

Midpoint Madness and the Orlando Massacre: Exploring Mars, Saturn, Pluto Combinations

by Kathy Rose

The tragic mass shooting that recently stunned Orlando, Florida and the rest of the United States — as well as impacting people in far parts of the world — is still producing shock waves of sadness and grief for us all.

I am very mindful of the negative effect on our energy field when there is constant focus on such a tragedy, disaster, or catastrophe. So, my intention with this article is not to continue to amplify feelings of distress but rather to focus on a meaningful learning opportunity — looking through the clarifying lens of astrology. In particular, I would like to point out a potent midpoint pattern involving Mars, Saturn, and Pluto combinations.

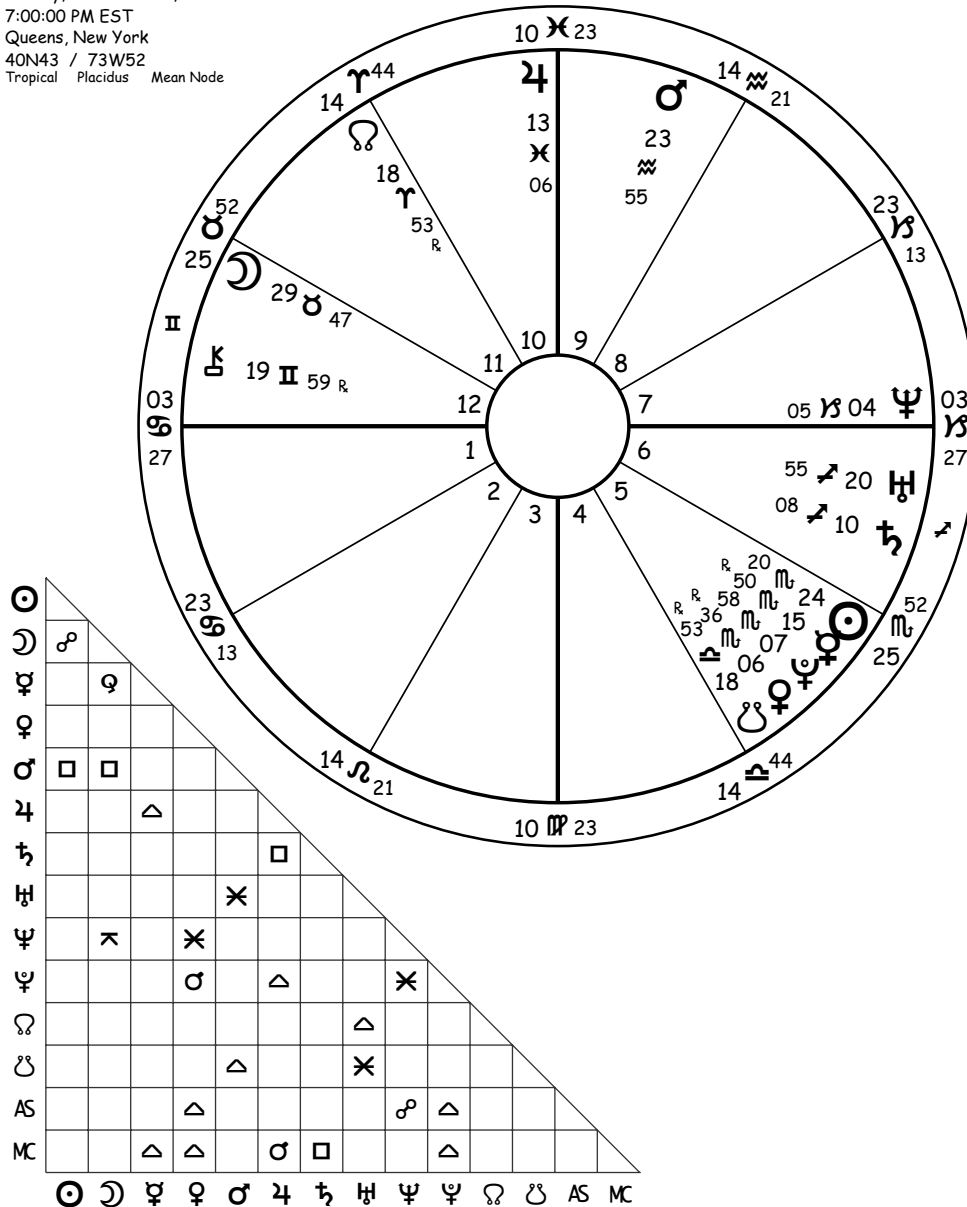
First, let's take a look at the natal chart of the man identified as the shooter inside the Pulse nightclub, Omar Mateen. (See **Chart 1**, below.) Mateen has a stellium in Scorpio falling in the 5th house, including the Sun, Mercury retrograde, and Venus retrograde tightly conjunct Pluto. At first glance, we are instantly able to understand that the shooter was fueled by emotional energy, and that much of this fixed water intensity is internalized (due to the two personal planets being retrograde) — supercharged and empowered by the Pluto conjunction.

It has been my experience that, when Venus is retrograde in the natal chart, we must consider an undercurrent of developmental tension, related to social expression and relationship needs, as an influential part of the person's life purpose. The degree to which this may manifest as problematic depends on the complete view of the patterns present in the horoscope — and of course, on the choices the person makes regarding how to express the natal energies.

In Mateen's chart — with Pluto conjunct retrograde Venus, which rules the 5th house (giving and expressing love) — there is a suggestion of challenge and intensity related to the social and emotional dynamic. So often, Pluto conjunct a personal planet adds "extremes" to the mix, and here we could say that there is an overabundance of internalized, highly emotional relationship energy.

Natal Mercury retrograde pulls energy inward even more; in Scorpio, the intellectual process flows from deep feeling and emotion instead of from objective logic. The planet that symbolizes *how a person needs to think and communicate* is internalized and repressed. And since Mercury is in Scorpio, the thought process could easily move into secretive, clandestine, covert patterns.

Omar Mateen
 Natal Chart
 Sunday, November 16, 1986
 7:00:00 PM EST
 Queens, New York
 40N43 / 73W52
 Tropical Placidus Mean Node



Charts use Placidus houses and the Mean Node.

Quite often, when the two inner personal planets are retrograde, we see a second agenda swirling under the surface, unknown to others. Symbolically, we could say that Mateen’s 5th house is similar to an inner emotional volcano, aggressively — even obsessively — churning beneath the surface with powerful, intensified, and eruptive emotion.

The tensions reflected in Mateen’s 5th house are reinforced by Mars in Aquarius, ruling the 11th, in a tight square to the Sun. The energy of giving and receiving love (5th–11th axis) is powerfully challenged. One more echo of deep hidden emotions is the natal Moon at 29°+

Taurus in the 12th house, opposing the Sun and squaring Mars. A dynamic t-square is formed that demands our attention when we view this horoscope.

Continuing to look at the relationship and sexual energy in the shooter's natal chart, we must observe that Neptune is conjunct the Descendant. Neptune on an angle can suggest unclear energy: *"Something is other than it seems."* There is often confusion or bewilderment that needs to be worked through as part of the life path, and in this case, it flows into relationships. Another echo with this same theme is natal Saturn (ruling the 7th and 8th houses) square Jupiter in Neptune-ruled Pisces.

We see a repeating pattern with the planets that rule the houses connected with sexuality, intimacy, and relationships (5th, 7th, 8th) all involved with challenging aspects. Again, this suggests that clarifying emotional needs regarding sexuality and relationships is very much part of the life purpose.

There have been many news accounts of Mateen's supposed friends and acquaintances who came forward and said they felt that he may have been gay. We know that there was conflict with his religious views — he has been described as a practicing Muslim — and the issue of whether his alleged homosexuality would be rejected by that community. Mateen reportedly embraced a radicalized, extreme view of Islam, which projects intense criticism and condemnation of a lifestyle that is not heterosexual. The symbolism of Neptune on the 7th-house cusp is concomitant with the need to hide sexual desires that were not supported by the important people in his life and the religious views to which he subscribed.

In Mateen's chart, there is a clear and powerful statement that sexual and relationship energy was severely challenged by high developmental tension as part of his life-purpose theme, and we can assume that this played a part in the choice he made in the location of the shooting.

Much more could be said about his horoscope, but now let's look at the midpoints and other factors in both his chart and that of the shooting event. There are powerful repeating patterns involving Mars, Saturn, and Pluto that make a dynamic statement.

Aries Point Activation

The horrific mass murder at the Orlando nightclub that catered to LGBT patrons took place when an important and influential midpoint picture was formed by the transiting planets at the Aries Point (AP): **AP = Saturn/Pluto**. (See **Diagram 1**, below. I use the 90° midpoint sort, which places all the cardinal signs at 0°–29°, the fixed signs at 30°–59°, and the mutable signs at 60°–89°.)

Orlando Shooting

Natal Chart
 Sunday, June 12, 2016
 2:02:00 AM EDT
 Orlando, Florida

90° Midpoint Sort

AP MC 00 06	☽/♁ 24 52	♂/♄ 39 25	♄/♁ 65 13	☽/♁ 78 50
AS 00 10	♃/♁ 27 15	☽/♁ 40 25	♁/♃ 65 45	☾ 80 43
♄/♁ 02 50	♂/AS 27 41	☾/AS 40 56	☾/♂ 68 27	♂/♁ 81 01
☾/♁ 04 16	♃/♃ 28 41	♁/♄ 41 19	♀/♂ 69 11	♁/AS 81 06
♃/♄ 04 16	♁/AS 29 36	♀/AS 41 40	☾/♁ 70 22	♃/♁ 81 17
♀/♁ 04 59	♃/♁ 29 43	♁/♁ 44 26	♁/♀ 71 06	☾ 81 42
♄/♁ 05 17	☽/♃ 31 35	AS/♁ 45 08	♁ 72 02	☾/♀ 82 26
☽/♄ 07 10	☾/♁ 31 52	♃/♁ 45 52	♃ 72 27	♃/AS 82 32
♁/♁ 08 28	♀/♁ 32 36	♁/♁ 46 53	♂/♁ 72 39	♁/♁ 82 55
♄/AS 11 53	☾/♃ 33 18	♃/♄ 48 02	♃/♁ 73 28	♀ 83 10
♁ 16 49	♀/♃ 34 02	☽/♁ 48 46	♁/♁ 74 30	♁/AS 83 34
♂/♁ 18 37	☾/♁ 34 20	☾/♄ 52 40	♁/♁ 74 34	☽/AS 85 26
♂/♃ 20 03	♀/♁ 35 04	♀/♄ 53 23	♃ 74 54	☾/♁ 85 54
♁/♁ 20 32	♁/♁ 36 04	♁/AS 53 29	♃/♁ 75 56	♀/♁ 86 38
♂/♁ 21 05	☾/☽ 36 13	♂ 55 12	☽/♁ 76 23	♃/♁ 89 38
♁/♃ 21 58	♃/AS 36 19	♄/♁ 56 52	♁ 76 58	AP
☽/♂ 22 57	☽/♀ 36 56	♁/♂ 57 07	☾/♃ 77 05	
♁/♁ 23 00	♃/♁ 37 30	♀ 59 02	♀/♃ 77 48	
♄ 23 37	♁/♁ 38 32	♂/♃ 63 50	☽/♃ 77 49	

When we look at the chart for the event (**Chart 2**, following page), we can see that the Aries Point (0° cardinal) was on the angles. I've written about the power of the AP before, and how this zone in the zodiac carries a *public projection* dynamic. As I first glanced at the event chart, my eye naturally could see that the midpoint of transiting Saturn and Pluto that day was at the AP. Pause for a moment and let that soak into your consciousness. Combine the symbols of Saturn and Pluto with the AP. What do you feel? It's a heavy, somber, serious public statement!

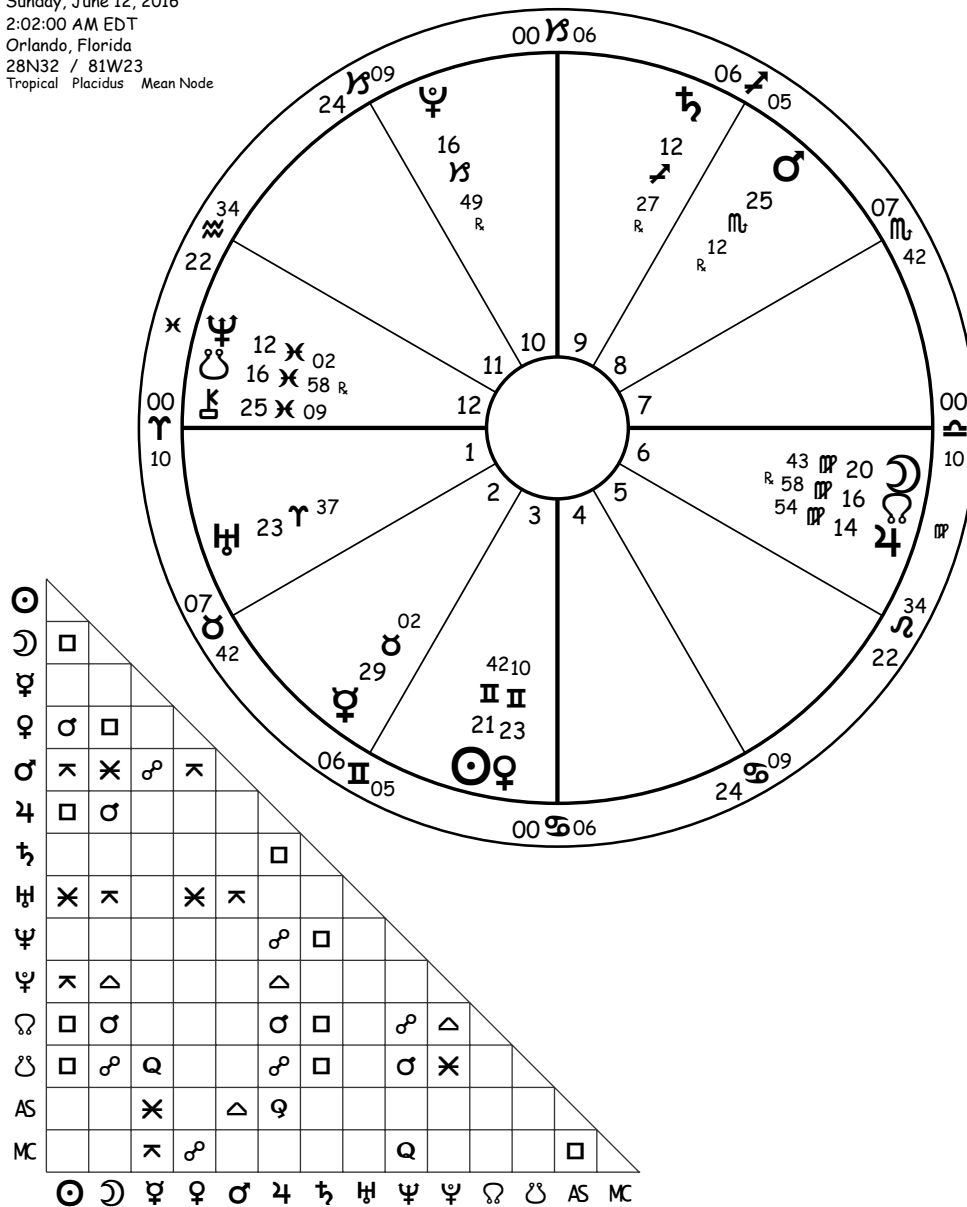
The Saturn/Pluto midpoint carries the most challenging energy of all the planetary combinations, and on the day of the shooting, it was located at 29°38' Sagittarius — just half a

degree from being exactly on the 0° cardinal mark. We could interpret this as the *potential for loss and destruction on a wide public scale*. This powerful midpoint is made even more active because in the event chart it falls on an angle!

Most investigators are now characterizing the shooting as an act of terrorism. The fact that the midpoint energy of Saturn/Pluto was active at the AP is no surprise.

Orlando Shooting

Natal Chart
Sunday, June 12, 2016
2:02:00 AM EDT
Orlando, Florida
28N32 / 81W23
Tropical Placidus Mean Node



Saturn and Neptune Connections

On the day of the event, Neptune and Saturn were exactly square. This is important because Saturn in Sagittarius brings our awareness to religious issues and the potential for righteous attachment to strict doctrine or dogma. Neptune in Pisces also calls our attention to matters of faith.

The current transiting Saturn–Neptune square had been activating Mateen’s natal Saturn–Midheaven (MC) square. The shooter’s Saturn return was in full swing, pushing him to make big life decisions — this is when we are urged to *grow up and pick our path*. The potent cycle at 29 years of age offers a major course correction, and we make choices about our commitment to achievement. We know that when Saturn comes back to its natal position, there is a push to move into a new level of maturity.

Along with the pressure from the Saturn return, I believe that the major trigger for Mateen’s mental/emotional/psychological break was the transit from Neptune to his MC. The first hit was in March 2016; the final contact would have been in early 2017. Neptune contacting an angle by transit can offer a spiritual or artistic breakthrough, but it can also intensify confusion and increase bewilderment, depending on what’s going on in the person’s life. The increase in emotional distress or disorientation stemming from the Neptune transit may have felt like a heavy, dense mist, obscuring and reducing the ability to see clearly.

If Mateen had homosexual feelings and was programmed to believe that those urges were evil or sinful — possibly so sinful as to deny him salvation — the Saturn return and transiting Neptune activation, plus transiting Mars about to station square his natal Mars, would ignite motivation to *do* something to release the fog and become clear. He did indeed make a choice, and it was deadly.

Continuing to examine the midpoints in the event chart, we see more patterns that reflect potential violence:

- **Neptune = Mars/MC** (*confusion and idealism with assertive energy*)
- **Saturn = Mars/MC** (*strategic public aggression, focused protest, or violence*)
- **Sun = Mars/Pluto** (*ego is illuminated through extreme passion, aggression, and force*)
- **Sun = Neptune/ASC** (*ego identified with idealism or confusion, possible covert activity*)
- **Sun = Saturn/MC** — all are exact by degree! (*personal achievement through discipline and hard work — the need to exert control*)

Certainly, the midpoints in the event chart accurately reflect the tragic action, and we clearly see the repeating pattern with Mars, Saturn, and Pluto.

Omar Mateen's Natal Midpoints

Now we move to a deeper look at the shooter's natal midpoint picture (**Diagram 2**, below), and we see the unmistakable pattern of three heavyweight planets again! Here are the relevant midpoints in Mateen's natal chart:

Omar Mateen
 Natal Chart
 Sunday, November 16, 1986
 7:00:00 PM EST
 Queens, New York

90° Midpoint Sort

♀/♁ 00 16	♃/♁ 20 05	♃/♄ 38 35	♁/♃ 57 03	♁ 70 23
♁/♄ 00 57	♃/♂ 21 26	♃/♁ 39 20	♀/♃ 57 59	♃/♁ 71 44
♃/♁ 00 59	♁/♂ 22 25	♀/♀ 41 13	♀/♂ 58 46	♃ 73 06
♁♁ 03 27	♃/♁ 25 15	♀/♄ 41 54	♂/♄ 59 27	♁/♁♁ 73 53
♄/♁♁ 03 46	♃/♃ 26 37	♃/♁ 44 30	♁ 59 47	♁/♄ 74 12
♄ 04 05	♀/♁ 27 44	♁/♀ 45 28	♁/♁♁ 62 09	♃/♂ 75 31
♀/♁ 04 52	♄/♁ 28 26	♀ 45 50	♁/♃ 62 14	♃/♁♁ 76 37
♀/♁♁ 08 30	♁/♁♁ 28 41	♁/♄ 46 09	♀/♂ 63 23	♃/♄ 76 56
♁/♁ 09 07	♁/♄ 29 00	♃/♀ 48 12	♁/♃ 63 30	♂ 80 55
♄/♁♁ 09 11	♂/♁♁ 30 39	♃/♄ 48 53	♃/♃ 64 57	♁/♁ 81 24
♀/♃ 09 51	♃/♂ 32 00	♂/♁ 49 54	♀/♁♁ 65 02	♃/♁♁ 81 47
♃/♄ 10 32	♀/♁ 32 21	♁/♀ 50 05	♀/♄ 65 21	♃/♄ 82 06
♃/♁ 11 51	♁/♁ 36 36	♃/♀ 52 48	♄/♁♁ 65 43	♂/♁♁ 87 11
♀/♁♁ 13 07	♀ 36 36	♀/♃ 53 22	♄/♄ 66 02	♂/♄ 87 30
♀/♃ 14 28	♁♁/♁♁ 36 55	♁ 53 55	♁/♂ 67 38	♁/♁♁ 89 38
♁/♃ 17 01	♄/♁♁ 37 14	♃/♄ 54 03	♀/♁♁ 69 38	
♁/♁♁ 17 22	♀/♄ 37 17	♁ 54 20	♀/♄ 69 58	
♁/♃ 18 43	♄ 37 58	♁/♁♁ 56 10	♃ 70 08	
♁ 18 53	♃/♁♁ 38 16	♄/♁ 56 29	♃/♂ 70 21	

- **Mars = Saturn/Pluto** (*assertive energy used to release frustration, fighting back with extreme force*)
- **Sun = Saturn/Pluto** (*achievement through hard work and discipline*). This is very important to consider, because transiting Mars in Scorpio was retrograding back to a conjunction with the natal Sun, further igniting and triggering the killer's aggressive tendencies.
- **AP = Mars/Pluto** (*extreme and forceful energy with public projection*). What a sad thing — to become famous (AP energy) for a horrible, historic act of extreme violence! This became his legacy of infamy.

Mateen's Midpoints Activated by Transits

Natal midpoint activation by transiting planets or by Solar Arc directions is important to consider. When I analyze triggers to key midpoints, I keep the orb very tight. I look for an exact hit by degree, and the closer to the minute, the better.

On the day of the shooting, we see that the transiting AP = Saturn/Pluto triggered Mateen's natal AP = Mars/Pluto. This presents an amazing correlation with the potential for violence.

The pattern continues with transiting Pluto at 16°49' Capricorn, igniting Mateen's natal Mars/Saturn midpoint, which is 17°01' Capricorn (*assertive energy and discipline come together with forceful projection — extreme anger and frustration*). This is again a very challenging and difficult combination of energies.

The transiting Sun at 21°42' Gemini on the day of the shooting was illuminating and energizing Mateen's Saturn/Ascendant midpoint, which is 21°24' Pisces (*personal achievement through hard work and discipline*). The Sun also triggered his Mars/North Node midpoint (*public aggression or protest*).

In addition, there was an exact trigger from transiting Mercury to the natal Uranus/Pluto midpoint — and also conjunct Mateen's natal Moon (*intense thought activity and emotion that overturns the status quo — agitated thinking*).

One more thing: Mateen's MC and Saturn had moved by Solar Arc to exactly trigger his natal Jupiter/Pluto midpoint (*strategic amplification of personal power*).

Again and again, we see the repeating pattern of Mars, Saturn, Pluto combinations standing out.

Media outlets have said that Mateen yearned for a career in law enforcement. He had applied to the police academy and had been rejected. Over a number of years, he had reportedly taken and excelled at shooting courses. At the time of the murders, he was working as a security guard at a gated residential community, which may have fulfilled some part of his desire — or instead could have underscored a profound sense of underachievement.

Given the stellium in Scorpio and the midpoints illustrated earlier, this man was wired to be interested in deep emotional intensity and, perhaps, life issues involving violence. With appropriate love and support, he could have channeled this into being very skilled at detective work, criminal investigation, general police work, or the military.

There is always a choice as to how we use the energies present in our horoscope. Mateen had the vocational profile for undercover police work, solving mysteries, and even confronting violence. Somewhere along the way, he got off track, and a very negative manifestation of his natal chart was chosen.

It's quite probable that his sexual feelings, which may have fueled his confusion, his self-doubt, even his rage — feelings in deep conflict with his religious views — helped push him to make these unfortunate choices. An unresolvable emotional conundrum led to a downward spiral that triggered the shadow and negative manifestations of all the aforementioned natal energies.

Spectrum of Expression

When I teach astrology, I frequently mention the importance of considering the concept of *spectrum of expression* regarding the natal chart. I believe that two people can be born on the same day, at the same time and location, and yet express vastly different levels of the planetary patterns in their natal chart. When we take physical form on the Earth plane, we bring with us the strengths and vulnerabilities from other incarnations — based on how we've chosen to react and process prior life experiences. It is my belief that we have choice every step of the way.

If the shooter had scheduled an astrology appointment prior to the horrific event, we would certainly have made note of the obvious challenges and tensions in his horoscope in the preparation for consultation. However, it is irresponsible to make an absolute judgment, prior to talking to the client, as to whether these natal challenges might be expressed constructively or destructively. We must communicate with our clients and listen for details that inform us how they are living their chart.

Indeed, it is incredibly sad that Omar Mateen engaged his natal energies in such an extreme, negative spectrum of expression. Our ethics as astrologers compel us to remember to look at all levels of possible manifestation. I believe that we must consider the circumstances in life development that are specific to the individual before making a declarative evaluation of natal energies.

Just because a person has a stellium in Scorpio, with Venus retrograde conjunct Pluto, doesn't mean there will be powerful emotional or sexual conflict that intensifies and leads to

tragedy or violence. The cookbook astrological approach of “this means that” tends to represent only one tiny portion of possible expression.

In the case of this very troubled man and a terribly tragic event, we can work backward and learn from the planetary patterns involving Mars, Saturn, and Pluto that were active that day. We can absorb the meaningful challenges in Mateen’s natal chart so that we may be more informed of the potential difficulties if we see similar patterns in our client’s horoscope. Our goal is to be of service and to help others find a path to the most positive expression of the natal chart.

We must use this knowledge and awareness with wisdom, integrity, and humility. That is the path of the astrologer.

Chart Data and Sources

Omar Mateen, November 16, 1986; 7:00 p.m. EST; Queens, NY, USA (40°N43', 73°W52'); AA: birth certificate published in *The New York Times*, June 19, 2016.

Orlando Shooting, June 12, 2016; 2:02 a.m. EDT; Orlando, FL, USA (28°N32', 81°W23'); news sources report that the first 911 call came in at 2:02 a.m.

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