

Chapter 18

PLUTO – A HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY OF AMERICA

If history repeats itself, and the unexpected always happens,
how incapable must Man be of learning from experience.

- George Bernard Shaw

In this final essay (written in July 2013), I shall be looking at the US's Pluto placement, and the impact of the Pluto cycle on America's history. In an attempt to identify and understand how Pluto manifests in the US's chart, I'll be investigating the types of events that have occurred in the past when Pluto has been activated. These should give us clues as to the effects of the upcoming Pluto transits to the US's Sun-Saturn square in 2014-16, and its Pluto Return in 2022-3. I'll be looking at some past transits and Solar Arc directions but, in particular, I'll be introducing and drawing from the Huber Life Clock.

There are many 'birth moments' for Independence Day of the United States of America, as well as significant dates around 4 July. The Uranus Rising in Gemini Chart was a former favourite of many, and some astrologers favour the late morning (Virgo Rising) chart, while others feel Libra or Scorpio Rising is more fitting.¹ Whichever chart you prefer to work with - and there seem to be valid reasons for using one of many times that day or week - it will ultimately reflect and influence how you see the US: your vision of America. For this article, I'll be using the Sibly Chart (4 July 1776, 17:10, Philadelphia), which works remarkably well with the Huber Clock. And because the Hubers used the Koch system of house division, the charts will be cast using this method (it doesn't change the position of Pluto).

The Astrological Pluto

Pluto's role is to excavate, purge and recycle. During this process, long-standing issues, themes or circumstances - areas that have been buried which perhaps secretly control us - are brought to

the surface for truthful examination in the harsh light of day. Our compulsions and emotional crutches are exposed, giving us the opportunity to restructure or eliminate them. All Pluto change is painful and this process may leave us (or our situation) stripped, undermined or downsized. As with all outer planet transit processes, chapters of our lives come to an end and that which has outlived its usefulness is brought into question.²

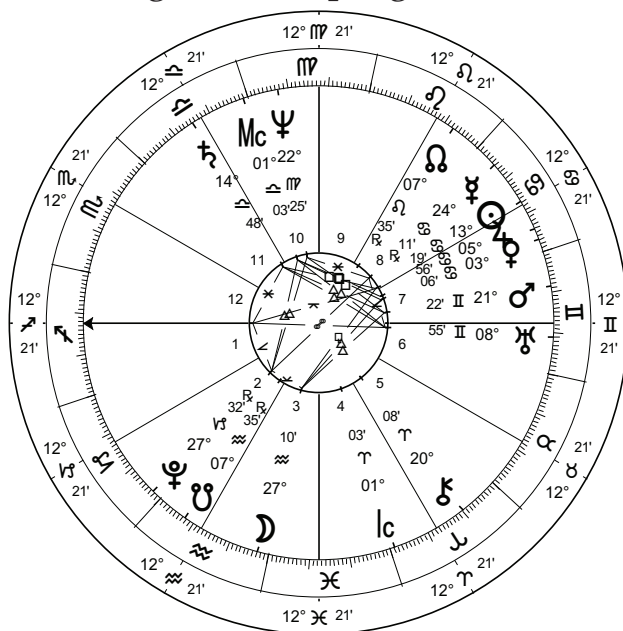
If Saturn represents old age and the final boundary of physical death, Pluto is concerned with the living process of death followed by rebirth. While both planets are linked to karma, with Pluto we are faced with wipe-out or extinction. Pluto's theme is to trigger our survival instinct and test our ability to rise from the ashes. In doing so, we emerge with some loss of innocence about the people and world around us. In its non-negotiable elimination of what was once considered powerfully pervasive, a seed is planted which allows for something new to evolve. Ultimately, Pluto is concerned with irrevocable change which forces the process of metamorphosis. Here are some keywords describing Pluto's functions:

- Compels, obsesses, shames, victimizes/empowers;
- Buries, suppresses, erupts, uncovers, exposes;
- Undermines, violates, humbles, strips, downsizes, makes redundant;
- Transforms, evolves, rebirths, regenerates, purges, cleanses.

Natal Pluto in the Sibly Chart's 2nd House

With Pluto in Capricorn in the 2nd House, the following four phrases and ideas come to mind:

1. **Money is power** Pluto in the 2nd can be seen in the strength of the 'Almighty Dollar' and the US being seen as a hyperpower that exerts strong economic



influence/coercion. With Pluto in the 2nd, power lies in ownership (particularly gold, oil/'black gold' and water). Here, wealth (especially extremes in wealth) becomes a measure of the country's self-worth (2nd).

2. Underlying obsessions about values and ownership Not only is Pluto in the 2nd fixated on its own worth, values and economy, it is also obsessed with the financial situation and values (2nd) of other people and countries. But with Pluto, there's an inability to see the extent of the preoccupation or fanaticism. Jessica Murray suggests that Pluto's placement shows a 'stunted awareness ... The truth is hidden in plain sight.'³

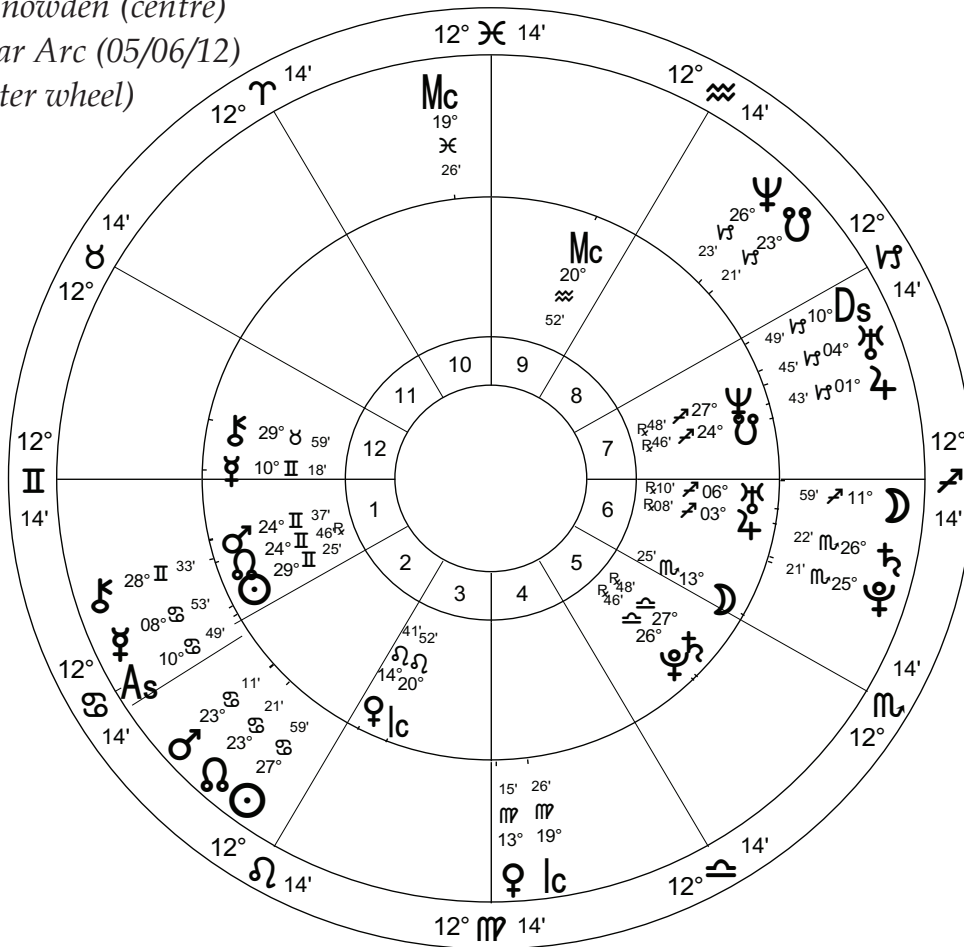
On a mundane level, Pluto relates to powerful, transformational belief systems, such as Islam and Scientology (to name just two). Pluto in the 2nd House could suggest America's strong territorial stance and its paranoia about seemingly extreme values that others possess. This could generate anxiety about how these values might have an impact on its own security. Howard Sasportas wrote of Pluto in the 2nd: 'It is necessary to discover the underlying motivations which propel such strong and passionate feelings about money and security.'⁴

3. Black power The African-American struggle in America has also been viewed as Plutonic, and America's karma - from the dawn of its history - is inextricably bound to the concept of ownership of slaves: a disenfranchised, subjugated people (Pluto) seen as commodities (2nd House).

4. The pen is mightier ... Pluto's main natal aspect is an opposition from Mercury in Cancer, suggestive of America's powerful media, propaganda, surveillance systems (CIA, FBI), cover-ups and witch-hunts, along with the mass influence and use of psychoanalysis. (It also suggests a pre-emptive strike is an emotional response when national security - Cancer - is considered to be at risk - i.e. attack as the best form of defence.)

It's interesting to note that when former CIA/NSA employee **Ed Snowden** blew the whistle on the excessive government surveillance of the American people, his directed/progressed Sun had reached the exact degree opposite the US's Pluto (and

Ed Snowden (centre)
 Solar Arc (05/06/12)
 (outer wheel)



his SA Moon was within a degree of the Sibly Ascendant degree). Snowden was also born with the Sibly Ascendant degree on his own Descendant, and his and the US's Mars placements (in information-savvy Gemini) are a few degrees apart.

America's Recurring Pluto Themes

Before I look at the transits, directions and Huber Life Clock examples involving Pluto in Capricorn in the 2nd, here's a glimpse of the themes that emerge when the planet is activated:

- Boundaries – redefining colonies, the frontier; key changes to the Constitution; new laws and structures put in place;
- Industry and innovation – new power bases formed;
- Gender and race issues – slavery, race riots; the formation of organizational structures to protect or restrict;
- Religious extremism – massacres; threats to security

- Censorship and morality – a crackdown on obscenity; bans/ vetoes; deep conservatism;
- Coinage – changes in the Dollar and to the Gold Standard;
- Depression – financial crashes, money panic; power failures.

A Few Transits to Natal Pluto

Looking at historical events when natal Pluto was triggered can provide clues to the upcoming events of the next ten years when TR Pluto opposes the Sun and Mercury in Cancer and returns to its natal position. The world is, of course, a very different place now so, rather than exact repeats, what should be obvious are patterns and themes (as listed above) that reveal the nature and manifestations of Pluto in the US chart. Here are a few:

September 1873: Neptune in Aries square natal Pluto in the 2nd

The Wall Street panic undermines (Neptune) the power structure.

May 1848–Feb 1851: The US's first Pluto square Pluto (from Aries to Capricorn)

During this time, the Gold Rush sees a mass movement (Pluto) to California – a scramble to pioneer (Aries) and mine for wealth (Pluto). The women's movement is born, too, when Lucretia Mott presents a declaration suggesting that women should be free to speak in public and have the right to vote (July 1848).

Sept 1935 to May 1938: Pluto opposite Pluto (from Cancer to Capricorn)

The Social Security Act and Revenue Acts had recently been signed; the FBI is given its name; Alcoholics Anonymous is formed; and Jesse Owens travels to the 'Nazi Olympics' in Berlin and challenges Hitler's notion of Aryan superiority. During this opposition, *How to Win Friends and Influence People* is published (October 1936) and strongly influences the American psyche (showing how to win others over to your way of thinking, increase prestige, influence and earning power). (Interestingly, just before this transit, when TR Pluto made a conjunction to Mercury, the book of the century, *Gone with the Wind*, set in the Civil War, was published.)

In a longer essay, it would be tempting to examine a series of Pluto's transits to America's chart, but consider two events around Pluto's discovery in February 1930 that are very Pluto/Capricorn/2nd: despite the Great Depression, two titanic, powerful constructions – symbols of wealth and prestige – were built: The Chrysler Building and The Empire State Building.

Solar Arc Directions to Natal Pluto

Looking at some Solar Arcs (conjunction, square and opposition only; orb: 30' / 6 months either side) to the US's natal Pluto, we can see the Pluto/Capricorn/2nd House themes emerge again:

Aspect Exact hit Event (using a 6 month/30' orb either side)

Sun to Pluto

- opp. 06/1791 First Bank of the United States founded; US Bill of Rights.
- sq. 12/1883 Doctrine of racial segregation is legalized.
- conj. 10/1972 Watergate scandal; Roe vs. Wade (Jan 1973); Dow Jones plummets to an all-time low.

Moon to Pluto

- sq. 05/1839 Women win (limited) rights to own property.
- opp. 10/1929 Wall Street Crash.

Mercury to Pluto

- sq. 01/1873 Coinage Act of 1873 passed; Susan B Anthony defies the law and votes; Comstock Law enacted, making it illegal to send 'obscene, lewd, or lascivious' books through the mail.
- conj. 02/1962 John Glenn orbits the Earth; Cuban Missile Crisis; Trade Expansion Act of 1962; start of Vietnam War.

Mars to Pluto

- sq. 11/1905 San Francisco earthquake/fire follows in April 1906 (3000 killed, 80% of San Francisco is destroyed).

conj. 06/1994 NAFTA signed; the double murder of Nicole Simpson/Ron Goldman leads to the 'Trial of the Century' (Mars is natally in dual Gemini).

Jupiter to Pluto

opp. 02/1799 NY passes a law aiming to abolish slavery.

Saturn to Pluto

sq. 11/1789 Supreme Court convenes for the first time (Feb 1790); first census; US Depts of Foreign Affairs, War, State and the Treasury are all established.

conj. 06/1882 Chinese Exclusion Act; 1882 Immigration Act passed.

sq. 05/1971 Nixon ends US gold standard; US ends trade embargo against China.

Uranus to Pluto

opp. 04/1827 Freedom's Journal (first African-American owned/published newspaper) is founded.

conj. 10/2006 Iraq War troop surge; iPhone announced; Saddam Hussein is tried/hanged.

Neptune to Pluto

sq. 05/1993 The World Trade Center is bombed; David Koresh/Waco siege; the Rodney King civil trial follows the LA Riots; 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy of gays in the military.

Pluto to Pluto

sq. 08/1869 The National Woman Suffrage Association is formed; Wyoming territorial legislature gives women the right to vote (the first to do so in the world).

opp. 11/1958 The National Defence Education Act is signed into law; NASA is formed; the US begins secret nuclear tests over the South Atlantic.

Pluto and the Huber Clock

There are many ways to consider Pluto's meaning in (and track its impact on) the US chart, but only a few predictive methods allow us to view a complete cycle of Pluto for our study. One is the Life Clock, a simple but ingenious 72-year 'Age Progression' timing device developed by leading Swiss astrologers Bruno and Louise Huber.

This fascinating tool, introduced to me by Faye Cossar, turns the chart into a 72-year clock where every house starting from the Ascendant (using the Koch method of division) represents 6 years of life (regardless of house size). The 'hand' of the clock (the 'Age Point') ticks through the degrees in those houses/signs. Applying this to the 4 July 1776 Chart, the 1st House starts on this date, the 2nd House begins exactly 6 years later, the 3rd House on the US's twelfth birthday, the 4th House on its eighteenth birthday, and so on. It returns to the 1st House at 72 and continues through the houses again (i.e. hitting the 2nd House cusp at age 78). In Diagram 1 (opposite page), we can see how the Age Point moves through each of the houses of the US Chart from its 'birth' at the Ascendant.⁵

When the Age Point reaches a planet, its astrological principles come to the fore. Although the Hubers didn't use this with country or business charts, the Life Clock works repeatedly well with the Sibly chart. In Diagram 2 (opposite page), we can see some fascinating 20th century examples of Age Points registering (using a 3–4 month orb either side of an exact hit).

The Age Point moved into Pisces weeks before Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans, showing up governmental incompetence, chaos and disarray. At the time of writing (August 2013), it is in Aries, approaching the same opposition to Saturn (exact on 22 December 2013) that took the US into World War II.

Looking at the Koch houses chart of the US (Diagram 2, opposite), we can see that Pluto is roughly midway through the 2nd House, corresponding to the age of 9 (and at 72-year intervals: age 81, 153 and 225). Put another way, the Age Point first hit Pluto at 9 (1785) and again 72 years later (1857), and so on.

Each time the Age Point conjuncts Pluto, we should expect to see a manifestation of Pluto in Capricorn in the 2nd House. (Also consider the opposition to Pluto 36 years into the cycle, and the

Diagram 1

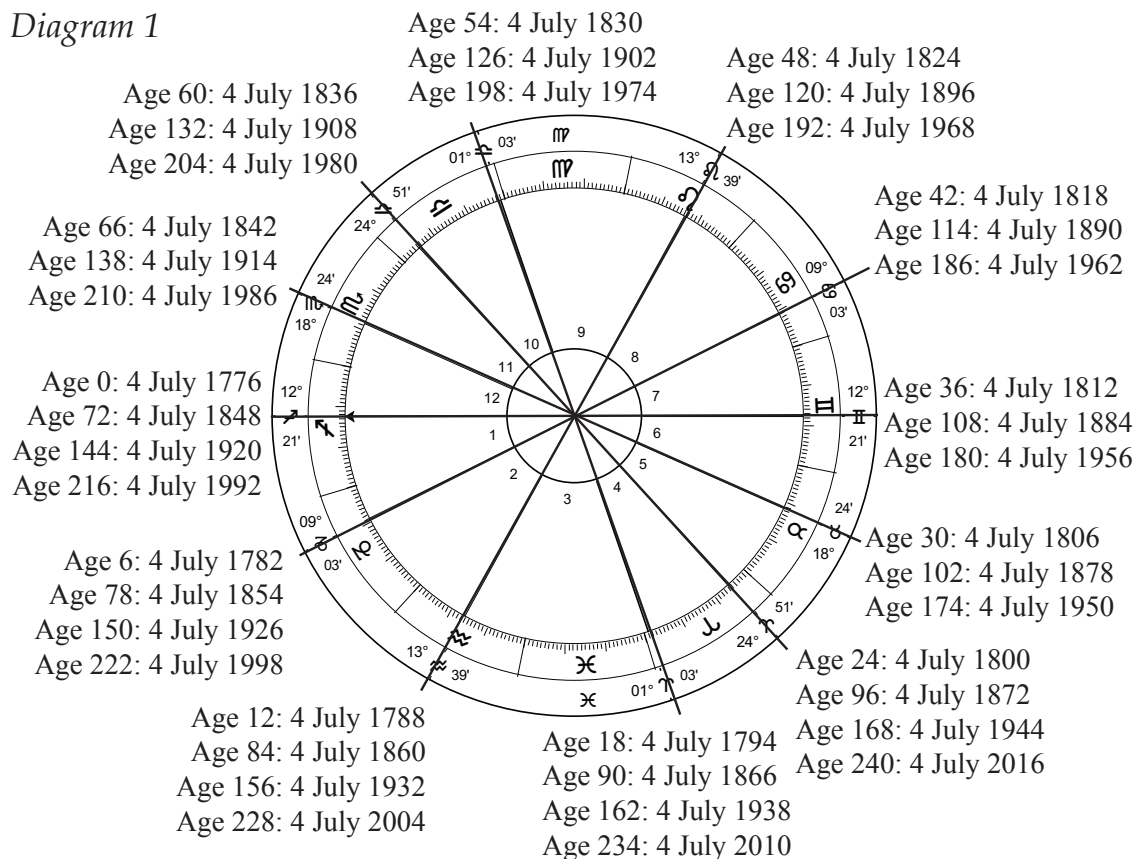
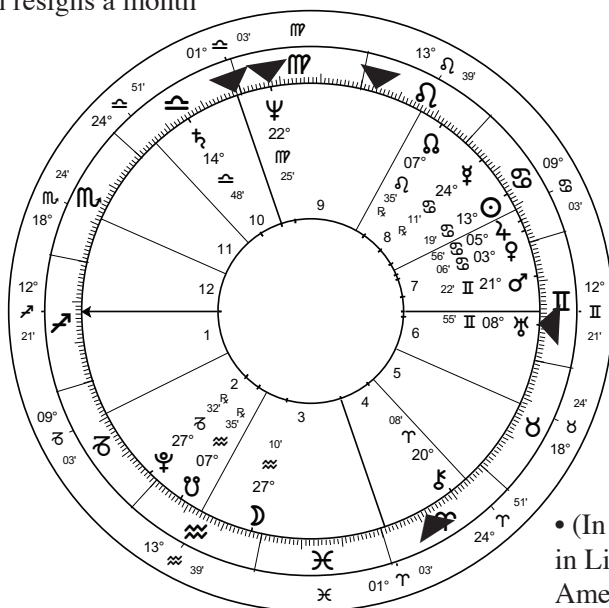


Diagram 2

• (In Libra) On the MC/10th House cusp (exact 6 July 1974): Nixon resigns a month later.

• (In Virgo) Conjunct Neptune (exact 1 June 1973): Nixon orders the Watergate break-in that month.



• (In Leo) In the 9th opposite the Moon in Aquarius (exact 22 March 1969): Stonewall Riots (the start of the Gay Liberation movement in June) and Apollo 11 lands on the Moon in July.

• (In Gemini) Conjunct Uranus in Gemini (exact 26 August 1955): Rosa Parks is arrested for defiantly refusing to budge (1 December).

• (In Aries) Opposite natal Saturn in Libra (exact 22 December 1941): America enters World War II.

square – the timing of which can vary depending on the house size.) Using an orb representing 3-4 months either side of the exact hit, the Clock doesn't disappoint.

Huber Clock conjunctions to the Pluto Age Point (exact 18 September):

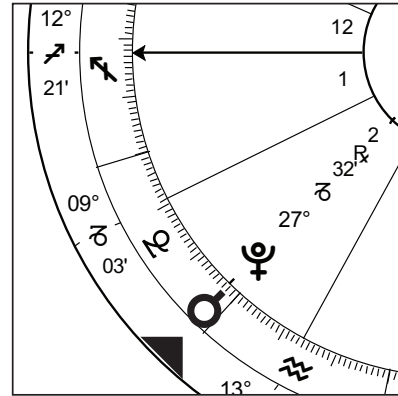
Exact date hit Events around the time

18 Sep 1785 The Treaty of Hopewell with Cherokee natives creates a western boundary for white settlement.

18 Sep 1857 Following a court decision declaring blacks are not US citizens, the constitutional protection of slavery is affirmed but leads to Panic of 1857 and civil war; 120 emigrants are killed in Mountain Meadows massacre.

18 Sep 1929 Eugene O'Neill's play *Strange Interlude* is banned for obscenity; the Great Depression begins on 'Black Tuesday'; Richard Byrd flies over the South Pole; the Immigration Act favours nationalities already established in the US.

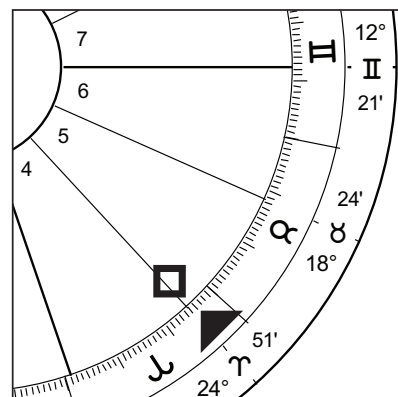
18 Sep 2001 Planes crash into the World Trade Center, triggering a 'war on terror' and the Patriot Act, which allows indefinite detentions; anthrax attacks.



Huber Clock opening squares in Aries to the Pluto Age Point (exact 13 March):

Exact date hit Events around the time

13 Mar 1801 John Marshall, who would go on to shape the legal system and Constitution, is made Chief Justice; Jefferson is elected after a



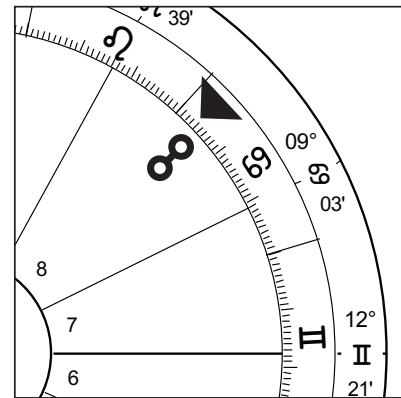
- dirty campaign – his win ushers in the Democrat-Republican two-party rule.
- 13 Mar 1873 The start of major censorship laws as the Comstock Act prohibits obscene materials being sent by mail; the Coinage Act embraces the gold standard and prompts the Panic of 1873.
- 13 Mar 1945 The Yalta Conference creates conditions that will divide control of Europe between Communist USSR and Western countries; Iwo Jima falls to the US, providing a strategic base for air operations against Japan; FDR dies; V-E Day.

Next hit: 13 March 2017

Huber Clock oppositions in Cancer to the Pluto Age Point (exact 18 Sep):

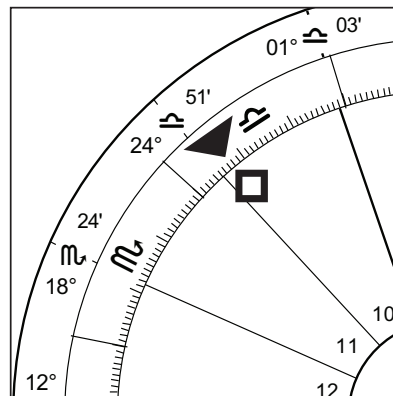
Exact date hit Events around the time

- 18 Sep 1821 Stephen Austin (the ‘Father of Texas’ in charge of recruiting new settlers) founds the first American colony in Texas (he dies before the first closing square of 1837).
- 18 Sep 1893 Stocks plummet on the New York Stock Exchange, starting a nationwide financial panic as foreign investors withdraw investments, railroads go bankrupt and 500 banks go into receivership – 20% are unemployed and riots sweep the country, beginning a four-year depression; Professor Frederick Jackson Turner delivers his ‘Frontier Thesis’ and many see this as a sign of the US entering a new age of imperialism.
- 18 Sep 1965 The Medicare Act becomes law; the long hot summer of 1965 of race riots, Malcolm X’s assassination and ‘Bloody Sunday’ in Alabama; the Voting Rights Act outlaws literacy tests that had restricted the rights of African-Americans to vote.



Next hit: 18 September 2037

Huber Clock closing squares in Libra to the Pluto Age Point (exact 12 March):



Exact date hit Events around the time

- 12 Mar 1837 Charles River Bridge vs. Warren Bridge declares that ‘property rights can be overridden by public need’; the Panic of 1837 begins five years of economic depression and record high unemployment; Oberlin College becomes the first to admit female and black students.
- 12 Mar 1909 Jack Johnson becomes the US’s first black sports hero; NAACP is formed; ‘Dollar Diplomacy’ – President Taft attempts to establish control over Honduras by buying up its debt to British bankers; the first men (including an African-American) reach the North Pole.
- 12 Mar 1981 President Reagan introduces ‘Reaganomics’ to jump-start the stagnant economy, causing cutbacks in social services; Reagan announces a \$5 billion increase in defence spending; an uncommon skin cancer appears in young gay men in New York City – it is soon identified as AIDS; the first Mexican-American mayor of a major American city is elected; the first space shuttle Columbia flies a successful three-day mission.

Next hit: 12 March 2053

Uranus Square Pluto

Certainly Pluto thrives on – and embodies – emotional crisis and seismic turbulence. And with an upcoming transit from Pluto, we must expect some crisis to emerge for change, demolition, rebirth and rebuilding to take place. As TR Pluto opposes the Sun – an ‘identity crisis’ – from February 2014 to November 2015, and then Mercury, will the Dollar be on its knees as the US teeters on bankruptcy? As China overtakes the US, the 2020s may be somewhat of a renaissance as the US regroups and restructures.

The Uranus–Pluto squares (from June 2012 to March 2015) are inauspicious omens: the last set of squares in 1933 coincided with FDR closing the banks. The current squares see the individual at war with the government, while the conjunction in the mid 1960s brought civil disobedience that led to the free speech movement and greater civil rights.

Uranus is a violent earthquake: splitting up and shattering the existing order. It is more devastating than the volcanic eruptions of Pluto because, with Uranus, there are no emotions attached – it's the principle and ideal at all costs. Brutal and swift, anything that doesn't reflect the zeitgeist gets the chop. We mustn't forget the Uranus–Pluto opposition of 1792–3 in Leo/Aquarius when, during the French Revolution, the aristocracy literally lost their heads by guillotine.

The current Uranus–Pluto (from Aries to Capricorn) suggests the sudden removal of institutional and governmental heads, too, the decapitation and castration of people in power. (Saturn in Scorpio also describes the deaths of long-established statespeople.) Yet the irony is that, during Uranian times, dictatorships are broken up only to be reformed into new ones, just with different names ...

Recalling the last time Pluto was in Capricorn, America – fearful of the tyranny of the British – was searching for a government and a constitution. The Pluto Return to 27° Capricorn begins in February 2022 and makes its last stop at that degree in October 2023. The American people may speak up against a tyrannical system and demolish it and/or be subjected to a new, harsh set of measures seeking to imprison them. As always with Pluto, if we don't take individual power and play a role in empowering the collective, then imperial force is imposed upon the people.

The Broader Picture

We are at the start of some very conservative times. The more things change, the more (we need) them to stay the same. Some of us are just 'going for it', knowing that we can't wait for retirement to follow our hearts. Others are deeply fearful and looking for someone to blame or persecute. But the planets suggest the need to live for (and in) the moment (Uranus in Aries) because the long-term perspective (Capricorn) has changed forever (Pluto).

The wave of anti-materialism (Neptune in Pisces) means people will either be obsessed with playing the victim and expecting to be rescued, or looking for alternative ways out of the rat race.

The true cold, hard winter of Pluto in Capricorn is now being felt as Saturn wades through Scorpio. It will reach a climax in the lead-up to early 2020, when Saturn conjuncts Pluto in the sky at 22° Capricorn – a period of economic frostbite, pruning, demolition and survival.

Many astrologers have written of Saturn–Pluto being about aftermath – the need to pick up the pieces and rebuild. This occurs just before the hope-filled Jupiter–Saturn conjunction at 0° Aquarius (December 2020) and the US’s Pluto Return between February 2022 and October 2023. Both aspects augur much that is positive in bringing facets of the American spirit back to the fore. America has the chance to divorce itself from its imperial, conquering past and embrace the true Aquarian (Moon) spirit of the times ahead, to invest in its domestic talent, build fair alliances with its neighbours and create a vision for its future with its own people and for its own people.

References and Notes

1. For evidence supporting various US charts, I direct readers to Nicholas Champion’s *The Book of World Horoscopes*, Ronald Howland’s *A Chronology of American Charts* and Robert Currey’s investigation at <http://www.astrology.co.uk/news/USA.htm>
2. For an in-depth study of outer planet transits, see Howard Sasportas’s *The Gods of Change*, Arkana 1989, Wessex, 2007.
3. From pages 30 and 47 of *Soul–Sick Nation*, MotherSky Press, 2008, an excellent book on the astrology of America by Jessica Murray.
4. *The Twelve Houses*, Flare, 2007, p. 243.
5. Age Progression (the Life Clock) offers additional considerations (such as Low Points and house meanings), which I am not looking at here. For more details, see the work of the Hubers, Joyce Hopewell, Richard Llewellyn and others. www.astrologicalpsychology.org