

# Charts in the News

with commentary by Elisabeth Grace



**Jacinda Kate Laurell Ardern**, July 26, 1980; birth time unknown (noon NZT used); Hamilton, New Zealand (37°S47', 175°E17'); source: AstroDatabank (<https://www.astro.com>).

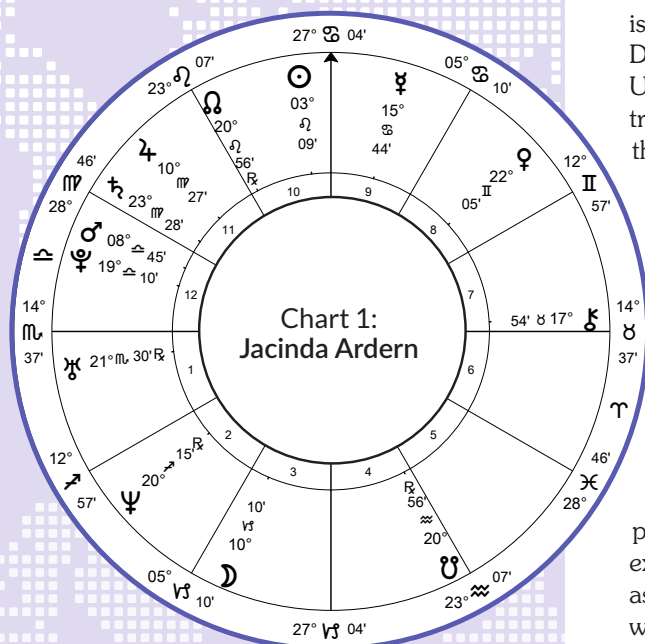
As I write this column on May 27, New Zealand's prime minister has plenty to smile about. From today's news: "New Zealand Discharges Last COVID-19 Patient; No New Cases in Five Days."<sup>1</sup> Under Jacinda "Jaz" Ardern's formidable leadership, her country's triumph over COVID-19 has been one of the rare, bright stories in this global catastrophe.

Like Arnold Schwarzenegger, Lucille Ball, and Napoleon, Ardern is a Leo (see **Chart 1**, at left), driven by an enterprising Capricorn Moon. It's notable that her Leo Sun is unaspected (or "feral"), suggesting that in her earlier years she may have felt like a misfit, even though she needed to march to the beat of her own drum.<sup>2</sup>

Leo Sun with Capricorn Moon combines the energy of ego recognition with a need for practical executive action, as in "no fooling around."<sup>3</sup> We saw her no-nonsense executive authority in March of 2019, just one week after a lone gunman killed 51 people in two Christchurch mosques. Assault weapons were banned. Boom. Just like that. With her Mercury square Pluto, we can appreciate how her mindset (Mercury) could be perceived as forceful or extreme. With her Mars in Libra, we can see her need to assert herself as a warrior — for *peace*. Toss her Capricorn Moon into the mix and we have a wide t-square, supporting her need to make things happen — in words and in deeds.

One year later, on March 14, her response to COVID-19 was equally strict and effective. "We must fight by going hard and by going early," she stated.<sup>4</sup> This tough-as-nails social expression reflects her Venus-Saturn square, though Neptune's opposition to Venus (all three form another t-square) adds idealism and empathy. New Zealand's lockdown may have been the strictest in the world, but Ardern made two exceptions quite clear: The Easter Bunny and the Tooth Fairy were absolutely, positively "essential workers." Her compassionate handling of the crisis won hearts around the world.<sup>5</sup>

Ardern's Leo North Node is squared by Uranus, which makes a modern psychological astrologer wonder how Ardern's independence may have been usurped in her early home life, likely by a maternal influence. How will a need for freedom to be her unique self play out in her relationships? Ardern is the third woman to become New Zealand's prime minister — that's not unique — though at age 37, she was the youngest. She was also unmarried and pregnant, becoming only the second elected world leader to give birth while in office (the first was former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto; Ardern's daughter happened to be born on Bhutto's birthday). She became engaged to partner Clark Gayford last year but has no plans to set a wedding date — at least not until after the September election.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps she's still feeling the need for independence suggested by the past three squares to her Sun from transiting Uranus between May 2019 and February 2020.



All charts use Placidus houses and the Mean Node.

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Without a confirmed birth time, our forecasting abilities are limited. New Zealand astrologer Graham Ibell has proposed a rectified birth time of 1:59 p.m., giving Ardern a 19° Sagittarius Ascendant, with natal Neptune–Venus almost exactly on the Ascendant–Descendent axis, squared by natal Saturn. Neptune conjunct a Sagittarius Ascendant certainly could reflect her dazzling projection of optimism, tempered by the gravitas of Saturn’s square.

What do you think? What we can see with certainty in the short-term future is that Solar Arc (SA) Jupiter conjoins Pluto in late October, and this is in effect now through the rest of the year. This suggests a continuing expansion of power and resources for Prime Minister Ardern.

**Richard Wayne Penniman (aka “Little Richard”),** December 5, 1932; 2:50 p.m. EST; Macon, GA (32°N50', 83°W38'); C: accuracy in question; statement made by mother in biography.

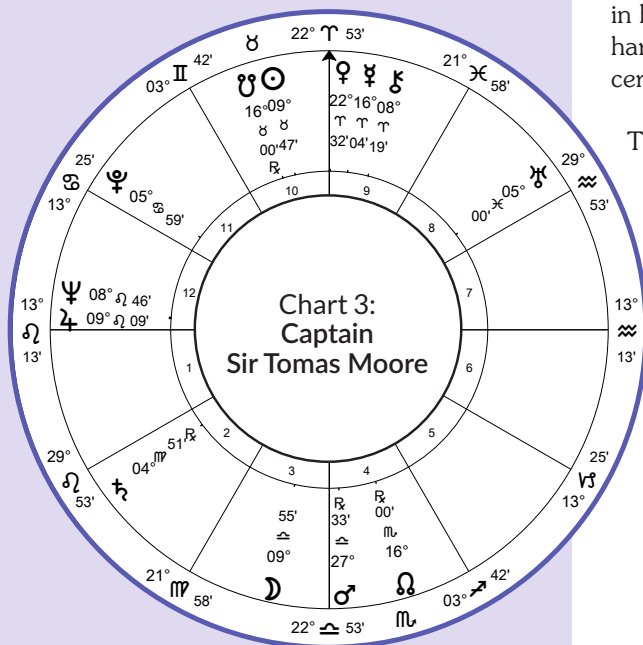
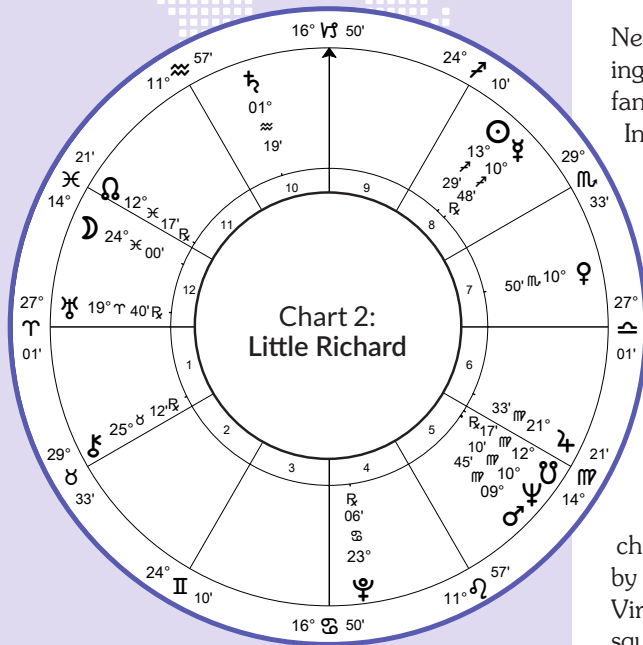
Dominant patterns in early May included transiting Venus square Neptune, transiting Sun sextile Neptune, as well as trines between transiting Mercury and Jupiter–Pluto. Stories of magic, music, and rose-colored fantasies, along with boundary-pushing thinking, were sure to make news. In eleven years of blogging about the astonishing synchronicity of planetary patterns and the headlines, I’ve noticed that even the obituaries reflect current patterns. “Little Richard, flamboyant rocker who fused gospel fervor and R&B sexuality, dies at 87”<sup>7</sup> was published on May 9, with a Sagittarius Moon activating his Mercury–Neptune square. Coincidence or conspiracy?

“Little Richard” Penniman was a Sagittarius, driven by an impressionable Pisces Moon. (See **Chart 2**, at left.) This combination suggests an immersion in matters of the higher mind, e.g., philosophy and religion — the bigger and more beautiful, the better! “Bigger” is reflected by his Jupiter–Moon opposition; Jupiter needs to expand whatever it touches.

Mars–Neptune–South Node in the 5th house can be a powerful and charismatic performer in all areas of creative expression. It’s supported by a sextile from Venus in Scorpio, adding depth and substance to the Virgo Mars–Neptune’s need for sublimely perfect action. Mars–Neptune squares the boundary-pushing needs of Sun–Mercury in Sagittarius. Mars in hard aspect to Sun–Mercury is a statement of high energy. Neptune in hard aspect to Sun–Mercury could reflect mystery, glamour, illusion, uncertainty, and/or idealism.

Little Richard made it on to the *Billboard* charts in the fall of 1955. The song was “Tutti Frutti,” and *Billboard* called it “a cleverly styled novelty with nonsense words.”<sup>8</sup> Oh, dear *Billboard*. With transiting Neptune opposing Little Richard’s Ascendant and all the other Neptune patterns in his natal chart, “Tutti Frutti’s” nonsensical lyrics were deliberately unclear. The song was about “raucous sex,”<sup>9</sup> with precise details a matter of debate,<sup>10</sup> as was Little Richard’s sexuality. At one point, he referred to himself as “omnisexual,” attracted to men

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and women; at another point, he denounced homosexuality as “unnatural.”<sup>11</sup>

It’s fascinating to see how much of Little Richard’s life experience reflected Neptunian themes. His father sold bootleg whiskey. He sang in gospel churches. He abandoned his rock and roll career in 1957, becoming an ordained minister and traveling evangelist. “For the rest of his life,” says the New York Times, “he was torn between the gravity of the pulpit and the pull of the stage.” In the 1970s, he battled drugs and alcohol and became a Bible salesman.<sup>12</sup>

Add the mask of a pioneering Aries Ascendant, ruled by that bedazzled Mars. Consider that Uranus and Pluto square the Midheaven and Ascendant, respectively. Uranus in hard aspect to an angle suggests disruption and innovation; Pluto in hard aspect to the angles suggests an irresistible force, for better or worse. Little Richard will always be remembered as a “founding father of rock and roll whose fervent shrieks, flamboyant garb, and joyful, gender-bending persona embodied the spirit and sound of that new art form.”<sup>13</sup>

**Captain Sir Thomas Moore, April 30, 1920; birth time unknown (noon BST used); Keighley, West Riding, Yorkshire, England (31°N07', 81°W33'); source: Wikipedia.**

The endearing story of World War II veteran Captain Tom was another bright light in the news. Some weeks before his 100th birthday, he launched a fundraising drive as a show of gratitude for the care he’s received from the most excellent National Health Service in the U.K. Vowing to walk 100 laps around his English garden, he figured he’d raise a thousand pounds. By April 19, he’d raised over 29 million.<sup>14</sup> One month later, his efforts had generated nearly 40 million and a knighthood.<sup>15</sup> Where in the horoscope do we see this aptly-timed resource-generating potential?

Captain Tom has an empire-building earthy Taurus Sun in a supercharged square to a grandly philanthropic Jupiter–Neptune conjunction in Leo. (See **Chart 3**, previous page.) That conjunction is being activated by the rainmaker potential of a square from transiting Uranus, which is also presenting his Taurus Sun with an opportunity to express his individuality without compromise. His Venus (who, what, and how he needs to love) at 22° Aries was squared in March by Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and Pluto. With natal Venus in Aries, we surmise that Captain Tom loves a good challenge or crusade! Note that he has the midpoint picture Venus=Jupiter/Pluto,<sup>16</sup> suggesting potent creativity and flair.

His Mars (how he needs to execute a plan) is in Libra (like Jacinda Ardern’s). At 27° Libra, his Mars is squared in 2020 by three of those four transiting planets (all except Pluto). Jupiter was within 1° to 3° of an exact square to Mars throughout April, and it stationed retrograde within minutes of exactitude in mid May. Less than a week later, he was awarded his knighthood. Perhaps he will be able to meet Her Majesty the Queen in person in early December, when the Mars–Jupiter square is exact.

Without a birth time, we can’t determine the transits to his Libra Moon, other than it is out of the range of squares from Saturn and Pluto (and by now, Jupiter, too). Still, it must

be extremely fulfilling to his people-pleasing Libra Moon to be so popular at this time. A Solar Arc between his Sun and the North and South Nodes — exact in October — suggests strong potential for public recognition. His knighthood is just one of many honors he’s received, including promotion and birthday cards from over 150,000 fans.<sup>17</sup>

What do you have scheduled in your horoscope on your 100th solar return?

## References and Notes

(All URLs were accessed in June 2020.)

1. <https://www.ibtimes.com/coronavirus-update-new-zealand-discharges-last-covid-19-patient-no-new-cases-5-days-2983698>
2. Wikipedia notes that Ardern was raised in a Mormon household; she has since become an agnostic.
3. Noel Tyl, *Synthesis and Counseling in Astrology*, Llewellyn, 1994, p. 87.
4. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/2020/04/what-new-zealand-did-right-in-battling-coronavirus/#close>
5. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2020/04/06/tooth-fairy-easter-bunny-are-essential-workers-new-zealands-jacinda-ardern-confirms/>
6. [https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=12304788](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12304788)
7. <https://www.latimes.com/obituaries/story/2020-05-09/little-richard-dead>
8. <https://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/rock/9374829/billboard-little-richard-tutti-frutti-review-1955>
9. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/09/arts/music/little-richard-dead.html>
10. <https://www.shmoop.com/tutti-frutti-little-richard/lyrics.html>
11. <https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-news/little-richard-dead-48505/>
12. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/09/arts/music/little-richard-dead.html>
13. <https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-news/little-richard-dead-48505/>
14. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain-veteran/captain-tom-99-to-help-open-hospital-after-raising-29-million-idUSKBN2200PI?il=0>
15. <https://people.com/human-interest/capt-tom-moore-gets-knighthood/>
16. Venus is making a square aspect exactly in between (at the midpoint of) Jupiter and Pluto. Venus is the focal point; Jupiter/Pluto is the midpoint. Taken together, Venus=Jupiter/Pluto is the midpoint picture. Translation (as Don McBroom explains in his helpful book, *Midpoints*, Llewellyn, 2007, p. 32): Captain Tom’s Venus accomplishes its social, relationship, and aesthetic needs through all that is symbolized by Jupiter (expansion, confidence, optimism) and Pluto (power, resources). When any planet is the focal point of a Jupiter/Pluto midpoint, we see potential for personal success.
17. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2020/04/30/capt-toms-100th-birthday-15000-cards-promotion-fundraiser-worth-39-million/>

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