

# President Donald Trump

by Bill Herbst

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Donald Trump has not become the President of the United States. Oh sure, Trump **is** the President, in fact. He won the electoral college vote (if not the popular vote) in the election back in November 2016, took the oath of office in January 2017, and occupies the White House (at least part-time). Trump has not, however, *become* the President. He has not risen to the lofty stature of his new office. Instead, he has remained the same Donald Trump he was before (and has always been), namely, an egomaniac and narcissist whose primary concern is shoring up the massive insecurities of his gargantuan ego. He does this by seeing life as a competition where what matters is winning, or at least the appearance of winning. He thinks of himself as the Don of a family business (*get it? Don as in ruler versus Don as in Donald — sorry, I couldn't resist that cheap double-entendre...*).

Trump wants to be loved by some and hated by others. He demands absolute loyalty from his friends, in the form of unquestioning allegiance to help maintain and support the self-imagined magnificence of his person, but he needs enemies as much as friends, since Trump sees everything as win-or-lose battles, and he requires enemies he can claim to have vanquished.

I want to be careful to identify these judgments as my own opinions. I hold them based my observations of Donald Trump's behavior, viewed through the lens of his chart. Astrology itself is *always* neutral. Charts say: "*This is what **IS** for the person in question. This is how he or she is hard-wired. These are the conditions within which the person works.*" Any value judgments are overlaid onto the chart and come from the astrologer interpreting it. Despite that disclaimer, I think Trump's chart and the general presumptions of astrological interpretation support my opinions.

For instance, Trump's natal chart and those of both of his sons, Don Jr. and Eric, all contain Mercury-Neptune connections. Everything I know about astrology suggests that this relationship indicates an individual who has difficulty distinguishing fact from fiction. The person may not know the difference or may not care.

More specifically, the detailed condition in Trump Sr.'s chart is Mercury in Cancer in the 11th house square to Neptune in Libra in the 2nd house. The custom-

tailored interpretation is that whatever Trump wants to be true to support his personal self-esteem is affirmed as true and claimed to be accurate, whether or not that is objectively correct. Fact-checking is not Donald Trump's strong suit. Further, Trump's Gemini Sun and full Sagittarius Moon involving Uranus imply that he will say whatever he's thinking at any given moment without social filters, and that he routinely offers up outrageous opinions (as fact) for their shock effect to disrupt ordinary social propriety. I think everyone would agree that Trump behaves in this fashion. Whether or not people like that quality in Trump's personality depends on their own values. Trump's critics tend to hate it; Trump's supporters tend to love it.

Beyond the caveats of neutrality and non-judgment, there's the larger question of how much we can trust whatever we see (or think we see) in someone's chart. As I've stated and written often in the past, I do not regard astrology as a "perfect" system for deciphering reality. As with all human systems for understanding life, astrology falls short. In my view, astrology never was and never will be a "stand-alone" system, since much that is relevant in our lives is omitted from astrological insight. For instance, astrology will not tell us how conscious or mature someone is, whether or not he or she has been paying attention and learning from life-experience. That process is quite mysterious and must be gleaned and judged from sources other than astrological charts.

What astrology does very well, however — better than any other system I've found in my 67 years — is reveal the characteristic, hard-wired structures and content of our individual life-journeys. Our natal charts indicate, sometimes with stunning accuracy, the paths of experience we will probably take over our lifetimes, detailing the resources we possess innately to make the journey, as well as the conflicts and paradoxes we are likely to encounter along the way.

Astrology is brilliant in confirming, clarifying, and sometimes correcting our perceptions of who we are, where we're headed, and what's happening to us, both outside ourselves from the environment and inside ourselves within our psyches. And that is certainly true in Donald J. Trump's case.

The political events unfolding in Washington D.C. since Trump took office and his administration began, and especially the most recent revelations of the past two weeks, are regarded by some observers as mind-boggling. While I wouldn't have been able to see or predict the specifics of what's happening from Trump's chart, I'm not surprised in the least by the general tone, nor by the implications of where we may be headed.

When Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton were selected as the two Presidential candidates by their respective parties in the summer of 2016, I looked at their charts and worried that whichever candidate won the election and became President would face a very difficult time. Here's what I wrote in closing out my commentary of November 1st, 2016, entitled "*(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction:*"

*However crazy this presidential campaign has seemed, the election isn't likely to provide any resolution. This past year has been the setup to an ongoing process — an eruptive collision of tectonic plates — and America isn't going back to business-as-usual. We are at war with ourselves, and the conflict is intensifying.*

*Whichever candidate prevails in the election — whether Clinton or Trump — the winner will have a very hard time as President.*

That prediction seems to be coming to pass.

Amidst all the other past two weeks' "breaking news" revelations of more lies and scandalous behavior from the Trump administration, we are learning now that special counsel Robert Mueller's Justice Department investigation into possible improprieties in the 2016 Presidential campaign (specifically, by digging into Russian meddling in the election) has moved into the realm of the Trump family business dealings. Trump's refusal during the campaign to release his tax returns appeared at the time to have been a rather obvious red flag about financial issues that Trump wanted to keep secret. Now, that refusal is like a smoke alarm going off at a screaming 100 decibels. Robert Mueller is about to unearth and expose if not all of that, or at least whatever he finds.

In his Wednesday, July 19th, interview with three New York Times reporters, President Trump effectively warned Mueller to back off. Trump's firing of FBI Director James Comey may have been motivated by similar concerns. As I write this, reporters have learned that Trump has discussed with his legal advisors the possibility of Presidential pardons for himself and his family. Yikes.

Many astrologers (including me) have noted that Trump's chart is under extreme duress throughout the entire year of 2017. In the commentary I wrote and posted a week after the election — entitled "What Now?" — I discussed the major developments in Donald Trump's chart that would shape his first year in office. Rather than re-write all that, I'll simply quote the entire section from that now nine-month-old commentary here:

### *The Coming Trump Presidency*

*The only certainty in this upheaval [the election result] is that things are going to change. While it seems likely that the country will move from a partially progressive to a largely reactionary social stance, at least in government and public policy, no one can be sure what a Trump Presidency will mean. The Republicans may encounter almost as much trouble with Mr. Trump as the Democrats do. Trump is not an ideologue. He is a showman, a TV star. He wants to be a Big, Can-Do, Do-Everything President, along the lines of Theodore Roosevelt. Trump doesn't concern himself with how something gets done, and he will push, shove, seduce, and cajole to get what he wants.*

*But there's a fly in the ointment. Trump's chart runs smack into major difficulties starting in late December as Saturn reaches his Sagittarian full Moon and arrives in January opposite his Gemini Sun-Uranus. This means that he will have reached the halfway point in his life-purpose cycle at the same that he begins a new emotional needs cycle, events that are astrologically rare and hugely significant.*

*Trump's first cycle of life-purpose definition and expression was from age 27-56. In that cycle, he followed in his father's footsteps to pursue wealth and fame in New York real estate and wealthy society. His second life-purpose cycle, which began 13 years ago at the age of 57, revealed to him a new focus, that of becoming a global celebrity. That cycle is now reaching the halfway or harvest point. He has reached the summit. Now, he must start to live in and use what he built.*

*2017 is also the beginning of Trump's second Saturn-Moon cycle. He must redefine how he needs to present himself to feel comfortable and secure day-to-day over the decades ahead. In Trump's particular chart, this is about his on-stage persona — the character he's portraying himself to be. Where he once identified himself as an elite billionaire who reveled in his status as an outsider and an often crude loose cannon, now he must become a man of the people, at least in his self-created pose, and take on the awesome responsibilities of the highest office in the land.*

*In anyone's chart, these transits are significant and meaningful, setting a tone for the coming 15 years of the life-journey. In pragmatic terms, however, they are difficult transitions. Since Trump was born at the full Moon, both cycles change phase together, and their simultaneous activation corresponds to dramatically increased pressure, responsibilities, and — typically — blockage or opposition.*

*It's as if one has been driving down the road and comes to a railroad crossing where the gates are down, the lights flashing, and a long freight train is clickety-clacking its slow passage through the crossing. The only choice is to stop and wait — in this case, for an entire year.*

*In short, Trump is in for serious frustration in 2017. The American President is often called the most powerful person on the planet, but that power is not unlimited. Trump is about to run head-on into the hard lesson that our government has built-in checks and balances. We shall see how well he handles that. This is not to suggest that he will not wreak havoc. He may. But, whatever he does, he won't be a happy camper.*

The two critical cycle activations — Saturn opposed to Trump's natal Sun and conjunct his natal Moon — have effective periods from December 2016 through November 2017. We're in mid-July, so Trump has another four months yet to go of these potent and frustrating transits. When these two come to a close, as they will at the end of the year, they are replaced in Trump's chart by two more significant and difficult Saturn transits — Saturn conjunct his natal Neptune and square to his natal Mercury, which will be effective throughout the bulk of 2018. So, there's no release of the pressure for Mr. Trump.

Will Donald Trump survive and serve out his term as President? Maybe. For all his many faults, Trump is a fierce fighter when it comes to his two primary orientations: self-aggrandizement and self-preservation. Will he find a way to derail Robert Mueller's investigation if it gets too close for comfort by revealing shady Trump family financial deals, perhaps by firing Mueller? Such an action would echo the "Saturday Night Massacre" of 1973. For those too young to remember Watergate, that was when special prosecutor Archibald Cox issued a subpoena to President Richard Nixon to give Cox the Oval Office tape recordings. Nixon refused but had to go three layers down the Justice Department chain of command to find someone who would carry out his order to fire Cox. This led to the climax of the Watergate scandal and Nixon's subsequent resignation.

If Trump removes Attorney General Jeff Sessions (who correctly recused himself from any involvement in the Justice Department's investigation into Russian interference in the election) and then instructs the next Attorney General to fire Mr. Mueller, that could provoke the greatest constitutional crisis in American history.

Given the waning strength this summer of the Saturn-Neptune square (indicating our susceptibility over the past three years to lies, deceit, and fantasies that cannot become real) and the continuing expression of the much longer and more significant Uranus-Pluto square (implying a major breakdown in institutions and loss of public faith in them), I think that such a major crisis may be a real possibility.

If Trump has any advantage in this debacle, it's in the fact that his "base" of hard-core supporters — roughly 30% of the voting public — does not care about the Russians or collusion or, for that matter, how Donald Trump made his fortune. They love Trump because he is not a politician, and they actually enjoy his ego-bluster, Twitter outbursts, all-over-the-map lying about everything, total lack of consistency, and that Trump has apparently no coherent philosophy or principles (except promoting the greatness of Donald Trump). The only thing that could erode Trump's loyal and fervent base would be his failure to make good on campaign promises. Although any realistic chances for fulfillment of those promises are either slim or none, not enough time has passed for Trump's base to turn on him, certainly not during the first year of Trump's sojourn in the Oval Office.

President Trump's greatest disadvantage over the coming months is that he is, to put it plainly, Donald J. Trump. A core saying in astrology is: *Character is destiny*. For Mr. Trump, his character might finally prove to be his undoing. Time will tell.