

The Lunar Gestation Cycle

by Dietrech Pessin

As astrologers, we're familiar with the four Moon phases (the New Moon, First Quarter Moon, Full Moon, and Last Quarter Moon), which complete a lunar month cycle every 29½ days. But nearly 25 years ago, I discovered that these phases also play out at nine-month intervals over a 2¼-year (27-month) period. Unlike the month-long cycle, these phases occur in the same sign and near the same degree of the zodiac: Nine months after every New Moon, there is a First Quarter Moon in the same sign and around the same degree (no more than a few degrees apart), and nine months after this First Quarter Moon, there's a Full Moon at around the same degree of both phases. And nine months after that, a Last Quarter Moon occurs around a similar degree of the same sign. Here's an example:

Jan. 30, 2014	New Moon	10°55' Aquarius
Oct. 31, 2014	First Quarter Moon	7°36' Aquarius
July 31, 2015	Full Moon	7°56' Aquarius
April 30, 2016	Last Quarter Moon	10°13' Aquarius

I named this the Lunar Gestation Cycle (because it parallels the nine-month human gestation cycle) and labeled each related group a "Moon Family" — four phases linked by time and the (near) degree of a sign. That area of the zodiac is the "address" of the Moon Family, a hotspot of activity and a treasure trove of interlinked information.

What I learned from interviewing clients and students was that there is not only a chronological significance to the dates in a Moon Family, but also a pow-

erful connection with the details of personal storylines. An extended scenario in a client's life often perfectly matched the dates in a Moon Family. A closer look revealed that some Moon Families had a *greater and often longer-term impact* if they contained a solar and/or lunar eclipse.

Studying this cycle, we soon realize that our lives are not a string of isolated or random events. Each Moon Family reveals a pattern of linked dates that track the unfolding of a story over time. When an event at one time reminds us of a similar event at another time, we're not often conscious of the connection. Knowing the dates of a Moon Family can help us to follow the major changes in a storyline or assist us in predicting the next major event of the given story.

The Evolution of a Story and Its Timing

Every story has a Moon Family and a timetable — it just needs to be traced (keeping a journal can be very helpful here). Each of the four lunar phases has its own platform for action; each plays a part in the ongoing, evolving saga. With this cycle, the astrologer does not need to be a fortune-teller spouting out predictions. The most important factor is not "What is going to happen?" but "When?" The Lunar Gestation Cycle has all four *whens* already mapped out. (Progressions, primary transiting aspects, solar returns, etc., all assist in filling in and rounding out the picture.)

Each Moon phase has its own agenda:

- **New Moon** — begins with the seeding of something new.
 - **First Quarter Moon** — reveals emerging issues that require action.
 - **Full Moon** — marks a culmination and a full exposure of plans or issues.
 - **Last Quarter Moon** — brings closure, reviews, rewards, and payments given or received.
- A *New Moon* is going places.
 - A *First Quarter Moon* is packing its bags.
 - A *Full Moon* is enjoying the trip.
 - A *Last Quarter Moon* is sharing the memories and paying the bill.

At the time of a New Moon (or solar eclipse), the related events can be elusive, due to the lack of moonlight during those dark-sky periods. More will be revealed — as more moonlight appears — as we approach the First Quarter Moon. Always check the events around the First Quarter Moon and tag them to the events that were seeded in some way at the New Moon nine months earlier. If you have something exciting going on at the time of a Last Quarter Moon, look back over the previous 18 months to make important connections.

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Here is an example of just that. A client called in a panic because she was afraid that her mistake in the office would cost her a job at an art museum. It was easy to find the Moon Family related to her call, because it was the day of the Last Quarter Moon at 29° Capricorn. I gave her the first three dates of the relevant Moon Family and asked if they had anything to do with the current crisis: January 20, 1996; October 19, 1996; and July 20, 1997. She linked all the dates to the process of funding the renovation of the art museum:

January 19, 1996 was the date when the museum signed a \$2 million loan agreement for ten years. (New Moon at 29°45' Capricorn on January 20, 1996.)

On October 18, 1996, the loan was renegotiated for \$5 million for 15 years. (First Quarter Moon at 26°38' Capricorn on October 19, 1996.)

On July 21, 1997, construction began. (Full Moon at 27°28' Capricorn on July 20, 1997.)

On April 19, 1998, at the Last Quarter Moon at 29°33' Capricorn, the client called, panicked over a note she had received two days earlier. The note from the bank was calling in the debt, because the museum had defaulted on the payments.

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Interestingly, the problem was cleared up by a kind person at the bank, and no harm was suffered. Yet, astrologically, every important step of the loan was documented by the nine-month Lunar Gestation Cycle over a 2¼-year period. We could show the chart of the caller or those of the museum or loan dates, but these are not necessary to demonstrate the grip that the Moon Family had on the series of Capricorn-like business events linked with a Capricorn Moon Family.

So, we have a clearly marked map, a ready-made timetable that links a storyline (a package of events), and we can watch it wax and wane through the months and years ahead. Dramas in our lives cluster around the dates of these phases, usually within two weeks on either side but sometimes *to the day*. And, as previously mentioned, when there's an eclipse involved (whether it's a solar or lunar one), it becomes a

The New Moon is a perfect time to conceive ideas or plant seeds of an undertaking, to research, brainstorm, or make a wish list.

power-packed Moon Family, and the developments have more lasting consequences for us.

The nine-month cycle is applicable to *any* event at *any* point in time, with or without the use of an entire Moon Family. To answer a question surrounding any issue, note how events from nine months ago might apply to your current situation. Did you have a dream about something nine months ago that you are involved with today? Maybe it was then that you took a workshop and were inspired to become involved in a new project — or you could have started a new job and now find that the honeymoon has worn off. Perhaps you were involved in an accident, met someone new, got married, or began planning a long trip. Whatever your issue, you can be assured that it will continue to develop and pattern itself into the fabric of your life over time.

Our affairs (pertinent to the area in our chart the Moon Family touches) appear to incubate during a Lunar Gestation Cycle, over which time we have an opportunity to interact with others, develop our interest, change our direction, or bring various factors to a close. I have read in older astrological literature that *the timing of events always waits for the Moon*. This cycle is a lost key to some of the timing questions related to the events in our lives.

Understanding this extended lunar cycle expanded my practice and gave

me a deeper insight into the complexity of my clients' lives in both the long and short term. Using this method, you can discover how astrology works as a practical tool for making personal and business decisions as well as for understanding the sequence of the patterns as they have played out in your own life.

Editor's Note: For further reference, see Dietrech Pessin, *Lunar Shadows III: The Predictive Power of Moon Phases and Eclipses* (fully updated version): <http://www.lunar-shadows.com>

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Working with Moon Families

by Frank C. Clifford

As Dietrech has pointed out, the Lunar Gestation Cycle comprises four related lunar phases (each nine months apart) that speak of the development of a seed (New Moon) into a crisis/action phase (First Quarter), then to fruition (Full Moon), and finally into crisis/recap/recoup (Last Quarter phase). (See **Table**, at right.) It's a useful timing tool that shows events unfolding over 2¼ years (at intervals of 0, 9, 18, and 27 months). No longer are we expecting a monthly lunar cycle to hold all the answers or show a complete cycle of human affairs in a mere 28 days. The Lunar Gestation Cycle is more akin to real-life phases and timings. So, what's on the agenda at each phase of the Moon?

New Moon

(The Moon conjoins the Sun.)

This is the "seed" stage, the beginning of a cycle; it is a time of new ideas and fresh starts, but it is *never* a good time to take action because, as Dietrech says, there is not enough (Moon)light on the matter. *Wait until the First Quarter nine months later before taking productive action related to ideas formed at this stage.* At the New Moon, there's a feeling of something new to discover; we're



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seen, particularly relationship concerns. (This is the Libra phase of the cycle, and generally speaking, emotions run high at the Full Moon, as relationship issues invariably come to a head.) At the Full Moon, we're completely aware: Ideas or circumstances are out in the open, and our cards are on the table. It's a great time for a launch or to achieve maximum exposure. There's a sense of fulfillment, whether it's the completion of a deadline or the enjoyment of the fruits of one's labours.

Last Quarter Moon

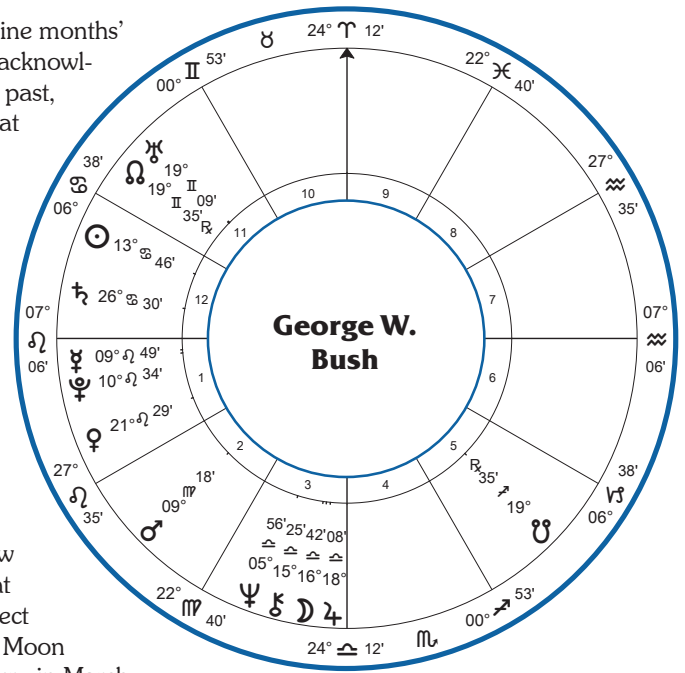
(The waning Moon squares the Sun.)

This waning phase is busy and crisis-driven (the square), but it is time to close the matter, to review and evaluate what has taken place in the past 27 months, and to see what remains useful for the future. The final phase is an ideal time to get rid of dead weight and safeguard the seeds that can be replanted

for the new phase in nine months' time. It is a period for acknowledging issues from the past, but leaving behind what no longer serves us (or a situation in our lives). It is also about preparing for the new cycle and preparing to re-invest what is still valuable.

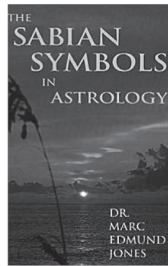
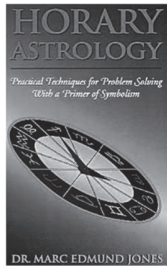
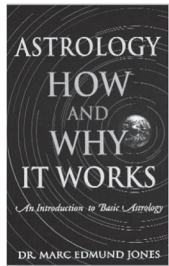
How do we know which phase we're in now?

Well, we're probably in a few, since there are New Moons each month that may activate some aspect of our chart. One New Moon may conjoin our Mercury in March, and a month later the next New Moon squares our Saturn — both begin Moon Families of their own. So, I would recommend highlighting New Moons and the aspects they make in our charts



Placidus houses, Mean Node

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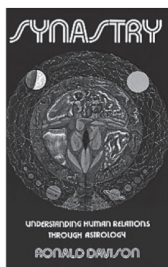
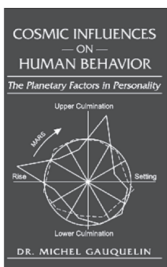
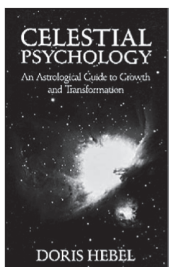
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(usually with no more than a 4–5° orb) and then follow the cycle through the stages. If a New Moon triggers our chart (by aspect to a planet or angle), it sets in motion a 2¼-year cycle. The events, emotions, or circumstances that transpire will have in them the symbolism of the sign(s), house(s), and aspect(s) involved, and the stage of the development (New, First Quarter, etc.) will be significant, too.

The cycle doesn't always end with the Last Quarter Moon. Sometimes (particularly with eclipses), the New Moon nine months later is still within orb of the degree(s) of the original set of phases, and this continues the storyline further. Let's consider an example. I began researching the 2003 invasion of Iraq to see whether this had links to George W. Bush's **Chart** (at left). I was surprised at the Moon Family involved (his Uranus at 19° Gemini was triggered) — and I was astounded at how accurately it pinpointed key dates in the developments that preceded and followed the invasion. Below, I've listed the dates, phases, degrees/signs, and corresponding events, but please take time to also consider the significance of the waxing and waning phases during both Moon Families.

Moon Family for George W. Bush

(from the New Moon on June 13, 1999)

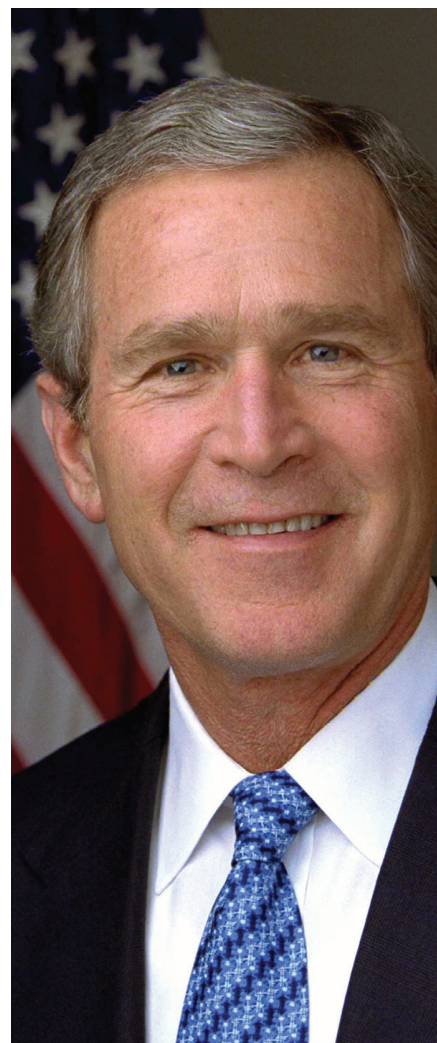
Date	Phase	Degree/Sign	Event
June 13, 1999	New Moon	22° Gemini	Bush announces his candidacy on June 13.
Mar. 13, 2000	First Quarter	23° Gemini	Bush wins Republican nomination on March 14.
Dec. 11, 2000	Full Moon	19° Gemini	Election is decided by Supreme Court on Dec. 12.
Sept. 10, 2001	Last Quarter	18° Gemini	Terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, "war on terror."

Moon Family re-triggered (near same degree/conjunct same planet), breathing new life into the story:

June 10, 2002	New Moon (eclipse)	19° Gemini	Bush "sells" the Iraq invasion to Congress.
Mar. 11, 2003	First Quarter	20° Gemini	The U.S. invades Iraq on March 20.
Dec. 8, 2003	Full Moon	16° Gemini	Saddam Hussein is captured on Dec. 13.
Sept. 6, 2004	Last Quarter (now out of orb)	14° Gemini	Bush accepts Republican nomination for second term.

The Last Quarter Square is busy and crisis-driven, but it is time to close the matter and to see what remains useful for the future.

This is an extraordinary timetable and remarkably exact. We could argue that astrology reveals this chain of events and Bush's motives. But why was his Uranus in Gemini (conjunct the North Node) at 19° Gemini in the 11th house the planet triggered? It doesn't immediately reveal Bush's impact as president of the United States: He was *not* a visionary or a reformer, nor did he speak for social change, although he *did* divide opinion (Uranus in Gemini) throughout his presidency like no other before him. In Bush's chart, Uranus, *the* planet provocateur, co-rules his Descendant (the critical angle for politicians); it is his most elevated planet, the first to rise (his "leading" planet), and is exactly conjunct his North Node. Even more telling is that it's two degrees away from his father's Sun at 21° Gemini (we could argue that he *was* completing George Senior's oil mission



in the Middle East) and also two degrees from the U.S. (July 4, 1776) Mars at 21° Gemini. These links and the related lunar phases that were triggered suggest the making of a President of War — one who would declare a controversial and far-reaching "war on terror."

Chart Data and Sources

George W. Bush, July 6, 1946; 7:26 a.m. EDT; New Haven, CT, USA (41°N18', 72°W56'); AA: from hospital records obtained by Kim Castilla.

George H. W. Bush (Senior), June 12, 1924; 10:30 a.m. EDT; Milton, MA, USA (42°N15', 71°W04'); B: Wayne Turner quotes an e-mail from the George Bush Presidential Library, citing the Bush Family Scrapbook for "between 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m."

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