

This is an original 1828 dictionary, which this year celebrates its 190th printing date.

# Knowing Noah

Astrologers find Webster's birth chart portrays his character

by Lynn Woike  
Editor

The larger-than-life statue of Noah Webster in the center of town is fitting for a man who was internationally known as a scholar, author, journalist, publisher, activist and patriot. He was born in West Hartford October 16, 1758. Two West Hartford astrologers looked at his birth chart to see if it predicted the life the town's most famous native would lead.

"I wondered what Noah Webster's birth chart would show," said Janet Booth, who's produced and hosted "Looking Up" monthly on West Hartford Community Television since 2000. She's a current board member and past president of the Astrological Society of Connecticut Inc.

"Noah Webster had the sun in Libra. The sun shows how one shines and in this sign of relationships, it ordinarily indicates a

'people person,' a negotiator or team-builder," she said.

Those need not be his dominant traits, however.

"That day there was a full moon, by definition in the sign opposite the sun's, setting up personal and interpersonal tension. Webster's moon – the signal of one's emotional nature – is in the

**"Overall I see in his chart that he had a tremendous drive and determination for worldly success, wealth and social prominence. ... I get the sense he would have been stubborn and dogged in pursuit of his goals."**

–Stephanie Briggs

solo and assertive sign of Aries. Both Libra and Aries are cardinal signs, inclined to take initiative and to react to situations through action. Libra has a reputation for procrastination or weighing choic-

es, whereas Aries' decisiveness can border on impulsiveness. He probably leaned more toward the Libra tendencies since he had two additional planets in Libra: Venus and Mercury,"

Booth said.

Venus' domain is attraction, love and values while words, ideas and information come under the auspices of Mercury.

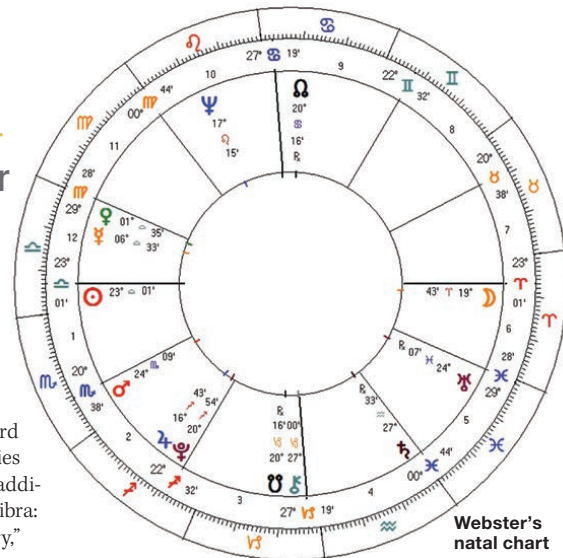
"It's not a surprise to find these

two planets close together and operating as a team in Webster's birth chart, showing a love of language. Their position in Libra brings an interest in fairness, refined social manners, and an ability to charm through conversation," Booth said.

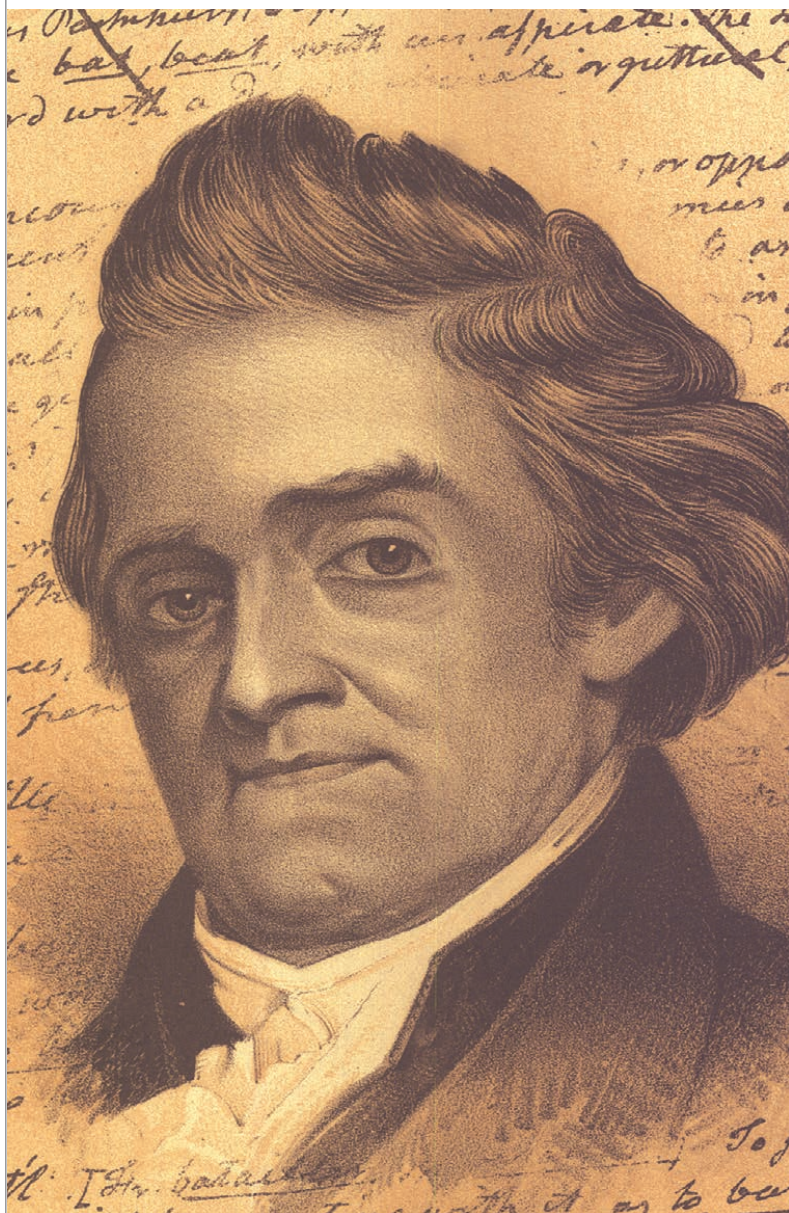
Every 12 years, Jupiter, representing expansion, passes through Sagittarius, which influences higher learning and philosophy; 1758 was one of those years.

"Publishing, education and legislation are associated with Jupiter and Sagittarius," Booth said.

Although Pluto had not yet



Webster's natal chart



Courtesy photo

This print of Noah Webster is from the "Schoolmaster of the Republic" collection at the Noah Webster House and West Hartford Historical Society.

been discovered, Webster was born when it, too, was moving though Sagittarius. Typical keywords for a Jupiter-Pluto combo include deep thinking, extensive research, extreme knowledge and big changes.

"That equals transformation on a large scale. Mercury, ruling mind and communication, is in a harmonious aspect to Jupiter/Pluto, meaning there is a flow of energy between them. This gave Webster the ability to apply his intellect and skill with language in support of his own learning as well as his larger work in the world," said Stephanie Briggs, a counseling astrologer, intuitive healer, writer and speaker based in West Hartford. Through her business, Heart Blossom, she uses astrology and other modalities to support and mentor sensitive people in their personal development and evolution.

"Pluto's influence is clear," Booth said. "Pluto is the planet of transformation and Webster certainly transformed American English usage and spelling with his 'Compendious Dictionary' with an adjective in the title that isn't in most dictionaries, at least not these days."

She wasn't surprised that Webster studied 28 languages to evaluate the origin of words because of Mercury's relationship with Jupiter and Pluto.

"The fortuitous blend of these three planets portends the luck he had when his local minister offered to tutor him and prepare

him for college," Booth said.

Webster's chart also shows a strong, harmonious aspect between Jupiter and Neptune.

"I would describe it as a strong sense of faith, passion and divine inspiration for his work," Briggs said.

Booth noted, "He was a prolific writer and for a time served in the Connecticut House of Representatives, living up to the big promise of his Jupiter in Sagittarius, arguably the best planet in his chart."

A proclivity for problem-solving and innovation can be seen in the chart by a smooth connection between path-finder Mars and scientific Uranus.

"This pair also enamors one of independence and inclines one to be rebellious or revolutionary. Indeed, Webster served in the Connecticut Militia during the Revolutionary War and wrote articles arguing that the separation from England would be permanent. His displeasure with how education was being conducted led him to establish a successful private school and through the textbooks he authored, to reshape the country's educational methods."

As a young man, Webster floundered trying to find his calling, and at times, money was a problem.

Booth said Mars can breed aggression while Saturn demands hard work, and in his chart, they are 90 degrees apart, which is the harshest type of interaction.





The Best Room is where Noah Webster was born in 1758.

"They add up to a lot of hard work. It took tremendous effort to accomplish all that he did. Obviously he wasn't afraid of immense tasks: he began a newspaper and a school, wrote voluminously, lobbied intensely and successfully for the first major revision of American copyright laws, and was committed to unifying America's culture. Saturn, represented as "Old Man Time,"

increases its influence with age. In Webster's later years, he became quite cynical and critical, typical of the affect of his birth Mars in the stinging sign of Scorpio."

The prominence of Neptune points to the importance of his beliefs.

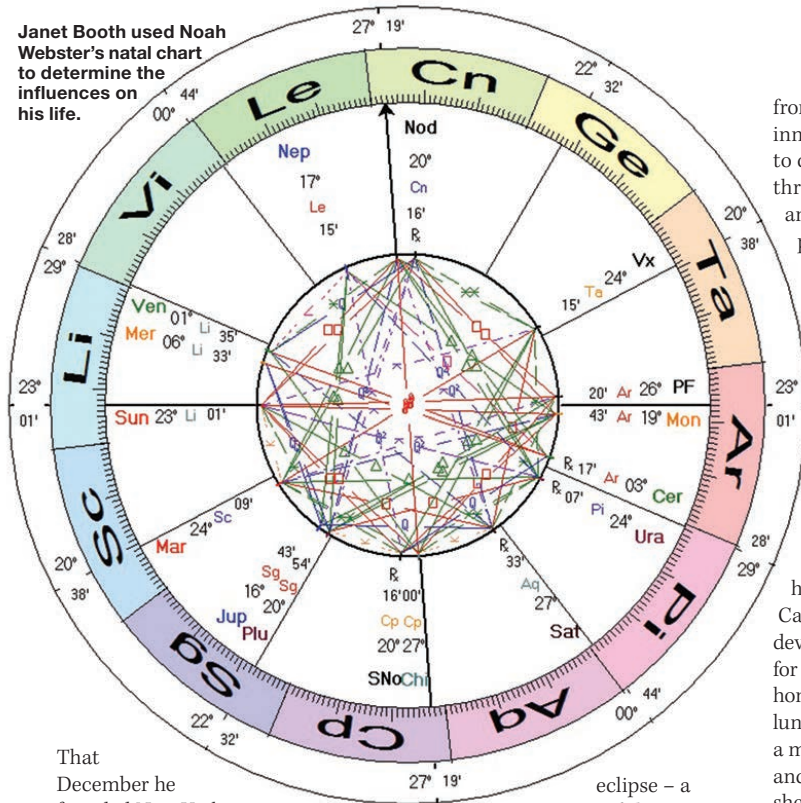
"His religious views shifted significantly over the course of his life and were always strong. His dictionary had more Biblical definitions than any other reference

volume and he even put together a revised and updated version of the 'King James Bible,' correcting its grammar. Yet, his 'Speller' was entirely secular, consistent with his ideals of keeping what's sacred separate from secular matters," Booth noted.

A birth chart goes beyond examining personality; it also presages life events and developments.

"For instance," she said, "considering the importance of Jupiter at his birth, we would expect this planet's return to its natal position approximately every 12 years to align with some important points in Webster's life. Indeed, at his third Jupiter return in 1793, he moved to New York City at Alexander Hamilton's behest to be an editor for the Federalist Party newspaper.

Janet Booth used Noah Webster's natal chart to determine the influences on his life.



That December he founded New York City's first daily newspaper. Twelve years later, he was preparing for the 1806 publication of his first dictionary." Looking at his chart, Booth said, "This occurred with a solar

eclipse – a powerful new moon, indicating big beginnings. Since eclipse positions often repeat in 19-year cycles, the eclipse in 1787 occurred when he was an outspoken supporter of the new Constitution."

He had a spark of genius from Uranus (the planet of innovation), as well as the ability to channel that into action through strategic use of his energy and effort, owing to his fortunate placement of Mars in Scorpio, Briggs said.

"Overall I see in his chart that he had a tremendous drive and determination for worldly success, wealth and social prominence. His chart shows that his major evolutionary journey in this lifetime was supposed to be about bringing this cold, hard ambition and focus on public life (represented by his south lunar node in Capricorn) into balance by developing a greater capacity for sensitivity, and nurturing home and family life (his north lunar node in Cancer). In short, a move away from 'workaholic' and toward 'family man.'" she said.

Jennifer DiCola Matos, executive director of the Noah Webster House, said, "Webster's private and public persona were quite different. Webster was devoted to his family – his wife Rebecca and their

**"Pluto is the planet of transformation and Webster certainly transformed American English usage and spelling with his 'Compendious Dictionary' with an adjective in the title that isn't in most dictionaries, at least not these days."**

**-Janet Booth**

seven children – and they shared a close and loving relationship." Webster's chart also indicates that he had wounding and insecurities around money and his place in society, as represented by Chiron in Capricorn, that probably began in childhood," Briggs said. "This would create a feeling that he was never successful enough. And with Chiron also in a tense



**Janet Booth**

aspect to his sun in Libra; he likely felt, on some level, that he needed to prove himself to other people. His cluster of planets in Libra indicates an idealized worldview and a preference for elegance, and he was likely especially attuned to the rules and values of society.

“His chart also shows hints of arrogance, and a capacity for manipulation with charming words (Mercury in Libra) and a strategic style of asserting his will and power (Mars in Scorpio). I get the sense he would have been stubborn and dogged in pursuit of his goals, doing whatever it took to advance his agenda. There’s also an evangelical flair to Jupiter/Pluto in Sagittarius. And we see that through his work as a reformer of language and education, he was able to impart his own ideals on a large scale by shaping the minds of students for generations.” Booth explained progressions are a forecasting technique that views the consecutive days after birth as symbolizing developments in the consecutive years of life.

“The year he was 40, the sun and Mercury indicated a time to shine regarding ideas and knowledge. That was the year he was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 1807, as his term in the Connecticut legislature concluded and he began compiling an expansion of his initial dictionary, Booth noted his



**Stephanie Briggs**

progressed Mercury passed his natal Jupiter, and said it was a fitting sign for important communication about laws and for a major writing project.

“In 1812, when his progressed Sun reached the degree of his natal Jupiter, he helped found Amherst College. Webster finally completed his major, monumental work, ‘An American Dictionary of the English Language,’ in 1825, the year his progressed sun finished its travel through Sagittarius, the sign of publishing and education.”

Lastly, she concluded, the year he registered the copyright, 1828, “there was a solar eclipse across from his natal sun in the neighborhood of his natal moon. This emphasized the full moon at which he was born, heralding the fulfillment of his natal promise, the signature accomplishment of his life.

Calling it “pretty impressive,” Matos, praised the accuracy of the details about Webster.

“At first I was surprised to learn that Noah Webster had the sun in Libra, as he is not known for being a ‘people person.’ His moon, Aries, makes more sense: his drive to succeed often separated him from others, both physically and intellectually,” she said. **WHL**

*Learn more about Janet Booth at [astrologybooth.com](http://astrologybooth.com).*

*Learn more about Stephanie Briggs at [heartblossom.life](http://heartblossom.life).*