

"Most astrologers don't know the fundamental basics of astronomy. Some don't even know what system they're using. There are at least five different ways to define 'houses.' A planet could fall in a different house in a different system. It depends on the systems as to the kind of horoscope you get," Davis said.

Posey admitted he did not know much about astronomy, but said he knew all he needed to know. He also said that although different astrologers use different systems for constructing a horoscope, the results they achieve are only subtly different, because all the parts of the horoscope are still related to each other in the same way. D avis said astrologers make their predictions by making guesses which are so general that they come true. "Nothing is very specific. It's just a lot of generalities that apply to most people. Everyone has the same characteristics, just to different degrees."

UNC psychology Professor Mark Appelbaum agreed. "The way these things often work is that they write things that could apply to anyone. I don't think many psychologists think much of it," he said.

"The real question is why people believe in it," Appelbaum said. "It's nice to have something we believe in in a world where everything is shot down. I'd way they do things by pointing out what they're doing wrong," he said. "I told a doctor that she wasn't being considerate enough of her patients. She found this to be true and has since worked on being more considerate.

"There's no such thing as a good or bad chart. Even when it seems like there's no hope at all, I can present a person with some positive ways of looking at things. Recognizing a problem is the first step to overcoming it," he said.

One of Posey's clients, Nancy Preston, a housewife in Chapel Hill, said the horoscope Posey had done for her was fairly accurate. "It is a perfectly fascinating exercise, but I take it for what it is. I'm not depending on his analyses to run my life," she said.

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Morris Davis

Davis explained that the zodiac is simply an imaginary band 16 degrees wide on each side of the eclipitic, the sun's path. It is divided into 12 boxes, each 30 degrees long.

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Whether astrology is worthless mysticism, as many scientists maintain, or a valuable tool for selfknowledge, as astrologers insist, the fact remains that it commands an enormous amount of attention in the United States. Horoscopes are carried in approximately 1,250 daily newspapers in this country, about two-thirds of America's papers, according to The Skeptical Inquirer.

A recent Gallup poll reported that over threequarters of Americans know their astrological signs, and about one-fourth of the adults in the United States "embrace astrology." That means astrology has 30-40 million believers nationwide. be very surprised if a horoscope says there is something basically wrong with a person. They say everything in a positive way, although they may pepper in one or two negative traits."

When I look at my own horoscope, Appelbaum's and Davis' objections seem valid. Much of what Posey did tell me was general and for the most part very positive. For instance, he said I got along with my younger brother and that I was a motivated person. Most people do get along fairly well with their siblings, and, as Appelbaum said, the majority of college students are motivated.

But Posey told me a few things about myself which make it difficult for me to completely dismiss his findings. He told me on our first meeting, when he knew me only as a reporter for a college newspaper, that I had meditated before. I took a course in transcendental meditation a few years ago. He also told me that journalism is a good field for me because I would become extremely bored at any desk job. I have cited that reason myself when asked why I chose to go into journalism.

Posey told me that of all his clients, who have included doctors, lawyers and chemists, I am the most skeptical. He said my chart was particularly difficult to read because it contained obvious contradictions, and it was difficult for him to tell which ones took priority. Astrology is most helpful for people who are looking for answers in their lives, and I really am not looking for them, he said.

"I've been able to show people directions of growth and potential. I've caused some people to change the UNC junior Yvonne Monroe has also had her chart done by Posey, and she, too, finds it accurate. "I've had three different astrologers do my horoscope, and they all came out basically the same. I see a counselor and this helps me with my counseling. Perhaps astrology could take over counseling," she said.

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While I may remain the most skeptical of Posey's clients, I must admit that many of the points he made about my personality seem correct and specific. However, some inaccurate statements he made, coupled with the total absence of any scientific basis for astrology, cause me to question it.

Or perhaps I just question it because the influence of Saturn in my chart makes me often highly suspicious.

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