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How to Find the Best Place for Couples to Live *by Corrie Cooperman*

Many years ago, long before I knew much about astrology or had any clue I would become a professional astrologer, I had my Astro*Carto*Graphy map done. It came complete with a handwritten note by Jim Lewis himself. I was fascinated with the beautiful map of the world and all those planetary lines, so many possibilities to explore.

Jim Lewis provided us all an immense service when he devoted himself to applying the position-based astrology of the ancients to our modern mobile lives. Voila, he launched a potent tool for finding one's right place on the planet. Astro*Carto*Graphy immediately had a broad public appeal and made him more successful financially than most astrologers. True to his humanitarian and quirky Gemini self, part of his largesse was handed out in \$100 bills to the down and out in San Francisco's seedy side of town at Christmas, after his premature death from brain tumors, as per his explicit instructions.

His foundation for Astro*Carto*Graphy is based on the ancients' wise observations that when planets are on the ascendant or mid-heaven they have unusually strong influences in our lives. Jim Lewis expanded this viewpoint to include the other two axes- the descendant and the IC. His favorite motto was, "You are not stuck with your birth chart!" Kenneth Irving eloquently echoed this sentiment in the book he co-wrote from Jim Lewis's notes after Jim's unexpected death; "Jim Lewis gave us a system that can unshackle us from our birthplace bound horoscope."¹

For those of you not familiar with the underpinnings of Astro*Carto*Graphy it goes like this: When a person is born with a member of solar system on one of the four angles of the sky, the energy of that planet plays a large role in a person's life. This is actually the only facet of astrology that has been validated by research.² If you are lucky enough, for instance, to be born with Venus exactly rising, you have Venus on the ascendant, showering you with gracefulness and attracting people to you without any effort on your part. Let's say you were not the one out of 360 people to be born with that exact good luck placement. Astro*Carto*Graphy postulates that you too can reap the benefits of Venus on the ascendant by moving to a place where it was rising when you were born. Those handy

Astro*Carto*Graphy maps show you exactly where that is, hopefully not in the middle of the ocean but in some great place where you might want to live.

Of course the reverse might be true. Some people are born with Pluto on one of those angles of the sky, which makes for an intense and possibly crisis filled life. To get a little respite from that intensity, a person can move just about any where else in the world as long as it is at least 300 miles (5 longitudinal degrees) from where they were born, and not on one of their other three Pluto-on-an-angle lines. This whole system of plotting the path of the planets over the globe was far too complex and time consuming until the advent of computers, and as a result Astro*Carto*Graphy is still a fairly new application of astrology.

ACG implies that position matters more than the sign for any given member of the birth chart. I have noticed that over time I have put more and more emphasis on the house placements position in the Birth Chart. I look at house structures first and scan for planets close to one of the four angles, knowing their impact is strong. Then I examine the aspects the planets, etc, make to each other. Finally I give attention to the signage as I build my sense of the chart. This could be an offshoot of having an astrology practice that involves so many location readings or it may be an unconscious, but intuitive, response to the precession of the equinoxes and the predicament it creates for astrologers. My Taurus Sun does not like looking up at a planet in the gratifyingly clear night sky we have here in Montana and seeing that planet is not where my Ephemeris says it should be. Year by year, decade by decade, this "problem" will only get worse. Even now the sky, as it appears from Earth, (where we live) is a good three weeks off the Ephemeris. The position of the planets, though, are one and the same as they appear in the sky and in the Birth Chart, no matter how deep we get into the precession.

As an astrologer certified in Astro*Carto*Graphy, I have advised hundreds of people about their moves. Working with individuals is relatively easy. I identify the best functioning features of the birth chart, take into consideration the client's goals and location requirements and come up with a few well chosen areas for consideration. I find it imperative to also check out transits and progressions so that when I tell someone how great a particular Sun line is for their goals, I can be certain it is not on the receiving end of a rough transit just as the move takes place.

For many years, when advising couples, I employed the identical approach and analyzed their charts and maps, as individuals, then scanned

for shared places that were either positive or neutral for both of them. This approach sent them to places that at least were not negative in nature and as a result generally produced satisfying relocations. But it did not explain a phenomena I was observing in couples I knew personally. Not uncommonly, couples I knew that had the good fortune to find an incredibly satisfying, successful and heart-linked place to live, did not have particularly notable individual ACG lines for that location. They never had negative lines in their mutually beloved place, but nothing in their individual Astro*Carto*Graphy maps explained the strong connection and ability to thrive that their favorite place to live bestowed upon them. At some point in my career I started including the Local Space system of locality in my research and readings and even when using this augmentation, there was no a-hah to explain couples' treasured locations.

As fortune would have it, a request came along in early 2000 for a location reading that shed light on this ever growing perplexity and permanently reshaped how I perform location readings for couples. An astrologer and his wife were interested in knowing more about a place they were considering for relocation. My usual individual approach showed benign influences for their desired location in Montana, nothing to merit the draw they were feeling. The astrologer member of the couple encouraged me to make a Davison Relationship chart and use that tool as well, to glean more information about this chosen spot. Until that time I did not do relationship charts, whether for location readings or compatibility readings, because they seemed quite contrived and gave the merged aspect of relationship more credence than I think it deserved.

When doing relationship charts most astrologers seem to prefer the Midpoint Relationship Chart. A midpoint chart is created by finding the exact midpoint between the partners' Suns which then becomes the Sun for the relationship chart. The same is done for the rest of the celestial bodies to create an entire relationship chart. What troubles me about the Midpoint chart is that it is an abstract mathematical derivation that has no anchor in time or space. And that is a big problem. Lacking time and coordinates, the Midpoint Relationship Chart cannot be converted to a location map

The Davison chart, on the other hand, is created by finding the exact great-circle geographic center between the two birth locations and the exact median between the two times of birth. Thus a chart with a real time and location is created which can be used for producing a relocation map.

Out of respect for my fellow astrologer, I did create a Davison chart for him and his wife. The results were stunning. The place in Montana that

so captured their attention was within one degree of their Jupiter Mid-heaven Davison line! That cinched it for them and for me- I perked up and immediately made a Davison chart for my husband and myself and was astonished at the results.

We had met in San Francisco, my home town, and both being blends of Earth and Fire, our passion was, and still is, hiking. When our son headed off to college, back East, as we say in San Francisco, we headed off to the Rockies, leaving three generations of very large families behind.

Of course we each had our own Astro*Carto*Graphy maps in tow. As you can see from the ACG illustration, San Francisco has an influence of Saturn on the Midheaven for me, a feature Jim Lewis thought I could do without! For my husband, there is a wide swath of neutral area in the West that includes San Francisco and extends all the way to the Rockies. Not so for me, in the Rockies I have a Neptune rising (ascendant) line. Jim Lewis was not fond of Neptune influences, thinking they make for fuzzy and languid living unless one has a career that is enhanced by Neptune, such as, a career in sales or music.³

So it never made sense that my career at that time as a nurse/bodyworker was successful in the Rockies, given the strong Neptune effect. In our first location to Casper, Wyoming my practice boomed even though everyone thought bodywork referred to working on cars. We loved Casper and felt very connected to the land there, hiking at every chance on Casper mountain and spending cherished time backpacking and later llama packing in the Wind River Range. I could only ascribe our success and enjoyment of living in Casper to an obscure part of Astro*Carto*Graphy that has to do with crossing lines, in which we had each had a positive crossing line at that latitude. Even when I began to include Local Space lines to the location map, Casper only picked up a distant influence from Pluto, hardly an explanation for the good times and success there.

As you can see from our charts our rising signs are only 8 degrees apart. By the time we left for the Rockies in 1988, Uranus had entered my fourth house and was soon to enter my husband's. It prodded us along to explore other Rocky Mountain towns in which we usually lived one to two years. Steamboat, Colorado; Santa Fe, New Mexico; and Billings, Montana to name a few, all having the same neutral influence for my husband and a Neptune rising for me. We loved them all, and our careers were successful there as well.

Ultimately, Red Lodge, Montana won our hearts, and we settled there, just about the time Uranus left our respective 4th houses in 1996. Around

that time I began to do Astrology readings professionally and again, my practice boomed. I even got featured in a very positive article about astrology, replete with a color photo, on the FRONT page of the Statewide Billings Gazette in this very conservative neck of the woods. It remained a mystery, astrologically speaking, why the Rockies was truly our place until I created that Davison chart.

There, as you can see in map illustration 3, our Davison ACG map, is a very pretty Jupiter ASC line running along the front range of the Rockies, never veering more than 5 degrees from our various locations and quite close to Casper and Santa Fe, two other places that were very successful for us in many dimensions. The Jupiter line also mingles energy with a Moon midheaven line, which I think explains the emotional attachment we both have to the Rockies and the strong connection to community we have enjoyed in all of our locations in the Rockies.

You might think that with the success we had in the Rockies that success and community involvement just came easy for us, but that is not the case. Twice we attempted to relocate closer to family, missing our moms and all those sisters and brothers we left, and each time was a disaster, especially for my career, but also in terms of us missing the Rockies terribly. Both those moves placed me quite close to my Saturn MH line again, the one Jim Lewis did not like.

With curiosity running high I looked at the charts of other couples I knew well, starting with my son and daughter-in-law. They were born on opposite sides of the United States, and met at college in Pennsylvania. After graduation and a year of humanitarian travel in Africa, they quickly settled in San Francisco, because they had fallen in love with the *City Different*. Again, their individual charts for the area are weak, with my son having no influences in the area and his wife having only a moon DSC nearby, a mildly positive influence at best. When I created their Davison map, I began to suspect coincidence was no longer in play concerning the validity of this tool. There was that Jupiter ASC line running almost exactly through San Francisco!

In short order, the Davison relationship chart became an integral part of all my relocation work with couples. The benefits far outweigh the added preparation time. Creating individual maps for each member of the couple is quite important so they will know about any personal planetary influences they have in the areas that light up on the Davison Map. And against all odds, when the Davison ACG line is welcoming for the couple, their individual ACG lines are almost never negative for the same location.

A third example that may fill in some gaps about the fruitfulness of the Davison chart is the thirty something couple who consulted me for a location reading. They were American born and schooled but had been living in London for some time, conducting a very successful business there, yet feeling the loneliness that frequently accompanies the ex-pat life. As a result they were planning to build a home in mid-state New York to keep their connection with the US more alive, even though they would not occupy the home for some time. They wanted to know if they had selected a good location to build that new home and wanted to know why London was working well for them professionally, but was socially problematic.

Their individual maps for London were striking. They each had Neptune on the IC under one degree away. I had to double check my data to make sure it was not an error! Such a strong, singular influence. One wonders how they ever managed to get any business done with that mutual and pervasive influence of Neptune. Though it might explain the isolation they felt.

The Davison chart, again, explains it all. Their Davison line for London was less than a half degree from a Mercury line, providing ample assistance to their consulting business. If they were not in London as a couple, it is doubtful the business would be so successful. And their home site in New York that would become a place of relaxation and restoration was blessed by a Jupiter descendant line, making it easy to approve that plan.

If you are not a professional astrologer it is unlikely you own a software program that will produce the Davison chart and maps. Astro Numeric Service, the main provider of ACG maps and the holder of the North America ACG trademark, can easily create a Davison relationship map for you.⁴ I might be prejudiced, but I also strongly advise consulting an astrologer versed in location astrology, if more than curiosity is driving your interest. (The organization Continuum maintains a list of certified Astro*Carto*Graphers).⁵ Relocating is one of the most expensive things a couple can do and an astrologer can address the more subtle and complex features that influence a successful relocation choice.

That being said, there are some helpful guidelines I would like to share. The four examples I used all have Jupiter lines involved in the couple's dream location. That is no accident! Jupiter is the line for hopes and dreams, success, camaraderie, excitement, and joy. It seems to outperform the other "good" planets when it comes to couple location. Moon lines have also proved very good for families in the child raising phase.

While lovely Venus has a good rap, it has not shown up often as the

preferred place for couples. It seems to function better as a vacation spot. North Node lines also are good choices, imbuing the location with a sense of destiny, familiarity and purpose.

But even with a very good line, it is important to make sure that planet is not strongly afflicted in the Davison chart. If a glorious Sun or Jupiter line is at the focal point of a T square the locale will probably not live up to expectations. I am frequently asked how close one should live to a beneficent line, my answer is, the closer the better, but no more than 300 miles east or west of the line, as its influence does wane with distance. Gauquelin's research suggests that the influence spreads out much farther east of a line and less far west of a line.⁶

And what about Local Space? This location system tracks the path of a member of our solar system from the birth locale to its Zenith position at the time of birth. I use it in all my location readings to help fill in the huge gaps, i.e. areas of no influence, in Astro*Carto*Graphy. However, I find Local Space lines to be nowhere as strong as ACG lines and ALWAYS overpowered by any ACG line in the vicinity. As a result, Local Space only gets a secondary emphasis in the advice I give to clients.

Areas of neutrality are worthy of comment because they can occupy such large sections of land on an ACG map. They can make excellent living choices for individuals, especially when someone does not have a Sun, Venus, or Jupiter line as a choice on the continent where they live. But, I have never seen a couple drawn to a neutral area in a Davison chart. It just does not have the positive intensity people are seeking.

We are a mobile society in America, relocating once every five years on average. Sociologists think our remarkable mobility might stem from a gene pool containing the restless and risk-taking traits of our forebearers. Personally, I think some of those moves are correction moves because a poor choice was made. When a couple relocates, the challenge is that both people have to do well in the new location for the move to stick. Armed with Astro*Carto*Graphy and the Davison chart the odds are on your side as a couple for a satisfying and lasting relocation.

Footnotes:

1 Kenneth Irving, *The Psychology of ASTRO*CARTO*GRAPHY*, Penquin Arkana, 1997, p. ix.

2 Michael Gauquelin, *Neo-Astrology, A Copernican Revolution*, Penquin Arkana, 1991, chapter 2.

3 Kenneth Irving, *The Psychology of ASTRO*CARTO*GRAPHY*, Arakana-Penguin Books, 1997, p.224-228.

4 Astro Numeric Service, 800/627-7464. For ordering a Davison Map, the company encourages use of their website: astronumerics.com.

5 The organization Continuum trains and certifies astrologers in Astro*Carto*Graphy. A list of certified astrologers is on their website: continuumacg.net

6 Kenneth Irving, *The Psychology of ASTRO*CARTO*GRAPHY*, Penquin Arkana, 1997, p.329-330.

Bio: Corrie Cooperman has been a professional astrologer since 1991. She was certified in Astro*Carto*Graphy in 1999. She is also a registered nurse and a recent graduate of Alberto Villoldo's Four Winds shamanic training program. Corrie has written other articles for Mountain Astrologer and has also published many astrology articles for newspapers in Montana. Relationship readings and location readings are her speciality. She can be reached at 928 308-8177 or corriecooperman@earthlink.net.

