

Review of “Presidents of Hope and Change”

By Timothy Spearman

I like this book. I like it because the lady who wrote is honest, sincere and deeply ethical. I like it because she employs the dialectic skillfully in order to defend her various arguments, but never has an acerbic or vindictive word to say about anything or anyone. What I am most impressed by is the fact that the book contains no lashing out. No one receives the point of her rapier, however much she might acknowledge that the pen is mightier than the sword. The pen can display its mightiness in other forms. It need not be employed as a rapier. A pen can build mountains. I believe hers has begun one. Others will follow who will turn this pioneering effort to advantage and carve out a mountain in the American landscape to complete this Mount Rushmore of the astrological field.

Unlike many of the current political polemics, there is no Bush bashing and no disrespect shown to the office of president in this book. While Marilyn acknowledges that some of the nation’s presidents did not govern as responsibly and successfully as others, she casts no aspersions on anyone’s character. I respect this display of integrity greatly and believe others will respond to it in a similar vein. I have in fact learned something from this wise 70-year-old lady, who displays a youthful wit and energy a good three decades junior her actual age.

I am glad I was asked to review this book as I am a student of metaphysics and astrology like Marilyn. My own published Ph.D. thesis in the field of metaphysics, *The Ethics of Timelessness*, resonates with me here as I review Marilyn’s book as I came to regard that written text and all subsequent ones as a living spiritual entity just as Marilyn rightly sees the nation and the office of president as such. She is unequivocal on this point, stating that, “...the USA as a country is a living thing and that, astrologically, its chart is viewed as a living thing.” Nowhere are her words on the subject more poignant or explicit than in this beautiful memoir from the early days when the project was still in its infancy:

I had the sky map of the inauguration of George Washington in my file. I had his personal sky map. I had the sky map for the USA. I knew who, what, when, where, why, and how. How could I resist? I did say that curiosity was probably behind my ambition. I aligned the George Washington sky map with his inauguration sky map; bingo! I compared the USA sky map to the first presidential inauguration of George Washington—double bingo! I looked at who President Washington was, who he had become, and what he had to offer in his own right as a person—triple bingo! I looked at the entity USA and what it had become in its own right and what it was seeking—quadruple bingo! I looked at the sky map of the inauguration itself—where are we?—jackpot! All of it fit together beautifully like a jigsaw puzzle, in both time and experience.

It’s hard for non-students of metaphysics educated in this secular and largely atheist scientific world to view the nation and the office of president as a living entity with an innate spirituality, karma and destiny, but if you read Marilyn’s book with an open mind without the hard

stubbornness of hard science, and just a good healthy dose of common sense, you can see that the New World, Francis Bacon's New Atlantis, the United States of America is indeed a spiritual being with a prescribed path and destiny. It was Manley P. Hall, who first spoke of America's appointment with destiny, when he wrote in *The Secret Destiny of America*, "World democracy was the secret dream of the great classical philosophers...The brilliant plan of the philosophers has survived to our time...and it will continue until the great work is accomplished..." It's hard to argue against America's appointment with destiny when you see how the natal charts in inauguration charts of the U.S. presidents line up with the natal star map of the United States.

Indeed it's hard to contest the fact that this brilliant young Harvard-educated lawyer, Barack Obama, is not part of this appointment with destiny, chosen by the universe and by public opinion to assume the office of president at one of the most challenging presidential mandates in history. When one is shown by astrologer-adept Marilyn how President Obama's natal and inaugural charts line up with America's Uranus-Aquarian characteristics of freedom and liberty, it is virtually a clarion call to wake up and smell the scent of freshly brewed coffee at the break of day in America's new 232-year rendezvous with destiny. Marilyn shows how in the personage of President Obama the right man has stepped up to the plate to put America's economic house in order:

His partnership point (Descendant) now connects to the USA responsibility pattern (Saturn). Amazing as it may seem, this activity takes place in the area of Obama's personal joint finance, taxes, other people's money (8th house). What were the primary issues that faced him upon his inauguration? Taxes, banking, stock market, trade, deficits, and a credit crisis. And significantly, his pattern of achievement, ambition, and success (Midheaven) in the world is now directly connected to the USA national identity (Sun). Clearly, we, *the people*, want to fix this. We want our reputation back. We want answers. Yes we can—for now.

She reminds us repeatedly that American and world citizens must be Uranian and Aquarian in our thinking, always looking forward instead of sticking to the adhesive glue of the status quo that will have our butts crazy-glued to our chairs. But she warns us that we must observe the cycles of the heavens and be cognizant of when the energies of conflict, change and becoming come around so we can prepare for these crises in advance and meet them when they come. Nietzsche once said, "Only the architects of the future can interpret the past." That may be true, but it is no less true that one must know the architecture of the past to build a solid foundation for the future. Repeating the same architectural and structural design flaws as existed in former plans will only bring the roof down upon us. We must be ready to address the needs of the time. Marilyn has given us a glimpse at the metaphysical blueprints of God's divine plan for Creation. It's not a bad plan, but if you don't look at the blueprints, you're not with the program. I would encourage any aspiring urban or national planner hoping to make a difference in this world to at least have a look at the blueprints before proceeding. You can save yourselves a whole lot of trouble, time and effort if you refer to the plans from the beginning instead of having to overhaul the project and start over again after design flaws emerge in your construction projects.

Chapter 7 is a compelling section that delves into the protracted cycles of the outer planets Uranus, Neptune and Pluto. Indeed, Marilyn goes to considerable pains to explain the roto-rooter

effect of Scorpionic Pluto as it agitates its way through Sagittarius to dredge up all kinds of social muck and unpleasantness. But she calms and placates us with assurances that Saturn will provide the mortar to rebuild once the wrecking ball Pluto has finished its work. Change through overcoming is the theme of Pluto, a planet that shares much in common with the Hindu god Siva, who recreates and reassembles the universe through destruction. *Ordo ob Cao* would be an apt enough phrase for the reconstruction process. “We are approaching the returns of two of the three generational energies, Uranus and Pluto,” Marilyn reminds us, “to the positions they held at the moment of the founding of our country. We are at a spiritual essence moment for our USA chart that resembles the approach to the Civil War. We are on a conformist versus change moment, a repeat of a 45-year cycle that seems to occur in pivotal moments in our country’s history.”

The conclusion of this enlightening book is that despite the planetary lineup in the star map, we have still been granted the power of free choice by our Creator. Marilyn reminds us that there are no genuinely benefic or malefic planets or star signs and that, “Only we can decide how we will use this energy, positively or negatively.” This calls to mind the age old debate between free will and determinism. Do we exercise free will, choice and deliberation in our world or is everything already predetermined and decided? I think Marilyn has answered that nicely for us in her book. There are cycles and they keep coming back so that we are presented with the same lessons until we get it right. When we succeed, we can advance to the next level as occurs in every school and every learning curve.

Come to think of it, it was another groundbreaking American creation, *Forrest Gump*, which resolved the free will versus determinism debate for me. At the beginning of the film, Forrest looked up to see a feather blowing in the wind. That feather symbolized free will. But it chose Forrest and landed on his shoe. Forrest picked it up and put it in his dairy. Later, at the end of the film, he referred to that feather floating on the wind in a touching graveside eulogy to Jenny, in which he said, “I don’t know if we each have a destiny, or if we’re all just floating around accidental-like on a breeze, but I, I think maybe it’s both. Maybe both are happening at the same time.” So Forrest the holy fool, the simple sage, solved the paradox that has puzzled philosophers for centuries. In fact, he lived well and wisely despite his limitations. He was born with free will like everyone else, but because in his uncomplicated decision-making process, he always chose rightly, he was granted a destiny. He may not have been terribly bright, but as he says, “Stupid is as stupid does.” Truer words were never spoken. Let’s never forget the wisdom of those who have learned life’s simplest lessons and who have come to them through no higher education or higher degrees. Let us remember that this Founding Mother of the new nation now being born as America completes its 232-year cycle has no formal university training. What can I say except “clever is as clever does”?