

# The power degrees of the zodiac



Frank C. Clifford

**The first, middle and final degrees in each of the signs carry specific and potent messages, whether in the natal horoscope or directed/progressed charts. Here, a range of horoscopes of famous people and events is analysed to demonstrate the spectrum of meanings across these highly-charged degrees**

In honour of Charles Carter (who famously researched the degrees of the zodiac), I prepared this lecture to offer some of my own insights and observations into the first, final (and middle) degrees of the signs. I won't dare suggest that these are the *most* powerful, determining factors in a chart – they're simply important ones. It's an on-going research project and tonight I'll be using some interesting modern day examples – both natal charts and solar arc (SA) directions.

I'll be paying close attention to the final degree of Scorpio – we astrologers know that it's fatal to ignore *any* degree of Scorpio. And, as we know, Mars is at this degree tonight (Friday 12 September 2014).

## The mundane picture

On a mundane level, we know that when outer planets transit the final few degrees of a sign, we say goodbye to certain aspects (and iconic figures) that have been at the heart of that ingress; it's the end of an era. As these planets ingress into a new sign, we can spot signposts of events to come – the mood of the new transit. And the scene is set for the years ahead.

Films and music released at this time can be prophetic. Remember, for instance, the voyeuristic theme of *The Truman Show*, which was released as Neptune moved into Aquarius – and heralded the start of our fascination with (and loathing of) reality TV?

Laws passed at ingresses can herald the new planetary season. Some weeks after Uranus made its ingress into Aries, France became the first European country to prohibit the niqab and burka. The planet Uranus is linked to bans and censorship, while Aries rules the face and is concerned with being the first to do things. Accordingly it was a controversial move that had both sides arguing equality – and freedom of expression. 'Bans in the name of freedom' seem to be the order of Uranus in Aries!

Neptune's move into the first degree of Pisces brought more than a whiff of scandal. There were stories about invasions. Not invasions of little green men from outer space abducting farmers in Middle America and performing surgery on cows. But the invasions of privacy and the abduction of personal data. We read of leaks and infiltrations, cyber warfare and phone-hacking. Who can forget *The News of the World* scandal?

Perhaps some of the biggest battles of this transit will revolve around the processing and containment of information, and the collection, sale and distribution of personal data. And by the end of this transit, there will be little left of personal privacy.

A few years ago, in *The Astrological Journal*, I wrote that Neptune in Pisces might be seen in:

- The increasing numbers of migrations of nomadic communities without a fixed abode;
- Telepathic forms of everyday communication;
- The erosion of drugs laws and acceptance of certain drugs for medical purposes, and a greater tolerance for euthanasia.

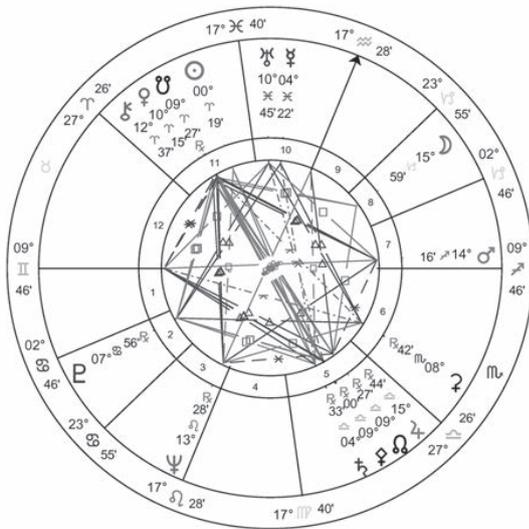
The transit might also link to areas ruled by its opposite sign of Virgo: from the disappearance of a retirement age, to diseases, viruses and plagues, and to the evaporation of pensions and health care provisions.

## 0° in the natal chart

So, let's take a closer look at the first degree – zero degrees – of a sign. When a planet is at 0° in the natal chart:

- There is new territory to explore. As it takes its initial steps into its new surroundings, the planet delights in discovering itself. It anticipates the new journey ahead.
- There is a new language to learn and much work to be done; a planet at the beginning of a sign is keen to grasp that sign's essence. Embarking on this voyage, the planet appears highly eager to encounter and get a sense of *that which it will become*.
- It revels in the pure, undiluted nature of the sign. There's a fresh, unstudied quality to a planet at this degree. There may also be a pioneering feel – those of us who have a planet (especially a personal planet) at 0° have something original to bring forth to the world around us.
- There is a tendency to exhibit the sign's most familiar, obvious, *prima facie*, 'textbook' traits. The planet at 0° indulges in a spectrum of sign connotations and associations, but as yet there's little deftness or experience in how to master the sign. The planet has grasped the initial spirit without the awareness that comes from journeying through the sign and mastering its essence.

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Russ Meyer natal, Mar 21 1922, Tue 9:35am Oakland, California

Let's consider a few pop culture and newsworthy examples.

There's little subtlety when the Sun is at 0° Aries. Overt, playful sexuality is one theme of 0° Aries. The independent film-maker Russ Meyer was obsessed with low-budget sexploitation films. He directed cult X-rated 'classics' such as *Vixen!* and *Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill!* featuring Amazonian starlets, with gargantuan, pneumatic, gravity-defying breasts, who ran around beating up men who dared to restrict their freedom. (We can see that his chart also contains Venus in Aries opposite Jupiter, Moon–Jupiter, and Mars in Sagittarius on the Descendant.)

Meyer made comedies and 'cartoons' and mocked moral stereotypes, using sex to satirise American society, but many feminists hated his adolescent Arien fantasies. He was known for his quick wit, and once he was confronted by a woman who accused him of being 'nothing but a breast man'. He responded, 'That's only the half of it.'

On a deeper level (if there is one!), the first degree of Aries is about a truthful performance, creating something stark and raw. There's a focus on making an impact, and a self-obsession with one's arrival onto the scene. And we sense immediacy (entering the fray without a plan of attack) and the need for instant arousal and speed, as in Ayrton Senna (Sun at 0° Aries), the Formula One race car legend who died from massive head injuries while racing at 280km/h (155 mph). Sports enthusiasts still argue whether he was a reckless renegade or the number one racer of all time.

Aries is a sign associated with physicality and violence (giving or receiving), and also (somewhat paradoxically) associated with blind faith, naïve trust and innocence.

I have a client with the Sun at 0° Aries whose father once described both her childlike innocence and her fearlessness. That's the key to the first degree of Aries. He said she could have singlehandedly taken on those in the Brixton Riots, but

could also be found out in the fields talking to the magical fairies and angels she believed in. She is a startling redhead who was at the forefront of many social protests and political rallies in the 1980s; someone who has fought for the underdog but is constantly too trusting and gullible in business. She gives away her time and money – and struggles to keep financially afloat. This placement defines her.

The first degree of Aries needs a clear-cut cause – now! – and sees the world in black and white terms. Not through the lens of cynicism, but through the simple polarities of good and evil, right and wrong: to 0° Aries, you're either the noble knight or the immoral charlatan.

Gemini at 0° has perhaps the lowest boredom threshold of all time and constantly needs to be 'in process' – juggling, scanning, choosing. A planet at this degree immediately sees the polarities, the contradictions, the alternatives and divisions in the world – and it's not surprising that indecision can be a major factor. Its enthusiasm lies in getting other people to share information, to break the ice, speak out and communicate. The urge to be heard, understood and in dialogue is strongest here, as is the flicker of boredom in the eyes when something newer or more tantalizing comes along.

Picture Henry VIII with Venus at 0° Gemini (suggesting fickleness and a non-committal stance in the area of women and attraction). With Venus on the MC, he was known for his numerous wives and his search for one who could deliver – literally and quickly.

A natural reporter, fact-finder and journalist, 0° Gemini is hungry for data in order to find patterns and make links. For instance, data collector Lois Rodden was born with the Sun at 0° Gemini. It wasn't just a desire to collect data and rate its accuracy; she had an interest in 'doubting' the official word – what had come before. We can see this with 0° Gemini: a rejection of what has been embedded by the previous sign (Taurus) or accepted as tradition, and a need to clarify before information-overload (later in the sign of Gemini). Or, simply put, to separate the bull – Taurus – from the bullshit – Gemini!

But wait, all of the above are Gemini traits and themes, whatever the degree of Gemini. But the nature of the sign is undiluted, simplified, most obvious and raring to go when a planet is at 0°.

What of 0° Virgo? As astrologer Kim Farley often says, 'After the party of Leo, someone's got to clean up.' Someone's got to dip their toe in and check the temperature – and look for hairs in the bath. And that's Virgo.

At this degree, there's a determination to learn a craft and embark upon the simple life. The understanding here is that to achieve, one must sign up to an apprenticeship, to be of service to a greater good, to have pure intentions, and to attend to the body and its needs. If 0° Leo is the degree of *helping oneself to something*, then 0° Virgo is the degree of 'self-help', a solo journey towards making a difference in the world. There's a

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belief that one's singular efforts can make a difference – if one works hard enough – and that the simple things in life are the most profound. These are things that truly touch the soul. Bob Geldof (with Mars at 0° Virgo) saw the clarity of one man making a difference – he responded to the plight of the starving in Ethiopia. Famine relief, health, (mal)nutrition and the overlooked are all of great concern to the earnest planet positioned at 0° Virgo.

### 0° in forecasting

When a planet reaches 0° by transit, progression or solar arc (take your pick), there's a major shift and a new script. The planet has changed sign, element and mode. In forecasting, I use solar arc directions, where *everything* in the chart (the planets, angles, house cusps, even retrograde planets) moves forward a degree a year.

With solar arc, each planet, angle or point stays at 0° for twelve months, and this sets the mood for the longer period to come. It's a portent, a signpost of what we can expect for the next thirty years. A sort of 'operatic overture' – a condensed, intensely heightened period during which we are swamped by images of this new sign and we experience issues around it. It's a year of getting to know, and beginning to work out, the essence of that sign.

An important point to remember is that when a planet ingresses into a sign, it 'speaks to' and begins to activate every planet/angle natively in that sign, regardless of the actual degree. This is the 'natal memory' – what the person knows of the sign from birth. So that initial year at 0° will have a flavour of the new sign and will be tinged by any natal positions in that sign.

A favourite example of mine that I often use is the chart of Pamela Anderson. She posed for *Playboy* when her Sun directed to 0° Leo, a sign that natively contained the over-the-top glamour combo of Venus and Jupiter in Leo. Now, we're not all going to pose for *Playboy* when our Sun's directed into Leo, but Anderson was ambitious and beautiful, and at the right time and place. Leo is linked to the centrefold and big blonde hair, and being a Sun in Cancer in the 1st house, Pamela Anderson was ready to show off her

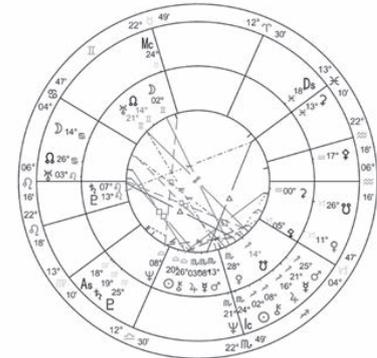
weapons of mass distraction.

Whether the transition to a new sign is easy or fraught depends on numerous things, including the planets waiting in the new sign. The week after singer Diana Ross's Sun directed into Gemini, her husband announced the end of their marriage – on live TV! Her Sun (already in the 7th house) had left the safety and stability of Taurus – the sign of her Moon and Descendant – and moved into somewhat uncomfortable, unstable ground in Gemini (where Mars, Saturn and Uranus sit). Her MC had also reached the final degree of Libra – and apparently there had been a last attempt at relationship mediation but the relationship had come to an end, as did the public's perception of her fairy tale romance (natal Neptune in Libra).

### The middle degrees in natal charts and forecasting

When a planet is placed in the middle degrees of a sign, from 14° to 16°, the planet appears to be truly ensconced in that sign's *raison d'être*. It's caught up in the midst of living in that sign and dealing with its key issues; there's a strong feeling that things won't change for some time. Sometimes it can feel like a mid-way (mid-life) crisis where there's a demand to understand the core challenges of a sign, knowing you have to keep ploughing on with no reprieve or change of scenery for a while. A solar arc planet in mid-Virgo, for instance, will be in the centre of chaos or bedlam for that year – snowed under with work, or perhaps dealing with health issues throw the person off kilter.

When in a cardinal sign, the planet/point is fully engaged in the process of moving forward, getting things done and encountering challenge and conflict. It's often a decisive period in a battle. Many people who engage in the cut and thrust of politics have personal planets at cardinal middle degrees. There's always a warning around full Moons in cardinal middle degrees – an existing conflict is triggered and there's no immediate solution. There was a lunar eclipse in mid-Capricorn weeks before 9/11 and there's a lunar eclipse at 15° Aries on 8 October 2014, bringing in so many of the charts of current politicians (including Putin, who has the Sun in Libra opposite the eclipse).



Inner Wheel: Edwina Currie natal, Oct 13 1946

Sun, 1:30pm, Liverpool

Outer Wheel: Edwina Currie, solar arc direction

for eggs crisis, Dec 3 1988, 11.00, Liverpool

On a less serious note, let's look at the preposterous former Junior Health Minister Edwina Currie. Her solar arc Moon reached mid Cancer when she put her foot in her mouth and announced that most eggs were contaminated by salmonella. This caused a sudden and massive drop in egg sales and led to her resignation. The Moon and Cancer are, of course, linked to eggs and chickens and what people buy to eat daily. Note, too, how solar arc Mercury in Sagittarius (foot-in-mouth disease!) reached an opposition to Uranus at the time.

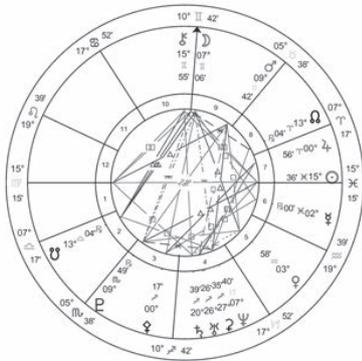
Currie wasn't a stranger to outrageous comments, once saying that 'good Christian people don't get AIDS' and 'northerners die of ignorance and chips'.

In fixed middle degrees, the planet is at its most permanent, solid and durable but sometimes feels stagnant or stuck in the areas linked to that planet and sign. By solar arc, it can be a year of feeling stable or trapped.

In mutable middle degrees, the planet is at its most flexible and diverse, but it's also precarious, scattered and prone to fluctuation. It can be a year of changeability, vacillation and instability.

Here's the chart for the opening of World Trade Center: the Sun is at 14°55' Aries, at the heart of action, dynamic conflict and aggression. We know of the various terrorist and bomb threats over the years. At 9/11, transiting Saturn was at 14°45' Gemini, a 'testing' Saturn Return time for the building. The Twin Towers have Saturn in Gemini at the most precarious of

degrees – not a safe bet for a construction of that size and importance.



Zeebrugge Disaster, Mar 6 1987, Fri 6:28pm  
Zeebrugge, Belgium

And what about the Zeebrugge ferry disaster (in which 193 people died)? This is the chart for the moment the ship capsized – note 15° Virgo on the Ascendant and the 15° Pisces Sun (both square Chiron). There's also Mars opposite Pluto, and Jupiter is at 0° Aries (its name was *The Herald of Free Enterprise*). Dennis Elwell, who predicted a disaster and tried to warn the company, has Jupiter at 6° Gemini and his solar arc Pluto had directed to 14°33' Virgo at the time of the tragedy. We're also reminded that the *Titanic* set sail when Jupiter was retrograde at 15° Sagittarius (and there was a whole range of other disastrous aspects that day).

### The final degree in the natal chart: poised for change

The final degree of a sign (29°, the thirtieth degree) in the natal chart is the end of an era. Known as the anaretic degree (or 'degree of fate'), it's often given a negative spin. Traditional astrologers awarded the malefics rulership over the final degrees of the signs. Some horary practitioners observe that the querent can do nothing to affect the outcome. It's too late to have control over the situation; it's a *fait accompli*.

Whereas the 0° planet is taking initial steps on the road ahead and is in the process of envisioning, discovering and creating its journey, the planet at 29° senses the end of a familiar path.

- There's a feeling of inevitability and 'fatedness'. There's no going back; situations are irreversible or irretrievable.

There may also be a fascination with *that which happened before we were born* that cannot be undone – a lifelong mission to come to terms with what we've been saddled with at birth.

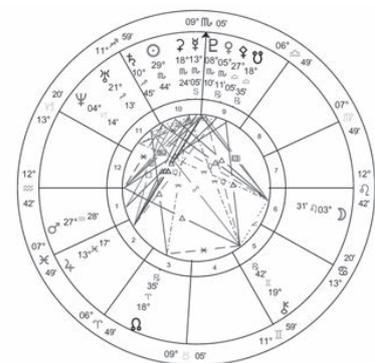
- There's a knowingness about the dynamics of the sign. By now the planet is a seasoned player. It's earned its stripes and is skilled in that sign; and equipped to deal with issues linked to it. With a natal planet or angle at 29°, we were born to finish the job of that sign; to display (eventual) mastery over its issues.
- We shall encounter some of the most challenging facets of that meaning.

Here are some examples. The need to take risks defines 29° Aries – to put oneself on the line. This might mean tap-dancing on a window ledge or walking the high-wire with no net. At 29° Aries, the person may reach crisis point and make a decision without much forethought. Having been through Aries, a planet now revels in its devil-may-care spontaneity – before it has to slow down in Taurus. (What do they say about Taurus? Taurus starts slow ... and then peters out.) The degree of 29° Aries has joy from continuing to be childlike regardless of the perils, mishaps or accusations of selfishness. It can also employ force and is no longer afraid of (or deterred by) violence. There's a skill in promoting a cause and getting people enthused with one's adventures and battles.

Australian astrologer Anne Button (<http://www.veritas.net.au>) has done much work on what she calls the 'potent and insatiable anaretic degree' – a degree that demands closure and has an insatiable/craving feeling to it. She refers to that planet being in a 'liminal' space. This is a disorientating place of transition, waiting and not knowing – when you have left the tried and true (the comfort zone) but have not yet been able to replace it with anything else. It's about learning to navigate and live with the ambiguity/haziness of being in an in-between place.

I promised you 29° Scorpio ... lots of it. The judge in the Oscar Pistorius case delayed the verdict yesterday (11 September 2014) – and left everyone in total Scorpio suspense. She was waiting for Mars to reach the final degree this morning (!) where it conjoins Pistorius's

Sun. This is the chart of a do-or-die man who knows nothing but full-on intensity and extreme behaviour in his fight against all odds.



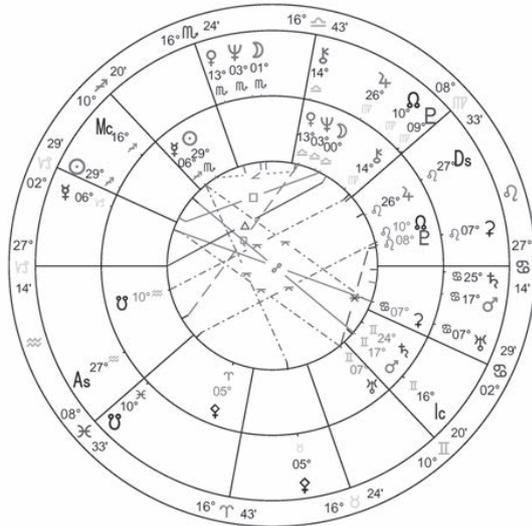
Oscar Pistorius natal, Nov 22 1986, Sat 10:30am  
Pretoria, South Africa

Another master of the game, Billie Jean King, the tennis legend, has the Sun at the final degree of Scorpio. Let's take a look at her chart.

Firstly, though, the Moon is at 0° Libra – she was an early advocate for equal prize money for women athletes, and in the 1970s she became an American figurehead of the struggle for female equality. Yet, King is someone who hates confrontation and, with her Moon-Neptune conjunction, was never quite comfortable with the feminist ideology of the time, which she felt could be intolerant and doctrinaire.

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Scorpio is a politically savvy sign that experiences (and is adept at handling) crises and extremes. With King's Sun at the final degree of Scorpio, she knows that the buck stops with her. She was born (Sun) to take control (Scorpio) and complete (29°) a Scorpio theme.



Inner Wheel: Billie Jean King natal, Nov 22 1943

Mon 11:45am, Long Beach, California

Outer Wheel: King, solar arc direction for sexes' battle, Sep 20 1973

11:00, Long Beach, California

At the final degree, in Scorpio, there may be: lifelong compulsions; a steely will, tunnel vision and total intensity one-on-one; an unflinching focus on the final, ultimate goal (be that victory or an obsession with death and endings); an ability to execute under pressure; an all-or-nothing, fight-to-the-death, winner-take-all philosophy; authenticity; emotional inscrutability; and an innate understanding of the relationship between power, money, sex, politics and gender. (I always think Scorpio should go into one of the 3 Ps: politics, psychology or prostitution.)

The Sun at 29° Scorpio reveals Billie Jean's impact on gender politics, as well as the influence she has had on sponsorship (Scorpio – other people's money) and prize money in the women's game.

This Sun placement was not without heavy personal consequences: she had to keep her (homo)sexuality hidden – the newly founded women's tennis tour and her own livelihood depended on this being kept secret.

The final degree of Scorpio knows how to play the game – how to suss out the competition and devise a strategy. When King agreed to participate in a Battle of the Sexes tennis match, she needed nerves of steel to beat hustler Bobby Riggs, who had just defeated the women's number one player, Margaret Court. The match had 30,000 spectators and 40 million at home in front of their televisions. It divided America into men for Bobby and women for Billie Jean. On that night, Venus and Mars were in opposition and in mutual reception: what a perfect planetary set-up for a 'battle of the sexes'! Venus was in powerful, premeditated and poker-faced Scorpio. It stood less

than one degree opposite Mars in solid but slow Taurus, which had turned retrograde the day before. King stayed focused and made Riggs look old and slow. She won in straight sets!

Not surprisingly, at the time of this sports circus extravaganza, King's Sun had directed to 29° Sagittarius (naturally the Sun is square Jupiter in Leo). It was an over-the-top, surreal spectacle befitting Sagittarius: one loud night of high drama, hyperbole and publicity on the world stage. It would overshadow the lifelong sporting achievements of both athletes. The win over Riggs would give King and her cause the professional credibility she craved (the Sun directed from Sagittarius to Capricorn soon after).

Speaking of 29° Sagittarius – it can be larger than life, with a gift for seeing the big picture. Think of Judy Garland's emotional, histrionic performances that packed a punch in your gut – designed to capture an audience's love. She had the Moon at the final degree of Sagittarius.

But 29° Sagittarius can also be the breadth and height of indiscretion. If you want something to go out with a whimper or pass unnoticed, please don't do it when a planet has directed to this degree of Sagittarius!

When Sarah Ferguson offered an undercover journalist 'cash for access' to her former husband in April 2012, SA Mercury had reached the final degree of Sagittarius. What a gaffe that action proved to be! Hopefully, a final one. And the solar arc was all the more potent since natal Mercury rules her Midheaven (her reputation) and comes from a conjunction with Neptune in Scorpio in the 12<sup>th</sup> house. This is not a woman who can hold on to her many secrets.

With her natal MC at 29° Scorpio, Heidi Fleiss was the reigning million-dollar madam of Hollywood and the keeper of the town's most intimate secrets in her infamous 'black book'. (We can speculate that Charlie Sheen's name was on half the pages – with his MC on her Ascendant/Venus conjunction in Aquarius. Interestingly, documentary-maker Nick Broomfield made a fascinating film about Fleiss and his Sun is also on this conjunction. She sure knows how to bring them in.)

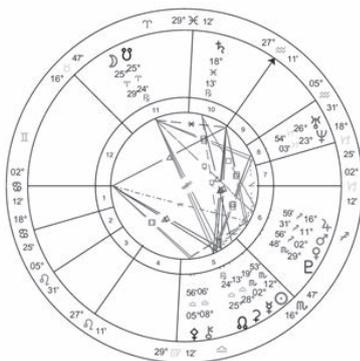
With a 29° Scorpio MC and the Sun in Capricorn, Heidi's story is about control – her need for absolute control. Although she never wanted to be famous or exposed (Scorpio prefers to keep control in the boardroom, not on the stage), she was one of the most influential madams in the US – and all before her Saturn Return. Her power extended to playing matchmaker to the richest men in the world, pairing them with women tailored for their every fantasy. She was a Capricorn – she took a 40 per cent cut of their earnings. On her slowest night, Heidi made \$10,000.

Her arrogant and cocky persona proved her downfall. With Mercury in Sagittarius square Pluto-Uranus in the 8th, she once boasted, 'I took the oldest profession on earth and I did it better than anyone on earth.' When her MC was at the end of Sagittarius, her high-profile case ended when her conviction

for pandering was overturned – she got lucky temporarily. But she later served 20 months inside for tax evasion when the MC moved into Capricorn. And then it was over. She said, ‘I had the party, did the party, threw the party, was the party. I’m parted out.’

Gender, sex and secrets are all on the agenda in Scorpio, particularly the final degree, where there’s a mastery of anything covert, underground, clandestine. As Quentin Crisp wrote, ‘The war between the sexes is the only one in which both sides regularly sleep with the enemy.’ Another expert in the battle of the sexes is Germaine Greer, with Mars at 29° Scorpio in the 10<sup>th</sup> house and co-ruling the MC. Mars closely trines Pluto.

Billy Tipton was a jazz musician who married four times. Not until his post-mortem was it revealed that Billy was really a woman – who had lived life as a man so as to be accepted as a musician in the 1930s and 1940s. This revelation left his wives and three adopted sons bewildered – they hadn’t had the slightest suspicion that their dad was female. Note Tipton’s Ascendant ruler is Venus, and it’s at 29° of inscrutable Scorpio. It’s also closely trine Neptune on the MC, which in itself is a placement of speculation and mystery. ‘Is he or isn’t she?’



Bashir arrives Diana Nov 5 1995, Sun 7:00pm  
Kensington Palace

Here’s the chart for when Martin Bashir secretly interviewed Diana, Princess of Wales, in what was to become the most astonishing, shattering and indiscreet royal interview of all time. Transiting Pluto was at 29° Scorpio when they taped the interview. When it aired two weeks later, Pluto had moved into less-than-cautious Sagittarius. The ploy backfired



Princess Diana

and set the scene for the dismantling of Diana’s life, her reputation as a loose cannon and the tragedies ahead. (Diana died when her solar arc Moon reached 29° Pisces: it was the end of domestic drama, the warped fairy tale, and the start of some major speculation surrounding her demise. She also became the Lady of the Lake. The Queen’s solar arc Ascendant was at 29° Pisces, too.)

To get a final feel for the last degree of Scorpio as a ‘hotly political’ degree, consider the horoscope for Margaret Thatcher’s resignation. Facing the humiliation of defeat in a leadership contest and a lack of support from colleagues, the three-time Prime Minister signed her resignation statement at 7:35 a.m. on 22 November 1990. The Sun was rising on the Ascendant at 29° Scorpio – it was the end of a leader who had been in total command. Thatcher never recovered from her party’s betrayal, branding it ‘treachery with a smile on its face’. The degree of 29° Scorpio was fitting: it was the end of her ‘acid reign’ – eleven ruthless, controversial years in power. (John F. Kennedy’s assassination on the same date in Dallas in 1963 also occurred when the Sun was 29° Scorpio.)

With 0° Leo there’s an interest in (and desire for) celebrity or in revelling in one’s own world of creative adventures, and relishing the discovery/realization that Leo *can* create. Sometimes the desperation for recognition, the spotlight and personal glory is palpable (think of

Madonna – Venus at 0° Leo – and her blonde ambition).

But, by the final degree of Leo a planet or angle has developed style, star presence and élan, and demonstrates a natural ability to deal (and mix) with celebrity. There’s authority and respect – the final word on advice, on knowing what’s best for us – but a warning of egomania and excessive pride. While 0° Leo has an instinct to *demand* attention, 29° Leo has a natural ability to *command* it.

And what of 29° Pisces, the final degree of the zodiac? Pisces is occasionally branded the dustbin of the zodiac. The final degree of Pisces is about ‘rest cures, religion and pills’, as the Sondheim song goes. Pisces is the true survivor, and 29° Pisces has seen it all. The first client I ever had with the Sun at 29° Pisces had come through addictions, gurus, religions, self-help quick-fixes and 101 other ways to escape the mundane world and connect to something higher. He’d tried everything.

Pisces at 29° recognises that we are all made of the same magic (although Virgos might call it ‘dirt’). It’s the talent to save, rescue and pour energy into addressing the needs of the forgotten and disenfranchised. Think of singer-turned-saint Bono, who has his MC ruler Mars at 29° Pisces. Saving people in crisis situations.

That final degree is not always a blessing – it’s also the degree of those who feel duped by people or have experienced major betrayal. One woman (a Pisces with Pisces MC) discovered her record company had siphoned off her royalties when her MC moved to 29° Pisces. She launched an attack and filed a lawsuit when the MC moved into 0° Aries. It was a dirty fight and took eight years of her life and reputation. She finally won the lawsuit and rights to her royalties when her Sun moved to 0° Taurus, suggesting she was now beginning to be on a firmer financial foundation.

Evangelists (‘messengers of good news’) usually have strongly Jupiterian and Neptunian charts (or their signs prominent). They are missionaries who sell and promote their vision of God, rescuing and offering redemption. With Mars at 29° Pisces, evangelist Jim Bakker

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saw himself as the ultimate visionary: he had a Jesus complex and felt crucified and betrayed by those who sought to curtail his brand of selling God on TV. His was 'prosperity theology': make money, give it to us and then you'll be happy and go to Heaven. In short, the donation box got bigger than the Message and the Gospel.

In March 1987, Bakker fell from grace as his solar arc Sun reached 29° Aquarius. Soon after, the Sun entered Pisces and he was truly crucified (most famously bound in chains and humiliated in front of the world's media). He was handed a 45-year prison sentence for mail fraud.

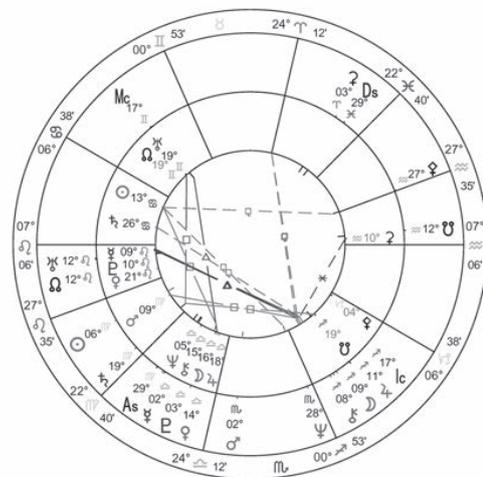
At the final degree of Virgo, there's consideration for the underprivileged (knowing what it's like to feel small, degraded or overlooked), and an ability to deal with crisis issues around health and safety. There may also be health emergencies that pop up during this time. Along with 29° Capricorn, here we have the control freak who has already considered every angle, whether it's the diet, schedule, route or other people's habits. There's a finicky attention to detail, to getting it right, being faithful to one's word, ensuring that contracts and agreements are drawn up with every 't' crossed, etc. There's an obsession with precision and sculpting (e.g. creating the body beautiful); perfecting a craft; finishing the apprenticeship. Often there's a need for an unpretentious, understated (sometimes solitary) life – feeling content in the rhythms of regular life.

Remember Jack Nicholson (with the Moon at the final degree of Virgo) in *As Good As It Gets* as the obsessive-compulsive novelist who avoids the cracks in the road and eats at the same table in the same restaurant every day? That phrase 'as good as it gets' should be a mantra for all those final-degree Virgos to enjoy life now.

Remember Labour's Red Queen, Barbara Castle? As a Libran, her Venus placement at 29° Virgo assumes greater importance: her concern was Libran and Virgoan – a concern for care, safety and addressing the ills and injustices of society.

She was put in charge of the Department of Employment and Productivity (Virgo), radically reformed pensions (pensions are, aptly, what you get at the *end* – 29° – of your *working* life), higher pay for nurses and increased benefits for old and disabled people. She brought in seat belts for cars and the breathalyser law, and ensured Child Benefit was paid to mothers rather than through the father's pay packet. Castle was chief architect of the Equal Pay Act (following the famous Dagenham women's strike at the Ford plant, as transiting Uranus crossed over her Mercury and later Venus). When the film *Made in Dagenham* was released, Jupiter was conjunct Uranus at 29° Pisces. It recently transpired that Castle drew up a dossier on VIP paedophiles but the document was confiscated for 'national security reasons'.

George W Bush's solar arc Ascendant was at 29°59' Virgo (the sign of his Mars) at the time of 9/11. It was the crisis of his life and the moment he'd been waiting for. The Ascendant would then move in to Libra (where the Moon, Jupiter and Neptune



Inner Wheel: George W. Bush natal, Jul 6 1946, Sat 7:26am, New Haven, CT  
Outer Wheel: Bush, solar arc direction for Sep 11 2001, 11:00, New Haven, CT

are placed), giving rise to a new script on a wave of nationalistic fervour and patriotism (Moon–Jupiter); an attempt to put the wrongs to rights and bring the terrorists to justice (Libra). Who knows how much Neptune played in clouding the real issues? With Neptune, I guess he chose the wrong week to give up drinking ...

### 29° in forecasting

What of the final degree in forecasting? Here are some observations:

- It's the end of a chapter. We're poised for change, but before we jump into a new field of experience (and perhaps an unknown scenario) we must deal with a crisis of sorts.
- It's a year when some of the most challenging aspects of the sign demand to be seen and resolved. It's the end of the line – can we meet the demands before moving on? It's the end of a 30-year era and often coincides with an intense twelve months (the final degree) that 'packs a punch' – a time when exaggerated manifestations of that sign appear as life events.
- We can truly make our mark by wrapping up long-term endeavours.

Positively, that which has been mastered – skills that have been acquired – can be put to good use in these twelve months. This

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is where the last degree can truly come into its own. It can be a year of distinction or conclusion of a long period of endeavour.

In 1997, intrepid British politician Mo Mowlam worked to restore an IRA ceasefire in Northern Ireland and persuaded various sides to participate in the peace process – all during a time when she was fighting a brain tumour.

Mowlam was instrumental in the signing of the Good Friday Peace Agreement on 10 April 1998, when her SA Saturn had reached 29° Libra. She retired from Parliament two years later. In hindsight, it's clear that her historic work had been completed at this time. It proved to be her legacy.

Woody Allen's Ascendant reached 29° Libra when he began a relationship with his partner Mia Farrow's adopted daughter. It was still at 29° Libra when Farrow split up with him. The degree of 29° Libra is linked to the last-chance attempts to keep a relationship in balance before war breaks out; the final attempt at a diplomatic solution. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't.

The final degree of Scorpio is the crisis degree of the crisis sign – a tough, profound period, 'a dark night of the soul' before we see the light of day in Sagittarius. A student of mine had her Midheaven solar arc to 29° Scorpio when her niece was bullied on Facebook into committing suicide. The same degree was on Prince Harry's Midheaven when Diana was killed, and on Marlon Brando's Midheaven when his troubled daughter killed herself.

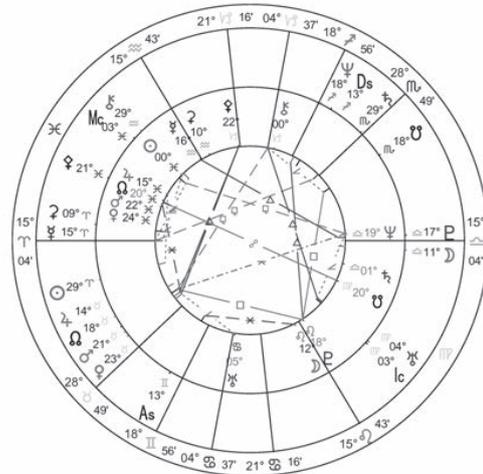
### No turning back: when scripts change

Finally, here are a few examples of events when planets and angles directed to 0° or 29°.

Superman Christopher Reeve: his natal Moon–Mars in Sagittarius suggests his love of horse-riding and competitive horsemanship. When he was thrown from his horse, at an event on 27 May 1995, he was left paralysed: a quadriplegic and unable to breathe on his own. Note the tight natal quincunx from Mars to Uranus. By solar arc, Mars had reached 0° Aquarius, and Uranus 0° Virgo, starting a very new script in his life.

By transit, Mars was at 0° Virgo and Uranus at 0° Aquarius – a remarkable repetition of planetary aspects. (Chiron, so often associated with horses and motorcycles, had directed to the Descendant and another link to horses, Jupiter, had directed to square Mercury.)

Gordon Brown waited a long time to see his dream of premiership come true. When he became Prime Minister, solar arc MC had finally reached his Sun, a classic leadership measurement and a solar arc year of a memorable change in status. At 0° Pisces, perhaps he was destined to play out the role of patsy. Three years later, Brown called an election. I'm assuming he did this without an astrologer: transiting Pluto was on his MC and his Sun had directed to 29° Aries and his MC ruler Saturn to 29° Scorpio – it was time for a big script



Inner Wheel: Gordon Brown natal, Feb 20 1951, Tue 8:40am Giffnock, Scotland  
Outer Wheel: Gordon Brown resignation, May 6 2010, Thu 11:00am Giffnock, Scotland

change. I guess he chose the wrong week to call an election! Political defeats and resignations are fascinating astrologically. Americans won't have forgotten Gary Hart's resignation due to the rumours of an extra-marital affair (famously on a boat called *Monkey Business*) on 8 May 1987, just 26 days into his presidential campaign. Only days before, he'd dared the press, 'Follow me around ... If anybody wants to put a tail on me, go ahead. They'll be very bored.' They weren't!

Natally, Hart has a tight square from Mars in Libra to his MC in Capricorn (warning of sexual pursuits damaging his civic reputation). By solar arc, his MC had reached 29° Aquarius and his Mars 29° Scorpio – both crisis degrees. The Moon had entered Leo, bringing much attention to his emotional and daily life. I guess he chose the wrong week to give up adultery! And whatever happened to labour union leader Jimmy Hoffa? Well, I don't know, but his chart at the time of his disappearance (30 July 1975) certainly describes the end of a chapter: solar arc Ascendant at 29° Aries, and the Moon–Saturn at 29° Cancer (plus Pluto at 0° Virgo). Perhaps he met a violent, Aries end and probably a deadweight Moon–Saturn home/coffin at the bottom of the sea.

### Can they talk!

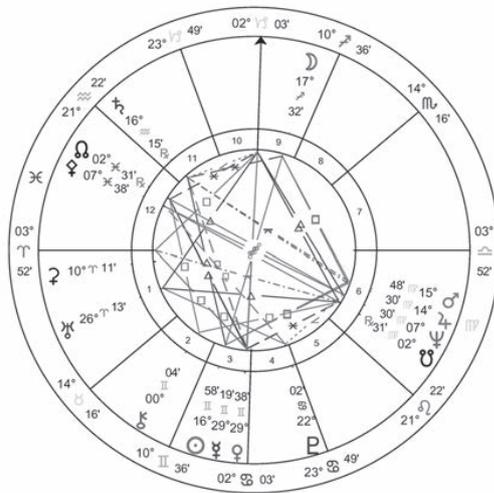
Let's end with the degree that likes to have the final word: 29° Gemini. Here we have the multitasker, adept at technology or language or making connections. The difficulty lies in finishing things off – they try to juggle too much and are weighed down by chronic indecision – and then they drop the ball.

The final degree of Gemini disperses the information (or says their piece) and then leaves others to handle the aftermath, just as Ed Snowden did (Sun at 29° Gemini), avoiding the conflict and consequences (characteristic of the mutable signs). Interestingly, his Sun had solar arc directed to the degree of the US's natal Pluto when he released the classified documents.

Someone else more than able to drop a Gemini bomb was age-obsessed Joan Rivers, born with Mercury and Venus at the

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final degree of Gemini. Whether she was talking about her body, what the famous are wearing or quipping that Michelle Obama was a transgender, Joan Rivers was the wisecracking witch who spelled it with a 'b'. In fact, one person roasted her with the line, 'Joan, you've been called "bitch" more often than a white guy serving a life sentence.' Rivers died just last week (4 September 2014) without having the final word, so I'm giving it to her now. Well, sort of.



Joan Rivers natal, Jun 8 1933, Thu 2:00am  
Brooklyn, New York

Picture it, *The Tonight Show*, the mid-80s. Joan is guest host. She's interviewing actress Joan Collins, herself a Gemini (possibly with Aries rising, too) and both are monuments to malice. Suddenly she turns to Joan Collins and says, 'OK, Joan, of all the husbands you've had, who was the best lover?' Joan Collins replied, 'Yours, darling.' It was the only time Joan Rivers was struck dumb and lost for words.

**Lecture given on Friday 12 September 2014 at the Astrological Association Conference, and on Monday 6 October 2014 at the Astrological Lodge of London**

### Data and sources

- Woody Allen, 1 December 1935, 22:55 EST, Bronx, NY (40N51, 73W54). Source: birth certificate; copy on file. RR: AA.
- Pamela Anderson, 1 July 1967, 04:08 PDT, Ladysmith, Canada (48N58, 123W49). Source: birth announcement in *The Ladysmith-Chemainus Chronicle*, as quoted by Nicholas Campion, printed in *The Sunday Telegraph*, copy on file. RR: A.
- Jim Bakker, 2 January 1940, 11:00 EST, Muskegon Heights, MI, USA (43N12, 86W15). Source: birth certificate obtained by Genevieve Edwards; copy on file. RR: AA.
- Bono, 10 May 1960, 02:00 GDT, Dublin, Ireland (53N20, 6W15). Source: Edwin Steinbrecher quotes a mutual friend, from Bono, 'two on the dot'. RR: A.
- Marlon Brando, 3 April 1924, 23:00 CST, Omaha, NE, USA (41N15, 95W56). Source: birth certificate quoted in *The Gauquelin Book of American Charts* by Michel and Françoise Gauquelin (ACS, 1982). RR: AA.
- Nick Broomfield, 30 January 1948, London, England (51N30, 0W10). Source: various online sites. RR: X.
- Gordon Brown, 20 February 1951, 08:40 GMT, Giffnock, Scotland, 55N48, 4W18. Source: birth

certificate quoted by Caroline Gerard and Paul Wright. RR: AA.

George W Bush, 6 July 1946, 07:26 EDT, New Haven, CT, USA (41N18, 72W55). Source: Karen Castilla quotes hospital records; same on birth certificate. RR: AA.

Barbara Castle, 6 October 1910, 14:30 GMT, Chesterfield, England (53N15, 1W25). Source: from her to the Astrological Association. RR: A.

Joan Collins, 23 May 1933, morning, Paddington, London, England (51N32, 0W12). Source: online sources. Her second autobiography *Second Act* (1996) states 'morning'; Frederick Davies quotes her for 3 a.m., while *Hollywood Sisters* (1989) by Susan Crimp and Patricia Burstein gives 7 a.m. RR: DD.

Edwina Currie, 13 October 1946, 23:30 GMT, Liverpool, England (53N25, 2W55). Source: from Currie's secretary to David Fisher in January 1988. RR: A.

Dennis Elwell, 16 February 1930, 23:44 GMT, Stourbridge, England (52N27, 2W09). Source: from him to Garry Phillipson in *Astrology in the Year Zero* (Flare, 2000), rectified by him from his parents' recollection that he was born 'late at night'. RR: C.

Sarah Ferguson, 15 October 1959, 09:03 GMT, London, England (51N30, 0W10). Source: Buckingham Palace records; same from her to her astrologer Penny Thornton. RR: A.

Heidi Fleiss, 30 December 1965, 09:05, Los Angeles, CA, USA (34N03, 118W15). Source: from her birth certificate, obtained by Frank Clifford; copy on file. RR: AA.

Judy Garland, 10 June 1922, 06:00 CST (+6), Grand Rapids, Minnesota, USA (47N14, 93W31). Source: note from birth registry obtained by Edwin Steinbrecher; copy on file. Same on birth certificate quoted in *Contemporary American Horoscopes*. Scott Schechter's thorough biography *Judy Garland* (Cooper Square Press, 2002) gives '5:30 a.m.'; copy on file. RR: AA.

Bob Geldof, 5 October 1951, 14:20 GDT, Dublin, Ireland (53N20, 06W15). Source: David Fisher quotes Jo Logan's letter, who obtained the data from Geldof. RR: A.

Germaine Greer, 29 January 1939, 06:00 AEST, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia (37S49, 144E58). Source: from her to Tiffany Holmes. RR: A.

Prince Harry, 15 September 1984, 16:20 GDT, Paddington, London, England (51N32, 0W12). Source: Buckingham Palace's announcement, quoted in newspapers on date; copy on file. RR: A.

Gary Hart, 28 November 1936, 14:25 CST, Ottawa, KS, USA (38N37, 95W16). Source: from his birth certificate; Marion March quotes his office. RR: AA.

Henry VIII, 28 June 1491 (7 July 1491 Gregorian calendar), 08:45 LMT, Greenwich, England (51N29, 0E00). Source: from his birth record, obtained by Martin Harvey. RR: AA.

Jimmy Hoffa, 14 February 1913, 06:52 CST, Brazil, IN, USA (39N31, 87W08). Source: birth note from registry, obtained by Ed Steinbrecher; copy on file. RR: AA.

Billie Jean King, 22 November 1943, 11:45 PWT, Long Beach, CA, USA (33N46, 118W11). Source: from her birth certificate, obtained by Doris Chase Doane. RR: AA.

Madonna, 16 August 1958, 07:05 EST, Bay City, MI, USA (43N36, 83W53). Tashi Grady quotes Madonna's father, who originally gave 7:00 a.m. and then telephoned the hospital of Madonna's birth. (Madonna has been quoted as saying she is Aquarius rising and, more recently, has said she does not know her Ascendant or birth time.) RR: AA.

Russ Meyer, 21 March 1922, 09:35 PST (+8), Oakland, California, USA (37N48, 122W16). Source: from his birth certificate obtained by Frank Clifford; copy on file. RR: AA.

Mo Mowlam, 18 September 1949, Watford, England (51N40, 0W25). From various online sources. RR: X.

Jack Nicholson, 22 April 1937, 11:00 EST, Neptune, NJ, USA (40N13, 74W01). Source: from him to Mark Johnson. Fredrick Davies in *Signs of the Stars* quotes Nicholson for 11:20 a.m. His birth certificate, obtained by Frank Clifford, was filed in May 1954 and has no time of birth; copy on file. RR: A.

Panorama (BBC TV series) interview with Princess Diana, 5 November 1995, 19:00 GMT, Kensington Palace, London, England (51N30, 0W08). Source: from the BBC documentary *Princess Diana: Behind the Panorama Interview*, which stated that Bashir arrived at Kensington Palace at 7pm. RR: A.

Panorama (BBC TV series) broadcast with Princess Diana, 20 November 1995, 21:40 GMT, London, England (51N30, 0W10). Source: Sy Scholfield quotes *The Times*, 20 November 1995, p.43. RR: B.

Oscar Pistorius, 22 November 1986, 10:30 EET, Pretoria, South Africa (25S45, 28E12). Source: from Pistorius's aunt to Philippe Lepoivre, between 10h30 and 11h30' and most correct estimate would be 10h30 - morning.

Christopher Reeve, 25 September 1952, 03:12 EDT, Manhattan, NY, USA (40N46, 73W59). Source: from Reeve to Linda Clark by letter; he gave Penny Thornton 3:14 a.m., and his birth certificate (copy on file) has no time.

Joan Rivers, 8 June 1933, 02:00 EDT, Brooklyn, Kings, NY, USA (40N38, 73W56). Source: from Rivers to Shelley Ackerman in March 1997. RR: A.

Lois Rodden, 22 May 1928, 00:27 MST, Lang, Canada (49N56, 104W23). Source: from Rodden, rectified from mother's recollection of 'after midnight'. RR: C.

Diana Ross, 26 March 1944, 23:46 EWT, Detroit, MI, USA (42N20, 83W03). Source: birth certificate quoted in *Contemporary American Horoscopes* by Janice McKay and Jessica Saunders (Astrolabe, 1990), and *The Gauquelin Book of American Charts* by Michel and Françoise Gauquelin (ACS, 1982). RR: AA.

Ayrton Senna, 21 March 1960, 02:35 BZT, Sao Paulo, Brazil (23S32, 46W37). Source: from birth certificate, obtained by Marcello Borges. RR: AA.

Charlie Sheen, 3 September 1965, 22:48 EDT, New York, NY, USA (40N43, 74W00). Source: from him to Linda Clark, quoting his birth certificate. Sy Scholfield quotes Sheen's interview stating he was born at 22:58. RR: AA.

Ed Snowden, 21 June 1983, 04:42 EDT, Elizabeth City, NC, USA (36N18, 76W13). Source: from birth certificate obtained by Eric Francis Coppolino; copy on file. RR: AA.

Margaret Thatcher's resignation, 22 November 1990, 07:35 GMT, Downing Street, Westminster, London, England (51N30, 0W09). Source: <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/108254>

Billy Tipton, 29 December 1914, 02:00 CST, Oklahoma City, OK, USA (35N28, 97W31). Source: from news clippings obtained by Joan McEvers. RR: A.

World Trade Center, 4 April 1973, 15:00 EST, Manhattan, NY, USA (40N46, 73W59). Source: from *The New York Times*, 28 March 1973, p. 93, quoted by Sy Scholfield. RR: A.

Zeebrugge Ferry Disaster, 6 March 1987, 18:28 CET, Zeebrugge, Belgium (51N20, 3E12). Source: from online sources, including Wikipedia. RR: A.