

Astrology: science or superstition essay



On January 14, 2010, it was announced by mass American news media CNN, that a 13th astrological sign, Ophiuchus was added to the western zodiac, causing the astrological signs of those born after 2010 to differ from those born on the same date in latter years (Carroll, 2010, January, 14). The report went on to explain that the current formulas did not account for new movements and shifts the earth as made in recent years (Carroll, 2010, January, 14).

Immediately, mass confusion, disgust, outrage and even pride were noted on social sites like Facebook and Twitter as people responded to the news. Responses ranged from, “ I was born an Aries, I will die an Aries” to “ I never felt like a Sagittarius, I’m definitely an Ophiuchus”, and “ I don’t care what they say, I’m doing it the old way”. But why would people be so concerned with such a change? Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary defines astrology as “ the divination of the supposed influences of the stars and planets on human affairs and terrestrial events by their positions and aspects” (Merriam-Webster, 2011). Although described as divination, astrology was certainly important enough to be explained by CNN national news and it certainly caused a stir among Americans who believe that the positions of the stars and planets can be used to predict and understand life and events. Although widely accepted enough to appear in most newspapers, astrology is not accepted by the western scientific community as accurate or scientific. While astrology cannot seem to be explained or believed by science, people seem to believe otherwise. The most damning piece of evidence that astrologers have is the sheer believability and the fact that so many people will attest that it is accurate to their lives or personalities.

In the preceding paragraphs, a careful analysis will be offered in the hopes of categorizing astrology as either a science or complicated form of divination. In order to truly decide if Astrology is considered a science or not, one must first decide exactly what a “ science” is. The Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary has several different definitions for the word “ science” which include the following: “ 1: the state of knowing: knowledge as distinguished from ignorance or misunderstanding 2a : a department of systematized knowledge as an object of study b : something (as a sport or technique) that may be studied or learned like systematized knowledge 3a : knowledge or a system of knowledge covering general truths or the operation of general laws especially as obtained and tested through scientific method b : such knowledge or such a system of knowledge concerned with the physical world and its phenomena : natural science 4: a system or method reconciling practical ends with scientific laws,” (Merriam-Webster, 2011). Based on certain definitions, astrology could be considered a science.

Consider the second definition listed above. In fact, abroad it is considered a science. The India Times reports, “ MUMBAI: Astrology has been debunked by most world scientists including India’s renowned physicist Prof. Yash Pal. However, it is “ science” in India. The Bombay High Court reaffirmed this on Thursday when it dismissed a PIL that had challenged astrology as science. The PIL was filed by an NGO, Janhit Manch that had sought action against ‘ fake’ astrologers, tantriks, practitioners of Vastu shastra etc. So far as prayer related to astrology is concerned, the Supreme Court has already considered the issue and ruled that astrology is science.

The court had in 2004 also directed the universities to consider if astrology science can be added to the syllabus. The decision of the apex court is binding on this court," observed the judges (Vyas, 2011). Astrology is based on math and calculations, if done properly a person's birth chart could be calculated by anyone and have the same results. 30 year astrologer Gnobo Calypso explains, " When an astrologer works on your chart, the astrologer would need to know your full birth date including the time and where you were born, what city that you were born in, so that the calculations can be accurate. What the astrologer will use is a book like this called the Ephemeris. And, this book is tables of calculations of where all twelve vibrations of the zodiac are.

Just so you know, zodiac does mean ' wheel of animal. ' The calculations become very precise using these tables that determine the latitude. It determines the contay. And, it determines, at the time that you were born, where the different astrological signs were and how that influences your birth.

There are new ones for [that]; this one is used for forecasting events in people's lives. If someone was doing a very major thing, like getting married or having a major contract to sign, and they wanted me to find out what is the best time for them. First of all, I'd have to know their sign, their Sun sign, their Moon sign, and their Ascendant. And then, I would go into this book and I would determine for them what the best date is.

What sign would best influence which one of the twelve zodiac signs would be of good influence. Because if the person is a Cancer, I wouldn't suggest

for them doing something on the day where Scorpio is rising because that could be a little bit too intense. So, these are the main tools of an astrologers are these books. Anybody can get these books and do these calculations themselves which I would highly suggest because astrology is a lot of fun. And, there is a lot of calculations, but, and there is a lot of detail, but in actuality it is discovering a lot of truths that exist right above us which makes astrology really quite wonderful. These books are available at any of the bookstores.

You don't have to go to a new age bookstore. Barnes & Noble will have them and they're not as complicated as they look. It's just many days and many, many numbers to work with. But, if my high suggestion is to find an astrologer who has done this for many years and let that astrologer do your chart for you. Because what makes a good astrologer is working many, many, many, many charts and then it would be more accurate for you. But, to not be intimidated by astrology which is a beautiful science and it's a very ancient science," (Calypso, 2008).

While astrology does seem quite scientific, it is the third definition of science which the scientific community considers to distinguish astrology from traditional sciences. Here science is defined as knowledge or a system of knowledge covering general truths or the operation of general laws especially as obtained and tested through scientific method and also such knowledge or such a system of knowledge concerned with the physical world and its phenomena. Although astrology is concerned with the physical world and its phenomena, scientists feel that astrological claims are vague and cannot be proven. For instance there is no way to test if the stars are

actually having an effect on what happens. At best one can hypothesize a correlation but there is no way to actually prove that an event is the result of the position of the Earth, stars or planets. The scientific community also feels that astrologers do not use scientific methods to prove or research their claims.

While any field of scientific study continues to make new discoveries each day, astrologers continue to employ the same methods and knowledge which has been available for centuries. Some scientists even argue that the word knowledge should not even be used in the definition astrology, since so much is left unexplained. While according to the scientific method, astrology is not considered a science, it seems to just be something people will have to accept that cannot be explained. Astrology is able to predict events with some form of accuracy, although it is not determined how this is possible or why the relation between celestial bodies and humans and events exists. It is known that the moon and sun affect our bodies, regulating menstrual cycle of women and mood. It is not known why, but it is known to be true. Some would even call it a scientific fact, yet the connection cannot be proven.

The usage of the word science is the real concern here. It is at the discretion of the speaker which context the word science would be used in that particular situation. Used loosely, almost anything could be considered a science, take for example definition 2b. from above. If it was to be argued strictly, then no I do not believe astrology is science since it's methods do not adhere to the guidelines of the scientific process. Astrology is just as it is defined by the dictionary, merely a form of divination. References astrology.

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