hofmann's life, as well as serve as a catalyst for thousands of others for the expansion of their consciousness.

Hofmann experienced the profound and sad change of LSD from his "wonder child" to his "problem child." His wonder child helped other scientists solve problems and helped artists unfold their creative genius. In 1980 he published the book *LSD: My Problem Child*. Transiting Saturn and Mars were square his natal Pluto/Mercury opposition. Fortunately, at the end of his life there began a revival of academic interest in psychedelics, including research in LSD-assisted psychotherapy.

Hofmann was voted the "greatest living genius" in 2007 by the *Daily Telegraph*. Genius is often correlated with Mercury/Uranus aspects. Mercury, the ruler of Hofmann's Gemini Ascendant is conjunct Uranus, and placed strongly on the angle of the Descendant. Pluto in the 12th house is indicative of his deep exploration of consciousness. Saturn at 0 degrees of Pisces is the most elevated planet, at the Midheaven, prominently placed near that angle. Mars loosely conjunct Saturn in the 10th house sharpens this focus. Saturn sextiles his Mercury/Uranus conjunction, giving him the discipline to use his genius mind for scientific exploration and discovery. Hofmann had planets near each of the angles of his horoscope: Mercury/Uranus on the Descendant, Saturn on the Midheaven, Pluto near the Ascendant, and Chiron near the IC. Neptune, the planet symbolizing the exploration of non-ordinary reality, is located in Hofmann's 1st house.

Stanislav Grof summarized the potential of LSD in his foreword for Hofmann's biography, *Mystic Chemist: The Life of Albert Hofmann and His Discovery of LSD*: "Never before in the history of science had a single substance held so much promise in such a wide variety of fields. For neuropharmacologists and neurophysiologists, the discovery of LSD meant the beginning of a golden era of research that could potentially lead to major advances concerning neuroreceptors, synaptic transmitters, chemical antagonisms, the role of serotonin in the brain, and the intricate biochemical interactions underlying cerebral processes."³

Grof described Albert Hofmann as "one of the most influential scientists of the twentieth century, a Promethean visionary whose discoveries helped to chart a new trajectory not only for psychiatry, psychology, and neuroscience, but also for the evolution of the human species."⁴ Grof also described Hofmann's uncommon radiant personal qualities: "Over the years, I developed great affection and deep admiration for him, not only for his outstanding and genuine scientific achievements but also for his extraordinary humanity which radiated astonishing vitality, curiosity, and love for all creation."⁵

Stanislav Grof

(July 1, 1931, 10:45 or 10:50 PM, Prague, CZE)

Rodden Rating A

Horoscope Features:

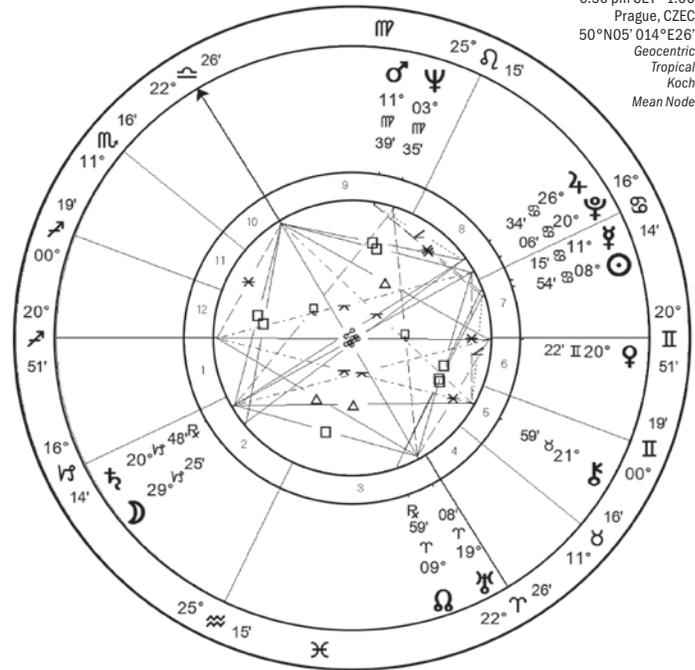
- Sagittarius Ascendant (19)
- Ruler of Ascendant, Jupiter, conjunct Pluto
- Uranus strongly angular at IC
- Venus strongly angular at Descendant
- Saturn/Moon conjunction (Vesta/Saturn/Moon) in Capricorn
- T-square Cardinal: Saturn/Moon square Uranus square Mercury/Jupiter/Pluto
- Mars conjunct Neptune in the 9th house

Stan Grof first heard of Albert Hofmann in 1954 when he worked as a medical student volunteer at the Psychiatric Department of the School of Medicine of St. Charles University in Prague. His teacher, George Roubicek, had a working relationship with Sandoz Pharmaceutical Company in Basel where Hofmann worked, from which they received complimentary samples of new products. As part of this practice, one day Roubicek received a package of LSD-25, along with a letter describing its discovery. Roubicek asked Grof to be a guide for experimental subjects, and to observe and keep records of their experiences. Grof was prohibited as a student from being an experimenter by the faculty board, and could not wait until he graduated from medical school to experience LSD personally. In the fall of 1956 he had his first LSD experience, just as transiting Neptune and Pluto were making an exact sextile, with Pluto conjunct his natal Neptune and transiting Neptune sextiling natal Neptune and square his natal Moon, symbolizing a powerful non-ordinary, transformative experience. He described how this altered the course of his professional life: "It resulted in a profound personal transformation and spiritual awakening that sent me professionally on a radically different course than the one for which I had been trained and prepared; I have, in fact, been following that trajectory with great determination to this very day. The research of non-ordinary states of consciousness has been my passion, vocation, and profession ever since."⁶ After this experience Grof became a lifelong psychedelic researcher.

In 1965 Grof was invited to the United States for an international conference on LSD. During that trip he went several places, including an unanticipated stop at Millbrook at which time he met Timothy Leary and Ralph Metzner, important connections that would be lifelong. The Uranus/

Stanislav Grof

Jul 1 1931, Wed
6:50 pm CET - 1:00
Prague, CZE
50°N05' 014°E26'
Geocentric
Tropical
Koch
Mean Node



Pluto conjunction in Virgo was conjunct his 9th house Mars, symbolizing transformation through travel afar. In addition, transiting Neptune and Saturn were trine to each other, and formed a grand trine to his quadruple conjunction of Sun, Mercury, Pluto, and Jupiter. He returned to Prague to seek official permission to go back to the USA and after one rejection, permission was granted to work on a two-year research grant from John Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. He left Communist Prague on March 7, 1967. SA Moon was exactly opposite his natal Neptune in the 9th house; SA Venus was exactly opposite his Saturn/Moon Midpoint. After these two years, Grof remained in the United States where his work in the expansion of consciousness has grown in exponential proportions. From 1967 to 1973 he continued to work at John Hopkins, becoming Chief of Psychiatric Research. The program at John Hopkins was one of the world's most influential projects to study the therapeutic benefits of psychedelics.⁷ Grof's first wife, Joan Halifax, participated in these studies, and together they wrote and published in 1977, *The Human Encounter with Death*, just as transiting Jupiter, ruler of his Ascendant, was crossing his Descendant, and opposite Neptune, coming to his Ascendant.

Stanislav Grof was the primary founder of transpersonal psychology and the transpersonal studies field.⁸ "Transpersonal" is a term Grof coined in 1967 to describe the emerging consciousness movement.⁹ When transiting Uranus was opposite his natal Uranus in 1973, Grof moved across country to become scholar-in-residence at Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California, where he lived through

1987. Esalen has served as a place for consciousness expanding experiences and education from its birth, and Grof organized numerous meetings and conferences there. He was co-editor of *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology and Psychotherapy* for several years. He met his second wife, Christina, at Esalen, and together they sought non-pharmacological methods of accessing altered states of consciousness, given that LSD therapy was no longer lawful. They discovered that certain breathing patterns were similar to those experienced with LSD, and in 1977 created a holotropic breathwork experience during a month-long workshop. The Grofs continued to grow the holotropic breathwork movement and worked with thousands of participants and trained numerous facilitators worldwide. Along with Esalen's co-founders Michael Murphy and Dick Price, Grof co-founded the International Transpersonal Association in 1978. He published *LSD Psychotherapy* in 1980. The Grofs were also the co-founders of the Spiritual Emergency Network, and in 1989 published *Spiritual Emergency: When Personal Transformation Becomes a Crisis*.

In 1987 the Grofs moved to Mill Valley, California. Stan became an adjunct teaching faculty at the California Institute of Integral Studies, where he has worked and taught with Richard Tarnas. Grof has continued his research, teaching, and writing on the expansion of consciousness, having published some 20 books. In 2007 he was presented the Vision 97 Prize from the Dagmar and Vaclav Havel Foundation, bestowed on October 5, 2007, by former President Vaclav Hamel of the Czech Republic, Grof's birthplace. Transiting Saturn was exactly conjunct his natal Neptune, and transiting Jupiter was near his Ascendant.

Grof has a Sagittarius Ascendant, symbolizing his interest in exploration of far-reaching philosophies, cultures, and world views. It also symbolizes the prolific writer, and the university professor. The ruler of Grof's Ascendant, Jupiter, is conjunct Pluto which amplifies Jupiter's expression. His Jupiter/Pluto conjunction, symbolic of the "high priest" archetype, is in the 8th house which symbolizes death and re-birth. His life-long interest in the transpersonal power of psychedelics and his invention and teaching of holotropic breathwork are expressions of this powerfully placed conjunction. Grof's Mercury is conjunct Sun, Jupiter, and Pluto, surely contributing to his ability to speak numerous languages. Venus is another strong planet as it is angular on his descendant. He has had marriages to two strong, powerful women, with whom he worked, conducted research, and



wrote books. Grof has a warm personality and is a sensitive and copacetic collaborator with his colleagues. Mars conjunct Neptune in his 9th house is indicative of the spiritual warrior whose passion is the study of altered states of consciousness (symbolized by Neptune), and who lives far from his birthplace. The cardinal T-square of Saturn/Moon opposite Mercury/Pluto/Jupiter and square Uranus creates tensions and contradictions that Grof certainly has used to make dis-

coveries, and to produce a great volume of creative and well researched work. Saturn gives endurance, reliability, and the willingness to work in a focused and determined way, and combined with outer transpersonal planets Uranus and Pluto, to further transformative theory and research, and to write and publish.

Timothy Leary

(October 22, 1920, 10:45 AM, Springfield, MA)

Rodden Rating AA

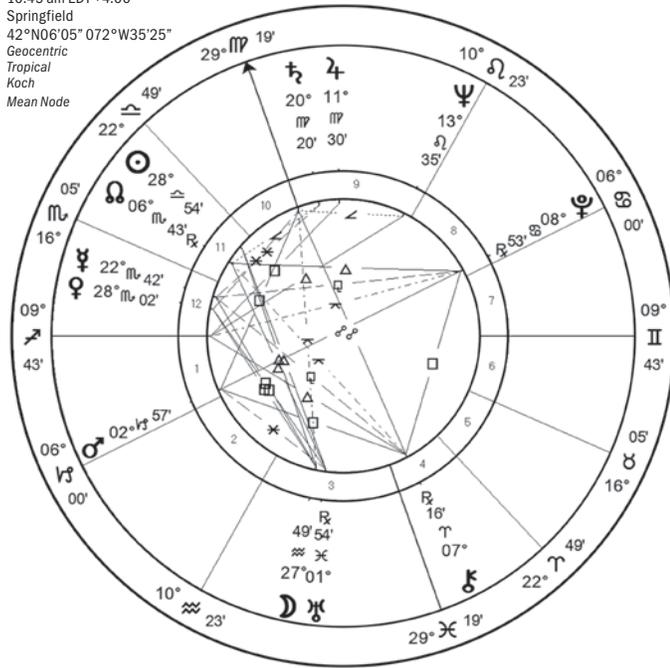
Horoscope Features:

- Sagittarius Ascendant
- Moon conjunct Uranus
- Moon/Uranus trine Sun
- Pluto in the 8th house (transformation)
- Mars opposite Pluto
- Cardinal T-square: Mars/Chiron/Pluto
- Mercury and Venus conjunct in the 8th house square Moon/Uranus
- Unaspected Neptune (no Ptolemaic aspects)

Timothy Leary is best known as a faculty member at Harvard, who, together with Richard Alpert and others, conducted experiments with psilocybin and LSD and popularized the therapeutic potential for psychedelic substances. Tim was the only child of strict Catholic parents, though his father left the family when Tim was 13. Leary attended West Point Military Academy but was expelled for misconduct. He then graduated with his bachelor's degree from the University of Alabama, obtained his master's degree from Washington State University, and his doctorate in clinical psychology from U.C. Berkeley in 1950. He was an assistant professor at Berkeley from 1950 to 1955. On

Timothy Leary

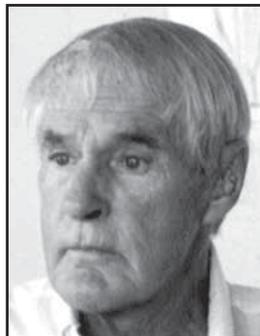
Oct 22 1920, Fri
10:45 am EDT +4:00
Springfield
42°N06°05' 072°W35°25"
Geocentric
Tropical
Koch
Mean Node



the eve of his 35th birthday in 1955 his first wife, Marianne, committed suicide, and Tim was left to raise his young son and daughter, Susan, age 8, and Jack, age 6. A transiting Jupiter/Pluto conjunction was opposing his natal Moon/Uranus conjunction.

From 1955 to 1958 Leary was the director of psychiatric research at the Kaiser Family Foundation. In 1957 he published *Interpersonal Diagnosis of Personality*, which was based on the analysis of hundreds of group treatment outcomes. Leary did not consider deviant patient behavior from the norm to be dysfunctional; in this book he categorized patients into different personality types with five different levels of interpersonal interaction. This book gave him a sound reputation in academic circles. Transiting Jupiter was at his Midheaven; transiting Saturn was at his Ascendant; and transiting Neptune was conjunct his Sun.

He and his children, after his wife committed suicide, relocated to Florence, Italy, in the winter of 1959 where he worked on a manuscript *The Existential Transaction*, which presented ideas for a new psychology. Transiting Jupiter was going over his Ascendant, and transiting Saturn was conjunct natal Mars. In Italy he met his old friend Frank Barron who told him about an extraordinary experience taking magic mushrooms in Mexico. Barron also told him that Harvard Professor David McClelland was in Florence and had just read *Leary's Interpersonal Diagnosis of Personality*. McClelland and Leary met, and McClelland offered Leary a job at Harvard. McClelland said, "You're just



what we need to shake things up at Harvard."¹⁰

In August, 1960, Leary traveled to Cuernavaca, Mexico, and consumed psilocybin mushrooms for the first time, an experience that altered the course of his life. Leary commented, "I learned more about the mind, the brain and its structures than I did in the preceding fifteen years as a diligent psychologist."¹¹ This experience corresponded with transiting Neptune conjunct his North Node; transiting Chiron was conjunct his Moon/Uranus conjunction. As could be expected, there were several prominent Solar Arc contacts at the time of this important event: SA Mercury conjunct Mars; SA Mars opposite Neptune; and SA Moon conjunct Chiron.

When Leary returned from Mexico, together with his Harvard colleague Richard Alpert, they founded the Harvard Psychedelic Research Institute, and began the Harvard Psilocybin Project. An aspect of this project was the Concord Prison Experiment, designed to study the effects of psilocybin combined with psychotherapy on the rehabilitation of prisoners. At Aldous Huxley's suggestion, Leary sent a detailed report about the Harvard Psilocybin Project to Albert Hofmann in early 1961. Hofmann responded on February 22, 1961, and noted, "it gave me ... great satisfaction to study your interesting approach using psilocybin and a consciousness-expanding drugs." Leary's SA Sun was conjunct his Ascendant.

Another famous experiment was the Good Friday experiment, also dubbed the "Miracle of March Chapel." Psilocybin was administered to subjects in a religious setting to see if the setting triggered or favored mystical experiences. Transiting Uranus was sextile Leary's Sun and opposite his natal Moon. It quickly became clear who was administered the placebo, and who had received the active ingredient. Some 20 years later, nine out of ten participants confirmed that their one-time experience had enabled them to lead a more spiritually aware life.¹²

On May 27, 1963, Leary was fired from Harvard, reportedly for not giving required lectures, while Richard Alpert was fired at the same time for allegedly giving psilocybin to an undergraduate. Transiting Uranus was opposite natal Uranus nearly exact; transiting Mars was opposite his natal Moon nearly exact. Saturn was in the mix, too, transiting conjunct Leary's Moon/Uranus conjunction. Pluto was transiting his natal Jupiter. These transits occurred in his 3rd and 9th houses, the axis of education and teaching. Also, transiting Neptune was square his natal Neptune.

Peggy, Billy, and Tommy Hitchcock, heirs to the Mellon fortune, enabled Leary, Alpert, Metzner, and others to live and work

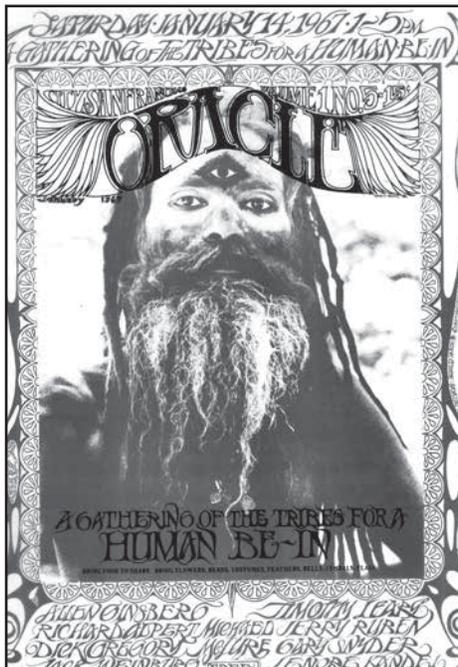
in a 63-room mansion on an estate in Millbrook, New York, to continue their experiments and research. “Millbrook,” as it was known, was a research headquarters for Leary and colleagues for about five years and an ongoing experiment in community living.

In 1964 Leary, along with Ralph Metzner and Richard Alpert, co-authored the landmark book *The Psychedelic Experience: A Manual Based on the Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Transiting Pluto and Uranus conjoined natal Jupiter, and transiting Saturn was in opposition. For everyone at this time, the culture was working with the revolutionary, transformative energy of Saturn’s opposition to the Uranus/Pluto conjunction.

Leary is known for designating the importance of “set and setting” in therapeutic psychoactive sessions, the set being a person’s mental and physical state of being and expectation, and the “setting” being the atmosphere and surroundings of the session. On September 19, 1966, Leary founded the League for Spiritual Discovery, a religion proclaiming LSD as its holy sacrament, when transiting Uranus/Pluto was conjunct Leary’s natal Saturn. Less than a month later, on October 6, 1966, LSD was declared illegal. Another landmark date was the January 14, 1967 Human Be-In held in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park. Speaking to a gathering of 30,000, Leary coined the famous phrase, “Turn on, tune in, drop out,” with transiting Neptune conjunct his natal Mercury. SA Neptune also was conjunct his Midheaven, symbolizing his attainment of fame as the “High Priest” of the psychedelic culture. Later in 1967, he married his third wife, Rosemary Woodruff.

Leary’s first of numerous run-ins with the law occurred December 20, 1965. At this time transiting Neptune was conjunct natal Mercury in his 12th house—symbolizing bad mental judgment. Transiting Saturn was opposite natal Jupiter, restricting his freedom; and transiting Pluto was conjunct natal Saturn, delivering some serious consequences regarding travel, freedom, and career. In 1970, when he was given prison time again, he was given the Leary Interpersonal Behavior Test, which he had designed. He answered the questions in a manner that resulted in him being assigned to a lower-security prison from which he escaped.

Albert Hofmann and Timothy Leary met for the first time on September 3, 1971, in Lausanne, Switzerland, when transiting Jupiter/Neptune conjoined Leary’s natal Venus,



and transiting Saturn was conjunct his Descendant. Transiting Pluto was at Leary’s Midheaven. Hofmann felt mixed about Leary’s legacy with LSD, “Leary’s indiscriminate publicity for the consumption of LSD contributed to its prohibition which ended scientific research. On the other hand, Leary’s propaganda and Oscar Janiger’s enthusiasm put LSD in the hands of the spiritual elite, such as Aldous Huxley, or of famous patients like Cary Grant.”¹³

In 1978 Leary married his 5th wife, Barbara Blum, and adopted her son Zachary and raised him as his own. Transiting Saturn was opposite his natal Moon/Uranus conjunction. SA Sun was sextile his natal Moon exact; SA Moon was sextile his natal Moon

within one degree, and SA Mars was conjunct his natal Uranus (that is in a conjunction with the Moon). Mars rules his 5th house of children.

In 1995 he was diagnosed with inoperable prostate cancer. He died at age 75 on May 31, 1996. His death was videotaped, and much of the footage appears in the recently released film by Gay Dillingham called *Dying to Know*. Leary left his mark as one of the most prominent figures of the counterculture of the 1960s. Yet, he was viewed as a threat by some, most notably, then-President Richard Nixon, who deemed Leary “public enemy number one,” or “the most dangerous man in America.” Leary noted, “Anything that alters consciousness is a threat to the existing order. That is one point of agreement across the entire political spectrum.”¹⁴

Leary was an explorer, a maverick, a free thinker, and a revolutionary: expressions of his Sagittarius Ascendant and his Moon-Uranus conjunction, powered up with a grand trine formation with the Sun and Pluto. Leary was in 29 prisons in his life, corresponding with a loaded 12th house with Venus, Mercury, and Juno there; and with Pluto in the 8th house opposite Mars. This Pluto placement symbolized the traumatic suicides of his wife and daughter, his lifelong work with transformative experiences, and his interest in the dying process late in his life. Neptune has no Ptolemaic close aspects which can result in a planet’s wild expression. He was a boundless explorer of altered states of consciousness. He was married five times, some of them ending abruptly, expressions of his Libra Sun that is drawn to partnership and marriage, but his Moon/Uranus that can result in sudden changes in home and family. The Sun and North

Richard Alpert

Apr 6 1931, Mon
 10:40 am EST +5:00
 Boston, MA
 42°N21'30" 071°W03'37"
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 Koch
 Mean Node

Node were in the 11th house of groups. He constantly led groups of people in consciousness expanding experiences, and spent some years in communal living. He was a prolific writer who published numerous books, symbolized by Moon/Uranus in the third house, and Neptune, Jupiter, and Saturn in the 9th house, symbolizing publishing. Mercury/Venus in Scorpio in the 12th house was square to his Moon/Uranus in the 3rd house symbolizing communication, giving brilliance to his deep, dry, and charming way with words. Ralph Metzner remarked about Leary's gift for words: "He had a fantastic gift for words. His descriptions of his psychedelic experiences...are unparalleled... Paul Lee once said to Tim, 'How did you teach your cells to write?'... He also had a gift for satire... He was a silver-tongued orator...he had them hanging on his every word."¹⁵

Richard Alpert (Ram Dass)

(April 6, 1931, 10:40 AM, Boston, MA)

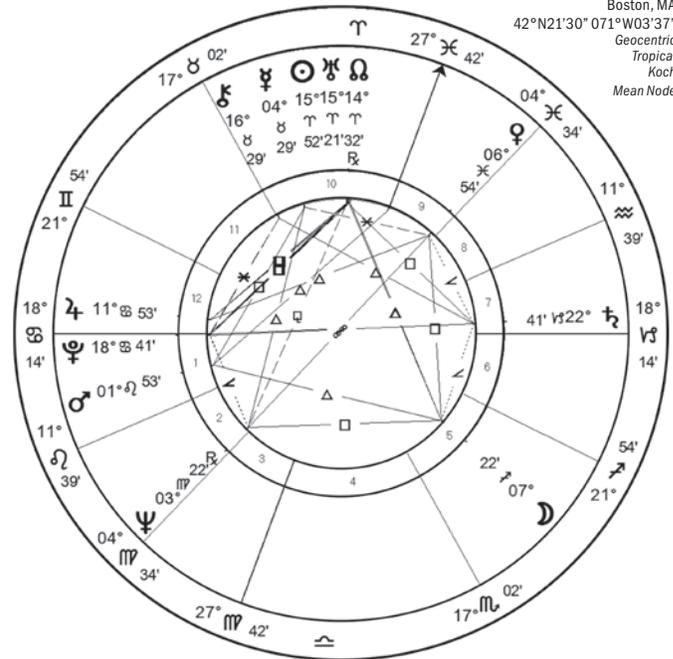
Rodden Rating B

Horoscope Features:

- Cancer Ascendant with Jupiter/Pluto on the Ascendant
- Moon in Sagittarius
- Sun conjunct Uranus—exact
- Square Jupiter/Pluto
- Grand Trine in Fire (Mars/Moon/Sun-Uranus)
- T-square Cardinal: Jupiter-Pluto/Sun-Uranus/Saturn)
- Grand Cross including Ceres (wide orb) and nodal axis
- T-square Mutable: Neptune/Moon/Venus
- Venus opposite Neptune

Richard Alpert was born to a wealthy Jewish family in Newton, Massachusetts. His father, George Alpert, was a Boston lawyer, president of the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad, and one of the founders of Brandeis University. Alpert obtained his doctorate from Stanford, and was a psychology professor at Harvard when Timothy Leary arrived in 1960.

Alpert was in Cuernavaca, Mexico at the same time as Leary, Frank Barron, and David McClelland at spring break 1960 when they decided to try psilocybin mushrooms. Transiting Pluto was conjunct his natal Neptune and transiting Saturn was conjunct his Descendant and



opposite natal Pluto. In October, he and Leary and others founded the Harvard Psychedelic Research Institute. Alpert traveled to the International Congress for Applied Psychology in Copenhagen in August 1961, and then traveled on to Switzerland where he met with Albert Hofmann. Hofmann wrote: "Dr. A. believes that the essential effect under psilocybin is for the true self to disconnect from the individual self that is bound to external circumstances and to become conscious of itself, which can lead to self-knowledge and healing...a nice lunch on the Rhine Terrace at Donati's."¹⁶ His meeting with Hofmann corresponded with transiting Pluto square his natal Moon; his Saturn return, and transiting Jupiter through his 7th house. As early as the summer of 1962 Leary, Alpert, and a few colleagues organized a six-week course in Mexico to train "trip guides" for the responsible use of LSD and other psychedelics, when Jupiter was transiting his 9th house. He was dismissed from Harvard in 1963, shortly after Leary was dismissed, for allegedly giving psilocybin to an undergraduate. Jupiter was going through his 10th house of career, and transiting Uranus was conjunct natal Neptune. One would expect more unsettling transits for such an event, but the transits would suggest that it would have felt like liberation. He co-authored, with Leary and Metzner, *The Psychedelic Experience*, in 1964 when transiting Jupiter was conjunct natal Mercury, transiting Saturn was conjunct, and transiting Uranus opposite, his 9th house Venus.

During his time at Harvard, he engaged in extensive exchanges of ideas with Alan Watts and Aldous Huxley, both of whom were experts on Eastern spiritual traditions.

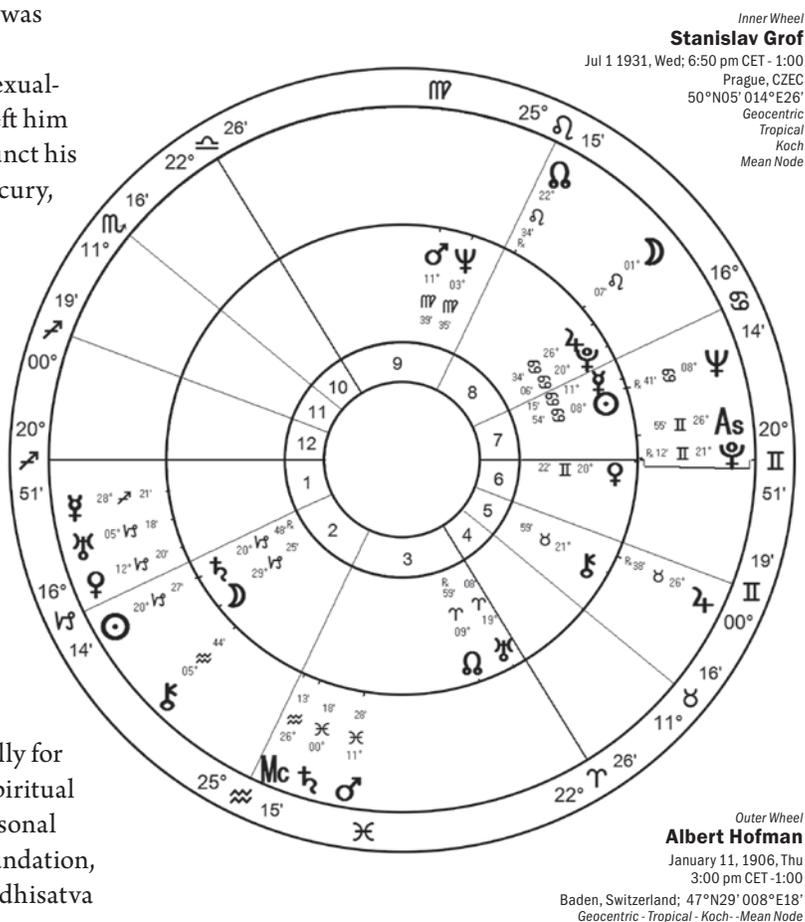
In 1967 he traveled to India with spiritual seeker Bhagavan Das, and met the man who would become his guru, Neem Karoli Baba, who Alpert called “Maharaj-ji.” Maharaj-ji gave Alpert his spiritual name, Ram Dass, which means “servant of God.” Ram Dass has been a spiritual teacher of meditation and spirituality through his books, lectures, and webinars. Transiting Saturn was trine his natal Moon. The transiting Uranus/Pluto conjunction was exactly sextile his natal Pluto on his Ascendant.

In 1971 he published his seminal book *Be Here Now* when transiting Chiron was conjunct his natal North Node/Uranus/Sun conjunction in the 9th house that symbolizes publishing. This book brought Eastern philosophy to Western minds in an easily readable book on how to live joyously in the present. This was one of some 15 books on spirituality that he has published, among them *The Only Dance There Is*; *Grist for the Mill*; and *How Can I Help?* In 1974 he founded the Hanuman Foundation, which developed the Prison Ashram Project, designed to foster spiritual growth in prison inmates, and the Dying Project, which offers spiritual support for conscious dying. In 1978 he co-founded, with Larry Brilliant, the Seva Foundation, an international health organization that focuses on sight restoration and eye health internationally. Seva Foundation was created when transiting Pluto was opposite his Sun/Uranus conjunction, and when transiting Neptune was trine that Sun/Uranus conjunction.

In the 1990s Ram Dass came out about his bisexuality. In February 1997 Ram Dass had a stroke that left him with expressive aphasia. Transiting Pluto was conjunct his natal Moon, and transiting Uranus was square Mercury, symbolizing the disruption in speech. In 2000, he published a book *Still Here*. In 2001 he was the subject of a documentary film *Fierce Grace*. He moved to Maui where he teaches by webinar and continues to be an inspiration for many. In 2009, at age 78, he learned that he had fathered a son as a 24-year old Stanford student during a brief affair. He then met his son, Peter Reichard, a North Carolina banker, and also learned that he was a grandfather. This occurred when Solar Arc Jupiter came to conjunct his IC, and SA Neptune was trine his Ascendant.

A signature feature of Ram Dass’s horoscope is the Jupiter/Pluto conjunction at his Cancer Ascendant, an aspect that projects him as a guru or “high priest.” Ram Dass has been a guiding light spiritually for thousands of people as he has worked on his own spiritual journey and shared his discoveries. Ram Dass’s personal foundation is called the Love Serve Remember Foundation, and it is noted that he “continues to uphold the bodhisatva

ideal for others through his compassionate sharing of true knowledge and vision.”¹⁷ This aim expresses the compassion of the Cancer Ascendant, and the spiritual ideals of the Jupiter/Pluto conjunction, and the individual truth of his exact Sun/Uranus/North Node conjunction high in the 10th house. He was born at a powerful time between a lunar and solar eclipse. His Sagittarius Moon, trine to his Sun/Uranus conjunction and trine to Mars in Leo, making for a loose grand fire trine, draws him toward religious and spiritual truth seeking. Saturn opposite the Jupiter/Pluto on the Ascendant and square to the Sun/Uranus forms a T-square that has called him to work on his own spiritual journey all of his life. His horoscope exudes independence and free thinking as well as great leadership. A Mercury-Neptune trine makes him a visionary, idealistic thinker, while a Mercury-Mars square tempers his thinking. These aspects give him the visionary ideas which he expresses through his writing and speaking. A recent book, *Polishing the Mirror: How to Live From Your Spiritual Heart* is a subject that expresses the two cardinal T-squares in his horoscope; the cardinal T-square of Saturn-Jupiter/Pluto-Sun/Uranus is symbolized by “Polishing the Mirror;” and the Mutable T-square of Neptune-Moon-Venus is symbolized by “How to Live from Your Spiritual Heart.”



Synastry and Common Themes of these Icons of Consciousness Expansion

Sagittarius/Jupiter Themes (spiritual seeking, exploration of other cultures and philosophies, spiritual leadership)

- Sagittarius Ascendant: Grof, Leary
- Sagittarius Moon: Ram Dass
- Planets in the 9th—all except Hofmann; Grof, Leary, and Ram Dass have been world travelers
- Strong Jupiter aspects
- Jupiter/Pluto on the Ascendant—Ram Dass
 - Jupiter (ruler of the Ascendant) conjunct Pluto in the 8th-Grof
 - Jupiter (ruler of Ascendant) conjunct Saturn in the 9th-Leary
 - Jupiter trine Sun-Hofmann

Uranus Aspecting Luminaries or Personal Planets

- Leary: Moon 27 Aquarius conjunct Uranus
- Ram Dass: Sun/Uranus conjunct exact
- Grof: Uranus 19 Aries widely square Moon and Sun
- Hofmann: Uranus conjunct Mercury

Pluto:

- 8th House Pluto: Grof, Leary
- 12th house Pluto: Hofmann
- 1st house Pluto on the Ascendant: Ram Dass (with Jupiter)
- Pluto/Moon Aspects:
 - Moon trine Pluto (Leary)
 - Moon opposite Pluto (Grof)

Pluto/Sun Aspects

- Sun square Pluto (Leary)
- Sun/Uranus square Pluto/Jupiter (Ram Dass)
- Sun conjunct Pluto (wide orb) -Grof

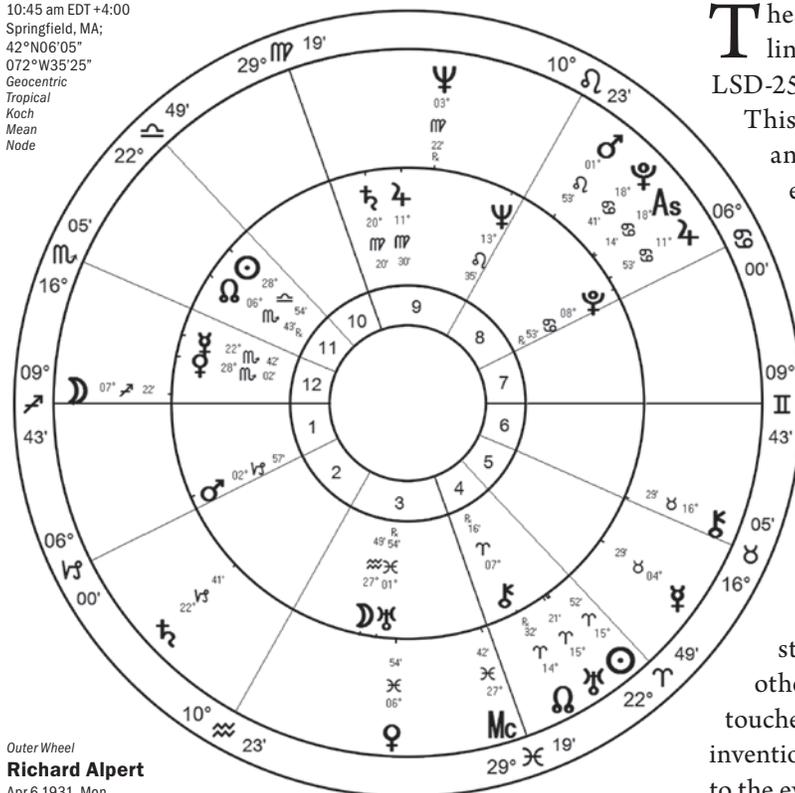
Other Strong Pluto Aspects

- Pluto opposite Mercury/Uranus (Hofmann)
- Mars opposite Pluto and square Chiron (Leary)
- Pluto conjunct Jupiter (and Mercury) opposite Saturn/Moon (Grof)

Other Notes of Synastry

- Leary's and Grof's Plutos conjunct Ram Dass' Ascendant
- Ram Dass' Moon conjuncts Ascendant of Leary and Grof

Inner Wheel
Timothy Leary
 Oct 22 1920, Fri
 10:45 am EDT +4:00
 Springfield, MA;
 42°N06'05"
 072°W35'25"
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 Koch
 Mean
 Node



Outer Wheel
Richard Alpert
 Apr 6 1931, Mon
 10:40 am EST +5:00
 Boston, MA; 42°N21'30" 071°W03'37"
 Geocentric - Tropical - Koch - Mean Node

These four icons of the expansion of consciousness are linked by the exploration of the therapeutic use of the LSD-25 molecule, discovered by Albert Hofmann in 1943. This discovery, and the exploration, research, writing, and teaching of all of these men profoundly influenced our culture, particularly from the early 1960s and beyond. Their links through their horoscopes are strong and profound. It is not surprising that there are strong themes of Sagittarius and prominent Jupiter. The planet, Pluto, symbolizes deep exploration in each of their horoscopes and figures prominently individually and in synastry with each other. The exploration of consciousness expansion through the ingestion of a psychoactive substance is a Plutonian process of search and discover. The freedom and independence and truth-seeking of Uranus touches each of them personally and figures into their lifelong strong pioneering endeavors. These men, and many others with whom they have worked, have deeply touched and widely expanded our worlds, giving birth to inventions, breakthroughs, spiritual growth, and ultimately, to the evolution of a kinder and brighter world.

References:

- Grof, Stanislav. *Battle for the Mind: My Adventures in the Communist World*. Unpublished paper. 2015.
- Hagenbach, Dieter, and Werthmueller, Lucius. *Mystic Chemist: The Life of Albert Hofmann and His Discovery of LSD*. Santa Fe: Synergetic Press. 2013.
- Metzner, Ralph. *Allies for Awakening: Guidelines for productive and sage experiences with entheogens*. Berkeley, CA: Regent Press, 2015.
- Ram Dass, Metzner, Ralph, and Bravo, Gary. *Birth of a Psychedelic Culture*. Santa Fe: Synergetic Press, 2010.
- Tarnas, Richard. *Cosmos and Psyche*. New York: Viking, 2006.
- www.ramdass.org

Endnotes:

1. Mishlove, Jeffrey. *The Roots of Consciousness*. Tulsa, Oklahoma: Council Oak Books, 1975; Rev. 1993
2. Dinan, Stephen. *Consciousness Timeline*. www.enlightenment.com.
3. Hagenbach, Dieter, and Werthmueller, Lucius. *Mystic Chemist: The life of Albert Hofmann and His Discovery of LSD*. Santa Fe: Synergetic Press, 2013. p.xiv.
4. Ibid. p.xxiii.
5. Ibid. p.xvi.
6. Ibid. p.xiii.
7. Ibid, p. 198.
8. Ibid, p. 204.

9. Ibid.
10. Ibid. p. 136.
11. Ibid. p. 137.
12. Ibid. p. 213.
13. Ibid. p. 275.
14. Ibid. p. 191.
15. Ram Dass and Metzner, Ralph, with Bravo, Gary. *Birth of a Psychedelic Culture*. Santa Fe: Synergetic Press, 2010., p.21
16. Hofmann, Albert. Diary entry August 23, 1961.
17. Ram Dass, biography on www.ramdass.org

Cathy Coleman

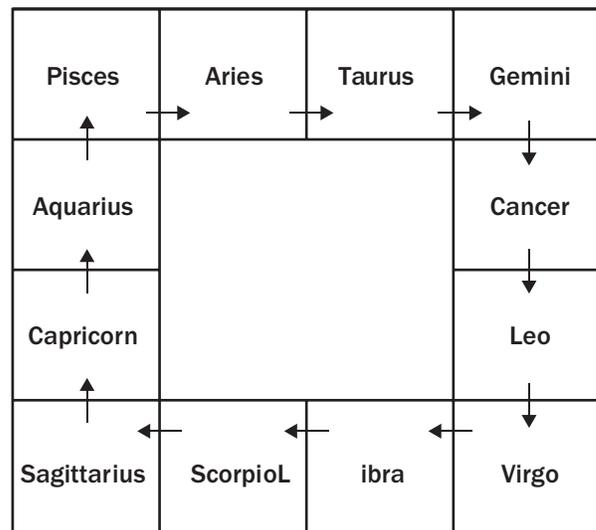


Cathy Coleman holds a doctoral degree in East-West psychology from California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS). She holds NCGR Level IV Certification, is an ISAR CAP; and is a certified Astro*Carto*Grapher. She was in the first graduating class of the Online College of Astrology (now International Astrological College) and the Online College of Vedic Astrology and has ACVA Level I Certification. From 2001-2003 she was President of Kepler College. She has lectured widely at Bay area astrological organizations and at national conferences, and is the president and education director of the San Francisco NCGR Chapter. Contact: ccoleman829@gmail.com; 707-334-3284; www.cathycoleman.co

How to Read a South Indian Chart

In this square chart the 12 zodiacal signs (known as *Rashis* in Sanskrit) are always in the same squares. The Dual signs are in the four corners. Pisces is always in the upper left hand corner, followed directly by Aries, then Taurus, and Gemini in the upper right hand corner. Virgo is in the lower right hand corner, Sagittarius in the lower left. The signs and houses are read clockwise around the zodiac. The Ascendant can be in any one of these 12 signs, and the planets distributed according to where they are in the heavens. All South Indian charts are read like this, and the birth chart is typically shown to the left or above the *Navamsha* (the 9th harmonic chart.)

South Indian Chart



*See "Edward Snowden" Article, beginning on page 71.