

Sedna:



Goddess for Our Time

by Barbara Schermer

At 10:32 p.m. PST on the evening of November 13, 2003, atop Mount Palomar Observatory in southern California, a Cal Tech telescope began recording the faint glimmer of a new celestial object orbiting the Sun, 40 times farther out than Pluto.

After three years of fruitless searching, Cal Tech astronomer Mike Brown and his team, Chad Trujillo and Mike Rabinowitz, tried a new imaging technique for their sky survey project. With this new approach, they rapidly began to identify more planet-like bodies than anyone since Clyde Tombaugh. (Tombaugh's exhaustive search of the entire zodiac in 1929 resulted in the detection of Pluto in January 1930.) Brown's search added *hundreds* of objects to the known solar system.¹ All these discoveries must have been especially satisfying for Brown, since some in the astronomical community dismissed his method as unproductive and a waste of time.

Once the orbit of the prosaically designated "2003 VB12" was known well enough, Brown submitted the name "Sedna" to the IAU (International Astronomical Union) Committee, the body responsible for solar system names. The honor of naming a new body is traditionally given to those who discover it, and Brown and his team reasoned: "Our newly discovered object is the coldest, most distant place known in the solar system, so we feel it is appropriate to name it in honor of Sedna, the Inuit goddess of the sea, who is thought to live at the bottom of the frigid arctic ocean."²

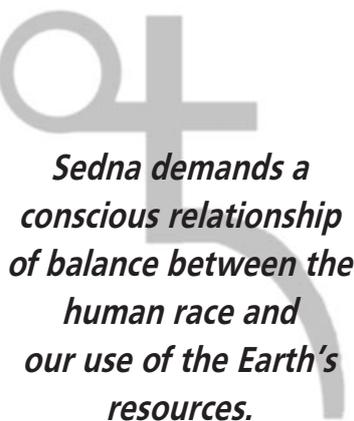
*Sedna
represents
a new and
powerful voice
calling us to a
balanced and
sustainable
relationship
with nature.*

Sedna

Brown is a rare astronomer. *He actually likes astrologers.* In an essay posted on his Web site (mikebrownsplanets.com), he says, “Astrology and astronomy are brothers with roots deeper than just the first five letters ... I don’t think anyone can watch the rhythms and pulses of the movements of the planets and sun and moon and not somehow get a gut feeling that there is ... meaning in all of that beauty, precision, and symmetry.”³ Like astrologers, Brown understands that names have power. The process of naming a planetary object calls upon both conscious and unconscious thought processes. In an interview, Brown says, “Naming [of celestial bodies] is important ... A name makes it real ... then it’s not just a blip in the sky. It’s a story.”⁴

Once named, a planet becomes a symbolic reality as well as a material one. Most astrologers would agree (and most astronomers would not!) that, when naming an object, astronomers are participating in an event of *archetypal manifestation* — bringing new gods upon the stage of the human drama. The new entity Sedna, unlike previous planets, did not receive a Greek or Roman appellation but arises from the Inuit mythos; this suggests that an entirely new global dimension may be opening up in both individual and collective consciousness.

As planetary entities are named and their stories located in myth, we astrologers pick up the narrative. Astrological ephemerides are generated and published. Astrologers begin to “unpack” the meanings of the symbols generated, perhaps first by contemplation and study of the many stories carried by the myth. Then we may empirically research that planet’s transits through our own lives, or observe cultural and historic events in apparent synchrony with the planet’s positions, or analyze the charts of individuals who have that planet prominent in their own birth charts. We may look for clues in the chart of the planet’s discovery, which, in the case of Sedna, can be calculated precisely to



Sedna demands a conscious relationship of balance between the human race and our use of the Earth’s resources.

the minute. In that process, planets and similar bodies become more like present persons to us than distant objects. We enter into a dialog with them that both creates and discovers their meanings.

I have been in such a dialog with Sedna for almost the entire four years since she became publicly known; I’ve used all of the methods above, and more — including a dramatic appearance by Sedna at my UAC 2008 workshop — to discern her message and her meaning. My overall conclusion is that Sedna, for the past 140 years at least, has presented a consistent message: We have become a danger to our own natural world and must act swiftly to insure salvation of all living beings. My study began with the myth of Sedna and the chart of her discovery. I’ll say a few words about both here, by way of orientation, but my main purpose is to describe the many “messages” Sedna has conveyed through events and persons who enacted her mission over the last century and a half.

The bare-bones version of the Sedna myth is as follows:

A beautiful, perhaps vain, daughter of an Inuit tribe reaches marriageable age but refuses all suitors until a handsome and spellbinding stranger wins her heart and her hand. Only as they journey to his distant land does he reveal that he is the spirit-being Raven Man. He proves to be a poor husband, barely providing her sustenance and treating her as another of his shiny possessions. Her distraught cries are communicated to her father, who launches a boat to attempt her rescue. The enraged

*Raven Man discovers her flight and roils the ocean with winds and waves that threaten both the girl and her father to the point that the latter, to appease their pursuer, casts his daughter overboard and then, when she struggles to raise herself back into the boat, cuts off her fingers. She falls into the depths of the sea, apparently to die, but instead to choose her own salvation and thus to be transformed into a great spiritual being, mother of the sea creatures that spring from the blood of her severed fingers and that will become the source of sustenance for the people — a gift she may withdraw if the people do not treat her with care and reverence.*⁵

Known by native Inuit as “the food-giving goddess,” Sedna delivers more than that, since her sea animals provide nearly all material resources in a treeless and frozen land. In turn, she requires mankind to honor her or else she will withdraw all these stores and the people will perish. In this and other stories, Sedna demands a conscious relationship of balance between the human race and our use of the Earth’s resources. The Inuit, like most native peoples, believe that the Earth is alive and that there is a web of relationship among all living beings. Ceremonial rites must be observed to renew this delicate balance. Every winter solstice in Canada’s northern provinces, there is a ritual performed by Inuit shamans, returning all seal bladders collected that year to the sea.⁶ This is an offering to Sedna in the hope that she will once again provide the tribes with food, clothing, and shelter. If Sedna is seen as having progressed over the ages from the environs and concerns of a local goddess to a global, even universal deity — upon her discovery, if not sooner — she might just be the Goddess for Our Time.

Sedna’s Discovery

What is remarkable about the discovery of Sedna (♁) is that the time she first made herself visible as an astronomical object is known precisely to the minute. So, astrologers can calculate an accurate chart and look for clues to her nature. A glance at the chart (see **Chart 1**, facing page) will reveal at once that this is an extraordinary horo-

scope! It contains two grand trines, making a rare hexagram or “Star of David” pattern. The water trine (Moon–Saturn in Cancer trine the Sun–South Node in Scorpio and trine Mars in Pisces), pointing downward, reflects the feminine principle. The earth triangle (Sedna in Taurus, Jupiter in Virgo, Chiron in Capricorn), pointing upward, represents the masculine. I can think of no more dramatic symbol of the principle of balance in an astrology chart, suggesting the opposed but interdependent forces of yin and yang or the T'ai hexagram of the I Ching, which unites the trigrams for Heaven and Earth to yield Peace or Greatness. Extended analysis of the chart (which I will leave to the reader) would suggest many refinements of this basic principle but not change its essential nature. It is a chart worthy of the manifestation of a goddess and fully supports the view of Sedna under development here.

Astronomers estimate that Sedna’s elongated orbital path is traversed in about 10,500 years. At the extremes of her orbit, she is the most remote of all the proposed “dwarf planets.”⁷ However, Sedna is not so distant from us now — she is at present hurtling toward her closest contact with us for this cycle, as her orbit places her ever nearer the Earth. She accelerated through the sign of Aries (1867–1968) in 100 years and

is now transiting Taurus (1968–2010) over 42 years. (Everyone alive today has Sedna in either of these two signs. To find your own Sedna position, go to astro.com/swisseph/sedna.htm; I recommend the ten-day ephemeris.)

Sedna then zips through Gemini in a mere 24 years, coming closest to Earth in the year 2076 in Cancer. What earthly events correlate with her last close pass? Only the end of the last Ice Age, the beginning of agriculture, the Neolithic Revolution that signaled the transition from a hunter-gatherer to an agricultural society! Can a goddess convey any more clearly that her mission has been and will be to announce, to encourage, and to compel a new relationship of humans with this Earth that, so far at least, is our only environment?

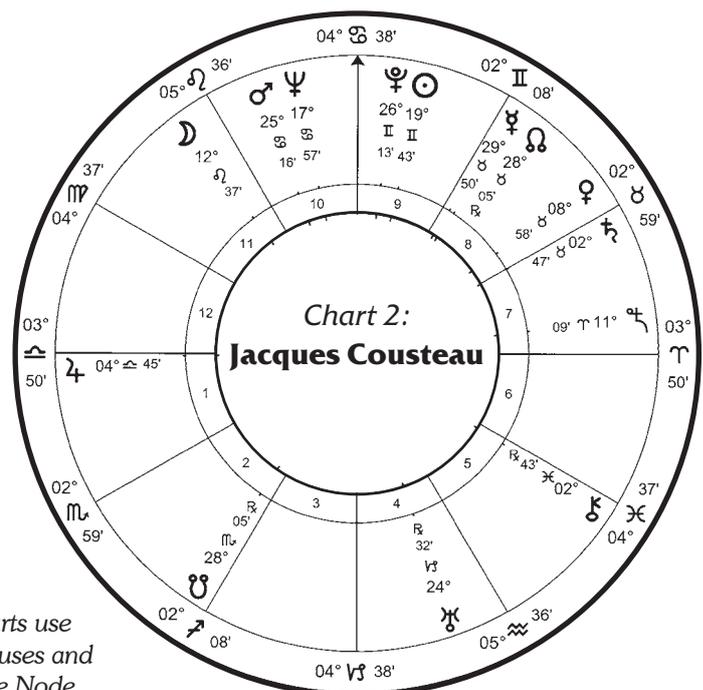
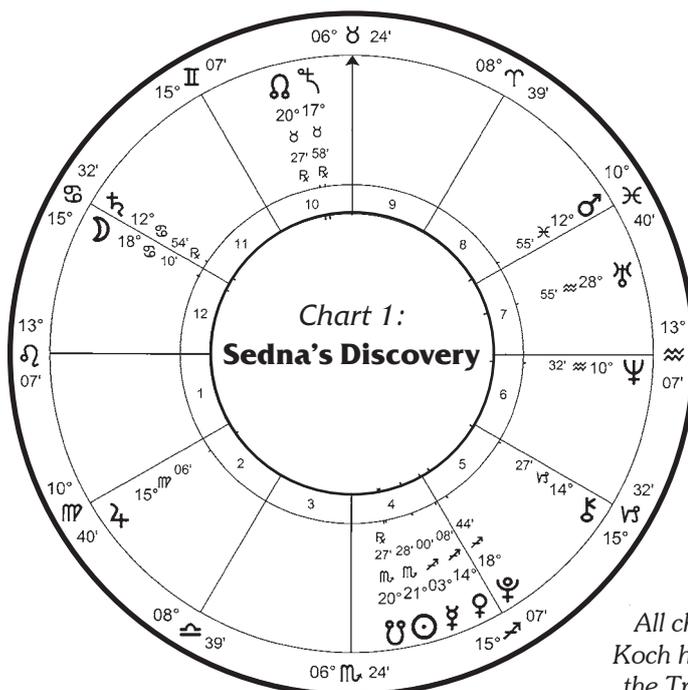
At some point in these reflections, I realized that I was meandering toward a research project. Maybe it was when I was TV channel-grazing and came upon a show about sea explorer and environmental advocate Jacques Cousteau. For decades, he warned that calamitous changes were occurring in our oceans and waterways. I wondered whether Sedna might make an appearance in his natal chart and transits.

Indeed, natal Sedna at 11° Aries makes a trine to Cousteau’s Moon at 12° Leo and a wide square to his natal Neptune at 18° Cancer (see **Chart 2**,

below). Sedna showed up in 1936, when he took his first swim in the ocean; by transit, she was at 19° Aries, exactly sextile his Gemini Sun. Between 1956 and 1960, when Sedna made a sextile to his Pluto at 26° Gemini, Cousteau accepted the Cannes Film Festival Palme d’Or award for his television series, *Silent World*. At this time, he publicly and successfully campaigned to eliminate dumping of nuclear wastes into the oceans. In 1973, as Sedna made an exact conjunction with Cousteau’s Saturn at 2° Taurus, he founded the Cousteau Society for the Protection of Ocean Life.⁸

Sedna Generations by Decans

As astrologers, you can see why I began to think I was on the right track. To learn more, it seemed best to cast a wide net, typical of this stage of exploratory research. A hypothesis emerged: Sedna represents a new and powerful voice calling us to a balanced and sustainable relationship with nature; therefore, she should appear in the web of planet-to-person relationships that comprise astrology. Considering that others with a passion for protecting the environment might also have a prominent Sedna, I decided to run the charts of individuals and organizations that brought environmental awareness to the collective and also the charts of the first



All charts use Koch houses and the True Node.

Sedna

release dates of films that raised public awareness of ecological issues. My intuition that there is a consistent and compelling environmental narrative that runs through the lives of individuals, organizations, and events related to Sedna became a conviction. Analysis of chart after chart began to yield patterns, an underlying structure, and finally a model that organizes the many components of Sedna's message. The model is illustrated in **Figure 1**, below.

The diagram depicts the passage of Sedna, from February 1867 at 0°00' Aries to June 2023 at 0°00' Gemini. (Note: The actual transit covers 60 degrees of a chart, or two signs; the diagram shows this spread out to a 180° arc to allow depiction of details.) The arc is split into two halves, the left half showing Sedna's movement through Aries (ending at 0°00' Taurus) and the corresponding transit through Taurus on the right. The signs are further divided into decans, the ten-degree segments of

There is a consistent and compelling environmental narrative that runs through the lives of individuals, organizations, and events related to Sedna.

a sign. (I used a 5° applying, 3° separating orb and used the date of the last ingress into a new decan or sign for the illustration. A cusp of ± 1° at the Aries/Taurus ingress should also be noted.)

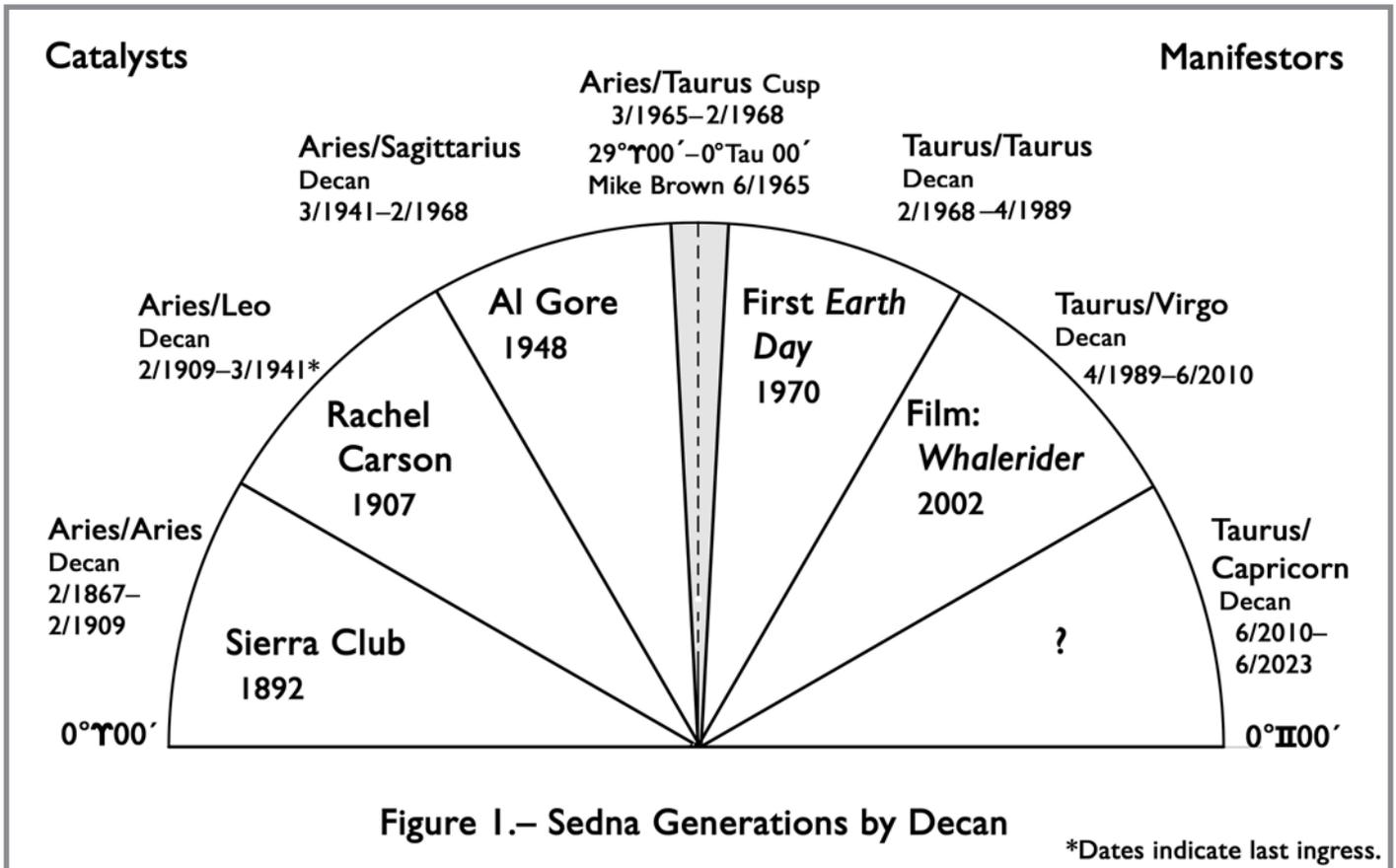
A look at the data suggested that Sedna appearing in the charts of births and events in fiery Aries signifies *inspiration, motivation, even the incitement of outrage*; therefore, the label "Catalysts" seemed apt. With Sedna in earthy Taurus, *determination and problem-solving* are apparent, so I have chosen to call those having this placement the "Manifestors." Though not quite definitive enough to justify a label, Sedna does seem to acquire a particular flavor from

decan to decan. Aries/Aries natives differ from Aries/Leo and Aries/Sagittarius types, and Taurus has its three "sub-types" as well. In the following discussion, I will offer examples of individuals and events that characterize each decan of Sedna's influence. All illustrated examples have Sedna prominent and within 3° of one or more planets.

Sedna first entered 0°00' Aries in February 1867, and from a geocentric perspective, we witness Sedna then at the very beginning of a new 10,500-year cycle. It may be useful to note that in alchemy, astrology's sister art, 0°00' Aries signifies the beginning of the first phase of "the Work," the root source of all that follows, a state in which the unconscious psyche and matter are not yet differentiated. Aries is the catalyzing, fiery element and the stimulus for all ensuing processes. Most of the classic texts begin with the process of Fire.

**Aries/Aries Decan:
February 1867 – February 1909**

This decan offers us our first example of an *organization* that appears to reflect Sedna's influence, particularly of



Sedna in the Aries decan of the Aries sign. John Muir, with a prominent natal Sedna,⁹ founded the environmental organization, the Sierra Club, on May 28, 1892, in San Francisco, California (charts not shown). The organization has Sedna at 6° Aries, sextile its Sun, Pluto, and Neptune, at 7°–9° Gemini and sextile Mars at 9° Aquarius. For more than 100 years, the Sierra Club has been a powerful, aggressive voice for the global environmentalist community. Its motto, “Explore, enjoy and protect the planet,” is supported by its clear mission statement: “To practice and promote the responsible use of the earth’s ecosystems and resources; To educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.”¹⁰ The Sierra Club currently has 750,000 members and an astonishing 500 paid staff.¹¹ (Sedna’s discoverer, astronomer Mike Brown, is himself a lifelong member of the Sierra Club.)¹²

Further examples of this decan include Aldo Leopold (ecologist, forester, called “the father of wildlife management in the United States”); Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, influential in landmark environmental cases, author of *A Wildlife Bill of Rights*, and adventurer — he hiked the 2,000-mile Allegheny Trail; and Otis

Barton, who invented the bathysphere, essential to ocean exploration.

**Aries/Leo Decan:
February 1909 – March 1941**

As we would expect of those with an underlying Leo quality, many important environmental leaders with a prominent Sedna were born during this era, especially between 1907 and 1916. In this group are Rachel Carson, Jacques Cousteau, Lady Bird Johnson (a champion of wildflower reintroduction, especially along highways), Eugene Odum (who defined ecosystem and ecology), Norman Borlaug (“Father of the Green Revolution”), and Gaylord Nelson (founder of Earth Day). A study of their lives reveals how the environmental “storyline” rapidly advanced with the efforts of just these six individuals.

The exemplar of this decan is Rachel Carson, the renowned marine biologist and nature author of *Silent Spring*. She was born just as Sedna moved into Aries’ second decan, Leo, for the first time. (Note: February 1909 on Figure 1 is the final ingress of Sedna into 10°00’ Aries.) Carson’s Sedna at 10° Aries makes a tight t-square to her Neptune–Jupiter at 11°–12° Cancer and Uranus at 12° Capricorn, creating the inner tensions that underlay her rage at corporations that were polluting the Earth with pesticides (see **Chart 3**,

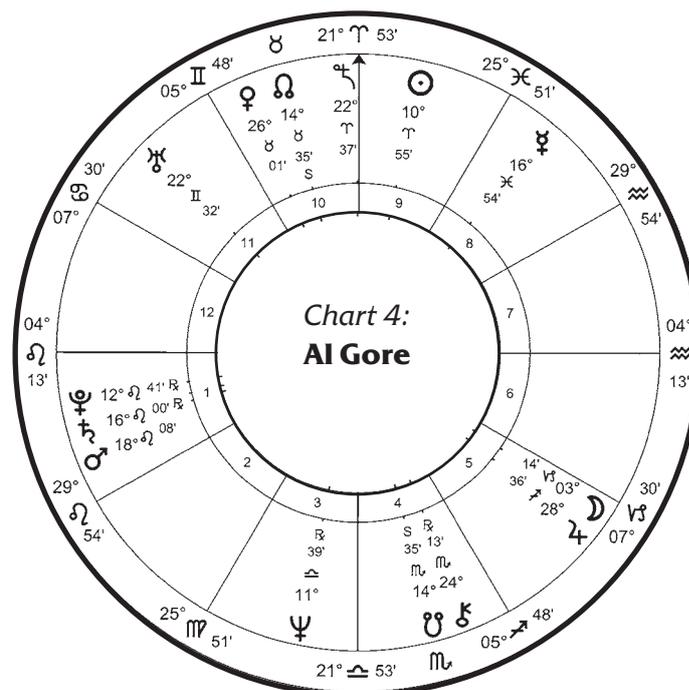
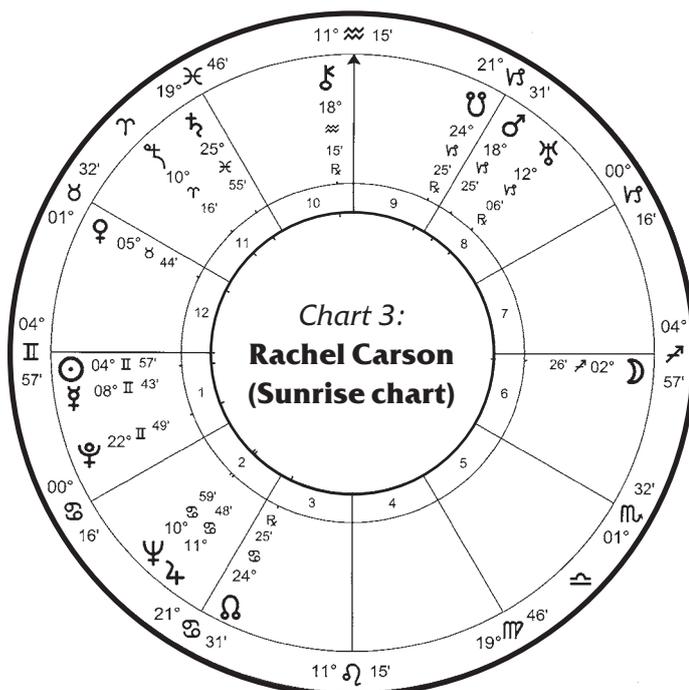
below). Sedna’s sextile to her Sun–Mercury at 5°–9° Gemini gave her the ability to write effectively and to make her insistent voice heard.

Carson’s startling and inflammatory book, *Silent Spring*, originally published in 1962 as a series in *The New Yorker* magazine,¹³ exposed the hazards of the ubiquitous insecticide DDT. Backed with meticulous research, Carson described how DDT entered the food chain. A single application on a crop, she wrote, killed insects for months and remained toxic long after it was diluted by rainwater. DDT had contaminated the entire world food supply! Because of Carson’s book, DDT was eventually banned. More importantly, the need to regulate industry in order to protect the environment became widely accepted, and environmentalism was truly born.¹⁴

**Aries/Sagittarius Decan:
March 1941 – February 1968**

This group comprises the entire Baby Boomer generation and includes environmental visionaries like Anita Roddick (The Body Shop), John Denver, Al Gore, Michael Pollan (*Omnivore’s Dilemma*), and even Barack Obama.

Al Gore’s Sedna is almost exactly conjunct his Aries Midheaven, in a grand trine with his Mars in Leo and Jupiter in Sagittarius, and tightly sextile Uranus in Gemini (see **Chart 4**, below).



Sedna

We all know that Al Gore has spoken tirelessly on behalf of the Earth's endangerment by the advent of global warming. While transiting Pluto was making a trine to Gore's Sedna and Midheaven, his consciousness-changing documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*, was filmed. (The debut of the film, on January 24, 2006 at the Sundance Festival, has Sedna in Taurus closely conjunct Mars and square Neptune in Aquarius.) When Jupiter in Sagittarius was making a trine to Gore's Sedna and Midheaven (October 2007), he received the Nobel Peace Prize for his environmental activism. He, more than anyone in recent memory, has raised global awareness of the fragile state of the Earth.

It is the hope of many that President Barack Obama will carry out his promise of an energy-independent society within ten years of his inauguration. Obama has his Sedna at the end of this decan at 28° Aries, trine his North Node-Uranus at 25° Leo, and sextile his Venus at 2° Cancer. (Obama's chart is shown on page 24.) True to his Uranus in Leo trine Sedna, he built his campaign upon a grassroots movement via the Internet. He has said, "The Internet

gives young people ... the opportunity to hold me accountable when I'm not following through on promises that I've made."¹⁵ Obama's campaign did not focus on training volunteers but rather on training organizers. When he leads as president, many of these organizers are expected to follow.

The Cusp Generation: March 1965 – February 1968

This tiny three-year transitional group has Sedna in either late Aries or early Taurus. Further research is needed to discern how Sedna in Aries may differ from Sedna in Taurus within this group. Mike Brown is a member of this cusp generation and his chart is noteworthy (see **Chart 5**, below). Brown's Sedna at 29° Aries sextiles his Venus at 29° Gemini. At the time of Sedna's discovery, transiting Uranus was making a station at 28° Aquarius. Uranus underlines the fact that Sedna's discovery was unexpected and that the object was found with new, technologically sophisticated digital camera methods.¹⁶

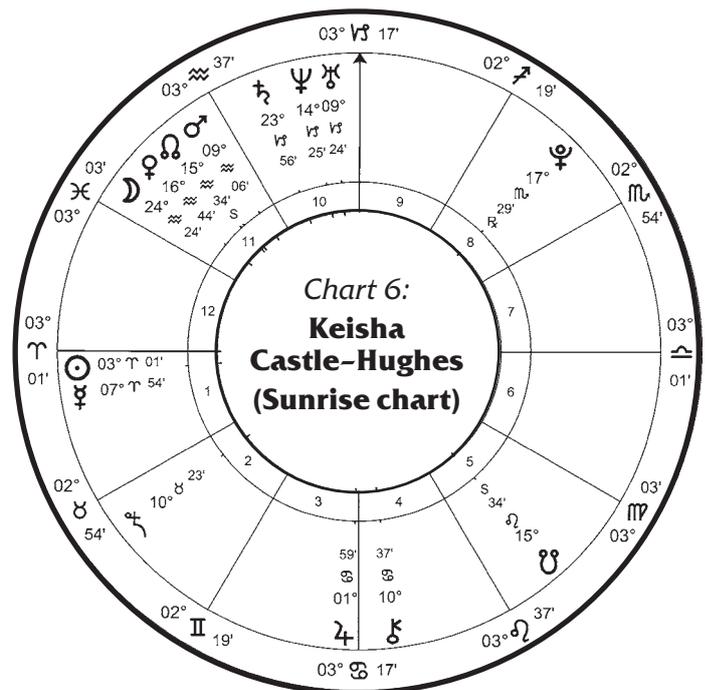
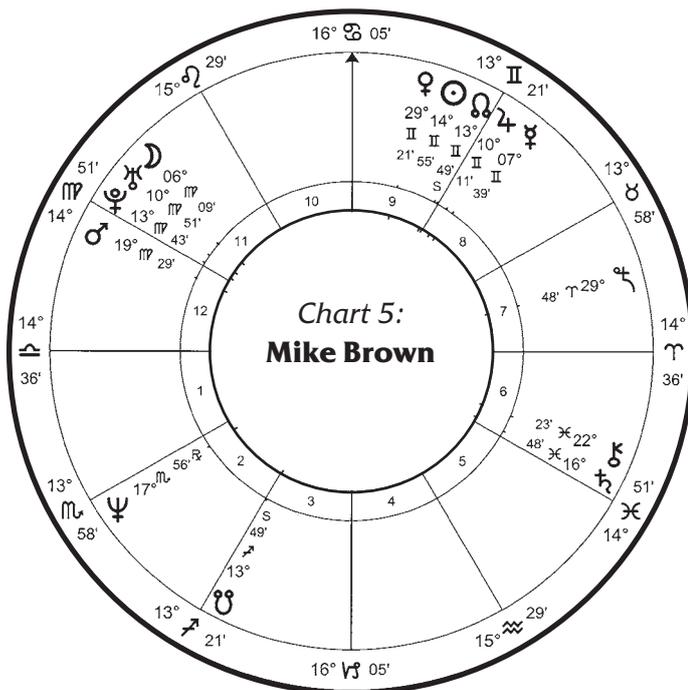
The goals and accomplishments of the Sedna in Aries generation are a platform for the further efforts of the emerging Sedna in Taurus cohort. Perhaps a lot of the advances in energy-saving technology will come from the technowizards of California's Silicon Valley,

many of whom pay heed to John Muir's suggestion: "Keep close to Nature's heart ... and break away, once in a while, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean."¹⁷

Taurus/Taurus Decan: February 1968 – April 1989

Events that characterize Sedna in this decan include the first Earth Day (1970) and the founding of both Greenpeace (1971) and Greenpeace International (1979).

This decan is illustrated by the chart of the first Earth Day, on April 22, 1970 (chart not shown). Sedna at 1° Taurus is almost exactly conjunct the Sun at 2° Taurus and opposes retrograde Jupiter at 1° Scorpio — just after the Full Moon in Scorpio. Earth Day also has Mercury-Venus at 21°–24° Taurus, making a trine to retrograde Pluto at 25° Virgo, an auspicious time to initiate a yearly event dedicated to Earth awareness around the world. *American Heritage* magazine called the first Earth Day "one of the most remarkable happenings in the history of democracy."¹⁸ Earth Day, which continues to promote environmental activities, "reaches over 17,000 organizations in 174 countries" and "is the only event celebrated simultaneously around the globe by people of all backgrounds, faiths and nationalities."¹⁹



**Taurus/Virgo Decan:
April 1989 – June 2010**

At this writing, Sedna is near the end of her transit of the Taurus/Virgo decan. To exemplify the symbolic meanings in the decan, I will describe the Sedna aspects of the film *Whale Rider* and its principal actor, Keisha Castle-Hughes. I could also have chosen other relevant films, like *WALL-E* (its debut at the Moscow Film Festival stands out) or *An Inconvenient Truth*, or organizations like the Alliance for Climate Protection. And we should note that Sedna herself was first seen in November 2003, announced in March 2004, and named soon after.

The individual who personifies this decan is Keisha Castle-Hughes, who plays the female protagonist Paikea Apirana (“Pai,” for short) in the film, *Whale Rider*. Her character undergoes a spiritual journey that reflects Sedna’s own to a remarkable degree — from innocent girl to woman of power. Castle-Hughes herself, an unknown half-Maori girl of 11 selected for the film role, underwent a transformation almost as great, nearly overnight becoming an Academy Award-nominated international star and delivering a message worldwide that seems direct from the mind of Sedna.

Pai’s birth chart we don’t know, but Castle-Hughes has her Sedna at 10° Taurus, trine her Uranus-Neptune at 9°-14° Capricorn, opposite retrograde Pluto at 17° Scorpio (wide orb), and square her Mars at 9° Aquarius (see **Chart 6**, facing page). An astrologer could not have selected a better Sedna position for someone who portrays a character who must overcome a father’s hidebound tradition and a community’s trepidation to claim her birthright as a leader — a privilege heretofore not extended to females. Parallel to the community unrest, and symbolic of it, an entire pod of whales — critical to the community’s well-being, both material and spiritual — have driven themselves onto the beach. Neither the prayers of old men nor the strength of boys can save them, until Pai, in psychic communication with the whales, achieves an understanding of what she must do. Knowing that she might die, yet in perfect harmony with her mission, she mounts and rides the largest whale and guides the pod back into the ocean depths and to safety. Having fulfilled a prophecy that a new leader will appear astride the whale, she takes her rightful place and opens the door for the needed new balance of male and female energies. The film made its debut on September 9, 2002 at the Toronto Film Festival while retrograde Sedna at 17° Taurus made a nearly precise trine to the Sun at 17° Virgo — a symbol that seemed to reflect a blessing on the entire enterprise.

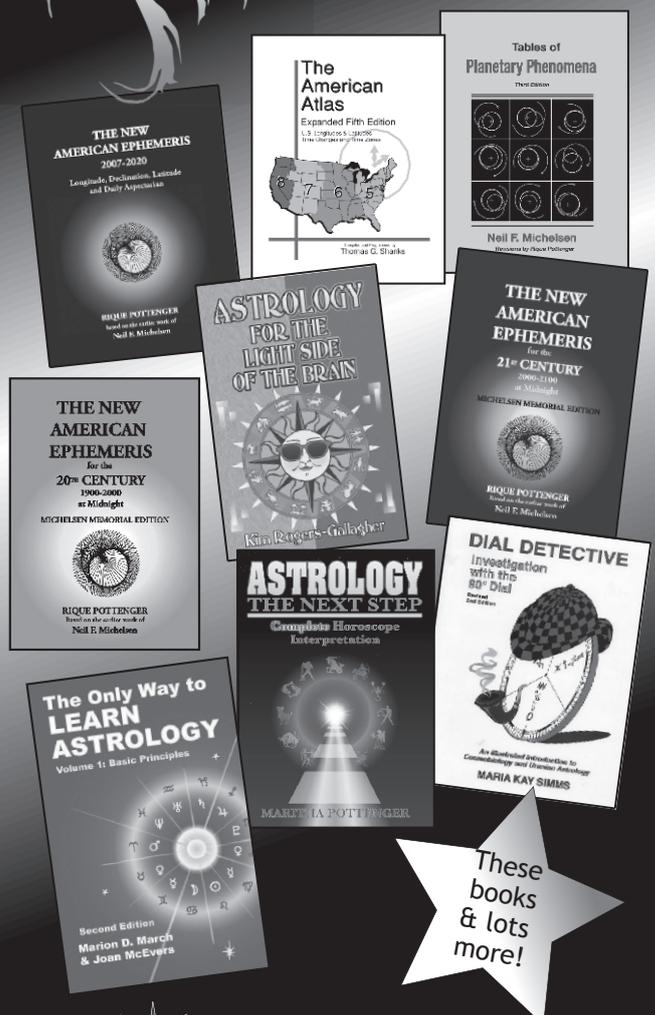
The progress of filming *Whale Rider* was marked with events that some might call eerie, others synchronistic. The script, after languishing in development for a decade, finally went to New Zealand screenwriter Niki Caro for a final rewrite. On the day she accepted this project, she got word that a whale had stranded itself on a beach near her home. A photo of the time shows her atop this sadly lifeless whale. Caro relates that, during the filming of *Whale Rider*, “we’ve been haunted by whale strandings throughout.” Coinciding with the film’s release in New Zealand, a pod of whales became beached on the country’s remote Stewart Island.

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Caro, questioned about the film's long delay, remarked that "I honestly think it had to wait until the world was ready for it," adding that she hopes the film is a "model of leadership for these dark times ... I send up a wish that it inspires girls everywhere to pursue power and use it wisely."²⁰ We can almost hear Sedna whispering in Caro's ear.

Our journey with Sedna through the signs and decans is now complete. Weaving back and forth between intuition and hypothesis, on the one hand, and data and interpretation, on the other, we have seen Sedna emerge in clear outline. At least for the data we examined, she does appear in meaningful configuration in the astrological charts of persons, events, organizations, and cultural expressions such as films. Having first appeared as an astronomical object, she is now subject to the methods of astrology, allowing us to

look back in time at her actions in the lives and occurrences of history. Her appearances are compatible with our notions of her as a goddess with a message for our time.

Sedna's mission is to promote interdependence, balance, beauty, transcendence, humility, prosperity, ethical purpose, hope, and the resolve to renew the Earth and all its creatures in the light of these values. Why, if it is the work of a just-discovered goddess, does this message not seem entirely new? Perhaps because Sedna has been speaking for generations through history, traditional wisdom, prophetic declamation, climatic spasm, scientific discovery, spiritual insight, and dawning social awareness. Are we ready to listen? More importantly, are we ready to recognize the increasing urgency of Sedna's demand for action, both individual and collective? The time is now to join the Sedna in Aries mission to be catalysts

with the Sedna in Taurus aspiration to solve problems. The time is now to join others in preserving our local environment. (I've put my money where my mouth is and have become a site steward for the Montrose Beach Dunes and Magic Hedge Bird Sanctuary, an eleven-acre site near my home in Chicago.) The time is now to press our leaders for policies, incentives, and hard dollar support for clean energy, environmental cleanup, and sustainable agriculture. We can only hope, from our leaders and ourselves, that a fierce and devoted pursuit of this mission will be our salvation.

Chart Data and Sources (in alphabetical order)

Mike Brown, June 5, 1965; 2:00 p.m. CST; Huntsville, AL, USA (34°N44', 86°W35'); A: mother's memory.

Rachel Carson, May 27, 1907; time unknown, sunrise used (4:58:42 a.m. EST); Springdale (Allegheny County), PA, USA (40°N32', 79°W47'); X: date without a time, from "Rachel Carson," Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rachel_Carson

Keisha Castle-Hughes, March 24, 1990; time unknown, sunrise used (6:26:27 a.m. AWST);

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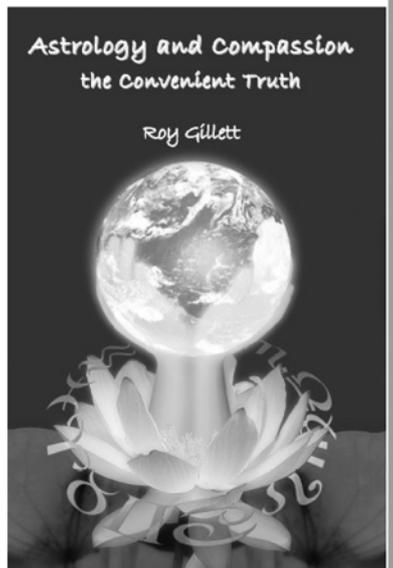
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e-mail: evelynroberts@earthlink.net

Sedna

Donnybrook, Western Australia (33°S35', 115°E49'); X: from Wikipedia.
Debut of *Whale Rider*, September 9, 2002 (at the Toronto Film Festival); Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Jacques-Yves Cousteau, June 11, 1910; 1:06 p.m. GMT; Saint-André-de-Cubzac, France (44°N59', 00°W27'); AA: Gauquelin Vol. 3/444.

First Earth Day (United States), April 22, 1970; from Wikipedia.

Al Gore, May 31, 1948; 12:53 p.m. EST; Washington, D.C., USA (38°N54', 77°W02'); AA: birth certificate in hand from Marion March.

Debut of *An Inconvenient Truth*, January 24, 2006 (at the Sundance Film Festival); Park City, UT, USA: www.imdb.com/title/tt0497116/releaseinfo

John Muir, April 21, 1838; time unknown; Dunbar, Scotland (56°N00', 02°W31'); www.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/frameindex.html

Barack Obama, August 4, 1961; 7:24 p.m. AHST; Honolulu, HI, USA (21°N18', 157°W52'); AA: copy of birth certificate posted at http://fightthesmears.com/articles/5/birthcertificate

Sedna discovery, November 13, 2003; 10:32 p.m. PST; Mount Palomar, CA, USA (33°N19', 116°W53'); AstroDatabank Update, Vol. 2, No. 7, March 30, 2004, cites a "scientific paper" by Mike Brown and a personal communication from Chad Trujillo to Tony Louis: www.astrodatabank.com/pat/col20040330.htm; confirmed by personal communication from Mike Brown to Barbara Schermer, 2008.

Sierra Club, May 28, 1892; time unknown; San Francisco, CA, USA; www.sierraclub.org/history/timeline.asp

References and Notes

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3. Brown, "Mike Brown's Planets," www.mikebrownplanets.com/2008/01/i-heart-astrologers.html
4. N. Sweet, "Heavenly Bodies and the People of Earth," *Science and Spirit* magazine, No. 34, July/August 2008.
5. From the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of Goddesses and Heroines*, by Patricia Monaghan (Greenwood, 2009). My thanks to her for sharing the many myths of Sedna, via personal communication.
6. Kat Allison, "Solstice," www.katallison.com/solstice.html
7. "90377 Sedna," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/90377_Sedna
8. "Jacques Cousteau Biography," www.notablebiographies.com/Co-Da/Cousteau-Jacques.html
9. Muir's natal Sedna is at 25° Pisces, sextile Mercury at 21° Taurus and trine retrograde Saturn at 27° Scorpio. He is considered by many to be the first and most influential defender of the environment. An incident in his life epitomizes the notion of Sedna as catalyst. Five weeks after the February 1867 Sedna ingress into Aries, Muir (at age 29 on his Saturn return) suffered a devastating accident and became totally blind for a month. When he regained his sight, he had an epiphany that revealed his soul's essential relationship to nature. He began to crave direct experience of the entire natural world and explored nature with zeal, traveling around the globe and writing about his naturalist philosophy. The events of the Sedna ingress sparked a transformation in Muir's life, and from that time forward, he was a fierce advocate of environmental preservation. (See www.californiamuseum.org/exhibits/halloffame/inductee/john-muir)
10. "Sierra Club Policies," www.sierraclub.org/policy/
11. "Sierra Club," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sierra_Club
12. Mike Brown, personal communication, November 17, 2008.

13. Michele Adler, "18–19 degrees of Virgo/Pisces and the Eclipse of September 2007," August 28, 2007 (5), www.micheleadler.com/18th_Virgo_eclipse.pdf

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20. B. Ruby Rich, *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, June 25 – July 1, 2003; reprinted at www.whaleriderthemovie.com/articles/article23.html

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Barbara Schermer fell in love with the night sky at age ten. Astrology and Kriya yoga entered her life in the 1970s through spiritual teacher Kriyananda (of Chicago). She learned astrology together with the spiritual practices of Kriya yoga. Barbara is a passionate advocate of a holistic, soul-centered astrology, integrating archetypal and Jungian psychology, mythology, Kriya yoga, and the arts in her work. She will share further results of research at ISAR's August conference in Chicago, where Sedna will appear in a dramatic presentation. To learn about Sedna in your chart, contact Barbara at: bschermer@astrologyalive.com or telephone: (800) 273-8868.

ABOUT THE ARTIST (p. 32)

Hrana Janto is an artist long inhabiting the realms of History, Fantasy, Mythology, and the Sacred. Her works include historical paintings for the PBS series, Joseph Campbell's *The Power of Myth*, with Bill Moyers, as well as numerous book covers, calendars, and several children's books. Hrana co-created the internationally published *The Goddess Oracle deck*, featuring her art and calligraphy, and *108 Yoga Poses*. She is thrilled to have just finished illustrating the new edition of Patricia Monaghan's *Encyclopedia of Goddesses and Heroines*. Hrana lives in New York's Hudson Valley. She also creates portraits and private commissions. To see more, visit: www.hranajanto.com

TMA'S BACK ISSUE SALE

HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO MAY 8, 2009!

SEE PAGE 88 FOR DETAILS.

Correction

In the article, "Re-Visioning the Lunar Nodes" (*TMA*, Feb./March 2009), by Kathy Allan, the reference to the Moon's travel in declination, which corresponds to the celestial equator, in fact refers to the Moon's travel in *latitude*, which corresponds to the ecliptic. We regret the error and any confusion it may have caused.

Letters to the Editor

continued from page 71

Dear TMA:

I very much enjoyed Cynthia Wood's article, "Earth and Taurus: Geocentric Astrology's Missing Link" (*TMA*, Dec./Jan. 2009, p. 47). Her argument for Earth as the ruler of Taurus was quite compelling. For some reason, even though I've heard it before, her mention of Chiron as the ruler of Virgo triggered a new insight. Perhaps this link corresponds to the phenomenon of people who've reached the age of 50 and experienced the Chiron return in the last 30 years and have felt compelled to redefine their self-worth and sense of service to reflect the qualities and issues of Virgo. Sometimes, it's a matter of finding inspiring new work; sometimes, it's a matter of recognizing that they can't serve anyone else until they've started to take care of themselves for a change. Either way, it fits the symbolism of the Wounded Healer and Virgo, operating in conjunction. I've seen this awareness dawn right on schedule, time and time again, in my counseling practice.

What didn't really make sense to me was the idea of noting the Earth in the chart as a point opposite the Sun. We haven't neglected the Earth in the chart, nor have we left it out of the chart; we've simply taken it for granted! Of course, this also describes our treatment of the planet's ecological needs, as Ms. Wood discussed.

The role of the Earth in astrology was brought home to me by one of my teachers, Larry Shea, who insisted in almost every class that "astrology is an Earth-based science." The planets and the lights only appear in signs and houses from the point of view of the Earth and its ecliptic. So, the Earth is represented by the center of the chart! The Sun, which in objective reality is the center of our solar system, subjectively appears to tenant a sign and house of the chart *only* from the point of view of the Earth. In this sense, every planet and point is "opposite" the Earth — not just the Sun, as Ms. Wood would have it. Maybe we forget the Earth in the same way we take for granted the air we breathe. We can't live without it, but we forget about it until we have trouble breathing.

The Ascendant and Descendant of a particular chart are determined by the individual's precise position on the Earth. And, of course, the Ascendant is defined as the point coming up over the horizon of the Earth at a precise moment in time, connected to the 24-hour rotation of the Earth. So, the Earth is the physical center of the chart, and the individual self, from its vantage point on Earth, is the psychological and subjective center of the chart.

— Cara Gallucci
Wellesley, Massachusetts
caragallucci@yahoo.com