

RANDOM HOUSE *e*BOOKS



21st Century Star Signs

Babs Kirby

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About the Book

The most up-to-date and comprehensive guide to the star signs.

21st Century Star Signs takes a completely contemporary approach to the Zodiac that's insightful, accurate and above all, revealing.

If you've ever wondered how best to win round a stubborn colleague, how to improve tricky relationships or why it is you can never settle for just one partner, you'll discover all the answers – and many more – in this the most modern, in-depth astrological portrait for the 21st century.

From your attitudes towards love and relationships – whether they're heterosexual, metrosexual, gay (or otherwise...), how you behave in work – with its ever-changing demands and opportunities, to what motivates you most in your homelife, Babs Kirby reflects and embraces today's sensibilities and shows just how best to survive and thrive in your sign.

About the Author

Babs Kirby is an astrologer and psychotherapist. A Vice President of the Faculty of Astrological Studies and director of its two year course, *Counselling within Astrology*, Babs taught for the Faculty for many years. She has lectured extensively both nationally and internationally.

Babs is a founder member and fellow of the Association of Professional Astrologers International and, in 2001, was appointed to the Advisory Board of the National Council for Geocosmic Research, one of the main astrological organisations within the United States. She is currently a trustee of The Urania Trust, an astrological educational charity in the UK, which provides funding for a variety of astrological endeavours. She is also a member of the Sophia Committee, whose remit is to establish astrology on the curriculum in universities.

Babs writes a regular astrology column for the weekly magazine *TV Choice*.

She lives and practises in London.

Also by Babs Kirby

Experiential Astrology - Symbolic Journeys using Guided Imagery, The Crossing Press, California, 1997.

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21st Century Star Signs

Babs Kirby



With love to Reuben

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Introduction

21ST CENTURY STAR Signs offers a new look at the twelve signs of the zodiac. These signs have ancient origins and in this book they are brought bang up-to-date and made relevant to life today. More than any other system of divination, astrology has stood the test of time and still provides a most convincing method by which we can gain a deeper understanding of our loved ones and ourselves.

The star in the title is, of course, the sun, the most important astrological influence on our lives. Since the popularisation of sun sign columns by newspapers and magazines, most people know that their sign is determined by their date of birth. Each sign of the zodiac is actually defined by the sun's presence in a thirty-degree sector of the sky and so, because of leap years, the exact date on which a sign begins and ends can vary each year.

At the start of each chapter, an approximate date is given for the sun entering and leaving the sign. For those who are born close to the day in which the sun enters a sign, please do read both signs to decide which one relates to you or consult an astrologer who can tell you exactly when the sun moved from one sign to the next in the year you were born.

Of course, since Copernicus, we all know that the sun doesn't actually move, the earth does, nevertheless that's how we experience it here on earth and it doesn't affect how we interpret the signs. In fact, in the West, astrologers no longer use the actual constellations – the backdrop of stars that the zodiacal signs are named after. The sidereal zodiac is based on the starry filament in the sky and is used by astrologers in India and the East.

The tropical zodiac is used by astrologers in the West and takes the spring equinox as its starting point, which occurs around March 21st when the sun crosses the equator and there is equal day and night. Both tropical and sidereal zodiacs contain the same signs but they start and finish on different dates and are measured using different criteria.

There are effectively two zodiacs and two thousand years ago they coincided but gradually they have separated; this is known as the precession of the equinoxes. Confusing though this is, it's one of the reasons Eastern and Western astrology is so different. Critics of astrology often assume that astrologers are not cognisant of this and use it in an attempt to discredit astrologers. On the contrary, astrologers are fully conversant with this fact.

The sun spends about thirty days in each sign and imparts a specific influence over those who are born in these periods, colouring their attitude and approach to life. The jury is still out on how exactly this occurs, with differing theories that are not going to be addressed here.

My particular orientation, like many Western astrologers, is to see the zodiacal signs as archetypal images. I prefer a symbolic attitude to astrology, rather than a deterministic or fatalistic one, and am satisfied that astrology shows our innate potential and can help us find direction and meaning in our lives. As well as being an astrologer, with over twenty years' experience, I also practice as an integrative psychotherapist and so my focus is as much on the inner landscape of the twelve signs as their outer characteristics.

Our biggest difficulties in life come from aspects of ourselves that we deny or reject – traits that we can't accept about ourselves. Whatever is buried and unconscious has the power to create havoc in our lives. We all have our blind spots and these are discussed with compassion in the following chapters in the hope that we can become more self-accepting and self-aware and, as a result, contented.

Astrology offers a powerful tool with which to understand others, too. It's relatively easy to find out other people's sun signs – all you need is their birthday. Reading about them in the pages that follow will give valuable insights into what makes them behave as they do – where they are coming from. The realisation that what seems to you to be an impossible attitude is actually perfectly valid for that sign, highlights the fact that there is never only one way of being, there are many. Knowledge of the different signs can help to create more understanding and tolerance between people.

There are numerous self-help books offering spiritual and psychological guidance these days, but a perceptive delineation of a sun sign cannot be underestimated, as it gives an instant sense of being recognised and understood.

Now for a brief explanation of some basic tenets in astrology. The signs are categorised by three qualities and four elements. Each sign has a unique combination. The qualities are cardinal, fixed and mutable and describe different modes of operation. The elements are fire, earth, air and water and these describe different ways of being.

The **cardinal signs** are Aries, Cancer, Libra and Capricorn and what they have in common is that, in their different ways, they all like to initiate. Those born under a cardinal sign are trail-blazers, good at starting projects and getting things off the ground. They like to shake things up, believing innovation is always a good thing. These are strongly-motivated, dynamic and enthusiastic individuals who excel at instigating changes.

Taurus, Leo, Scorpio and Aquarius make up the **fixed signs** and, as the name implies, they resist change. Those born under the fixed signs excel where dogged persistence is required, such as seeing projects and tasks through to the end, and bring stability and consolidation. These are reliable, steadfast, loyal and persistent individuals, who are good at maintaining the status quo. Never ones to give up

or let go easily, they conserve and preserve whatever they have.

Those born under the **mutable signs**, Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius and Pisces are adaptable and flexible individuals. With mental agility and physical dexterity, they can adjust easily to changes in circumstances. They have a knack of fitting in to whatever environment they find themselves in and can, metaphorically at least, bend in the wind.

One of my teachers used the following story to illustrate these qualities. Imagine arriving at a crossroads in the middle of nowhere with no signposts. The cardinal individual will charge off down one of the roads, in the belief that all roads lead to the final destination, no matter what. The fixed individual will stay put until someone comes along who can give directions. The mutable individual will go a short way down one road, then come back and try the next and so on, exploring what is down each road.

Besides the three qualities, the signs are made up of the four elements, fire, earth, air and water. The qualities contain one sign from each of the elements, so, for example, there is one cardinal fire sign, Aries, one fixed fire sign, Leo and one mutable fire sign, Sagittarius. When an understanding of a quality and an element are brought together, this immediately gives a lot of information about a particular sign. So let's look at the elements.

The **fire signs** consist of Aries, Leo and Sagittarius and those born under the fire signs radiate warmth and are spontaneous, lively and spirited. Cheerful, optimistic, wholehearted and generous, they rely on their intuition and are visionary, future-orientated individuals.

Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn make up the **earth signs** and produce practical, sensual, grounded and realistic people who trust what's tangible and factual. Those born under an earth sign rely on their five senses, touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing. Typically down-to-earth and matter-of-fact, these are no-nonsense individuals.

Those born under the **air signs**, Gemini, Libra and Aquarius, are sociable, gregarious individuals, who like to talk, exchange ideas and connect with others. With a detached, objective and logical approach, they are idealistic and interested in abstract thought. Their orientation brings perspective and tolerance to bear on all matters.

Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces make up the **water signs** and those born under these signs are soulful individuals, in touch with their feelings and inner world. Empathic, compassionate, imaginative, impressionable and sensitive, they pick up on the subtle undercurrents in situations.

When interpreting a birth chart, the sun's sign is just one factor among many that an astrologer considers. There is also the moon's sign and the signs of the planets, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto. Besides this, there is the rising sign (the sign on the horizon at the moment of birth) and the midheaven (the sign culminating directly overhead at birth) both of which are important in a full consideration of a horoscope. All twelve signs rise and culminate in any given twenty-four-hour period so in order to ascertain this, a time of birth is needed. This sets the orientation of the whole chart, giving an astrologer much more information than the sun's sign alone.

For those who recognise a description of themselves in signs other than their sun's this may well be because this is their rising sign or moon sign or is a sign emphasised by being occupied by several planets. None of us is just one sign; we are each a mixture of several, so having a birth chart, with all its unique complexities, read by an astrologer is a profound and revealing experience.

Despite these other astrological influences the sun is at the centre of our solar system – everything revolves around it and is dependent upon it, and likewise it is of central and unique significance to us all. The importance of the sun's sign can not be over-emphasised and the astrological

portraits that follow will be instantly recognisable as well as illuminating.

Each chapter contains five sections. The first provides a description of the main characteristics of those born under the sign, their behaviour, attitudes and what makes them tick. This general introduction discusses the sign's approach to work, money, leisure, and employer/employee dynamics, looking at the sign's strengths and weaknesses.

The second section looks specifically at the negative attributes of the sign, explaining their underlying psychological causes and offering constructive advice to those who struggle with these difficult traits. Those who are involved with someone born under the sign will find this section invaluable, as it reveals just what the problems are and offers suggestions on how to deal with them.

The following two sections deal respectively with men and women, discussing how the sign is expressed more specifically depending on the sex of the individual and how each behaves as a friend, lover and partner. Relationship dynamics are described in a non-gender specific way, to include those in heterosexual and homosexual relationships. Commitment and commitment phobia, responsibility and freedom, loyalty and infidelity, independence and dependency issues, security and autonomy, cooperation, closeness and abandonment issues are all evaluated. The different needs and relationship patterns of the signs are outlined, along with some typical scenarios.

The final section, on the child, is aimed at helping parents to better understand their child. Some may also want to dip into this section to see what they were like and needed as a child. The various stages of child development are mentioned, with reference to how each sun sign negotiates these transitions.

For those who would like to go on to have their birth chart set up or to study astrology, relevant organisations are listed in the appendix.

1

Aries *The Ram*

March 21st to April 19th
A cardinal fire sign, ruled by Mars

Introducing Aries

IT IS EASY to recognise an Aries by their warmth and sincerity. These are individuals who make steady eye contact and come across as genuine, unpretentious and forthright. Along with this is a certain innocence and naivety that allows them to get away with casual, throwaway and, at times, insensitive comments that others would not dare utter.

The ram represents Aries and those born under this sign have many ram-like traits, not least the tendency to use their horns – in a metaphorical way. They respond well to those who stand up to them and meet them head-on if necessary and can't abide shilly-shallying. They have no time for game playing; this is a no-nonsense type, who is frank and honest but may be a bit too outspoken for those who expect more diplomacy. It's not that they are deliberately rude; in fact they are refreshing, spontaneous and disarming.

As one of the fire signs (the others are Leo and Sagittarius) Aries are intuitive and future-orientated, with an abundance of optimism and faith in what lies around the corner. Others may see them as lucky, whereas it is their ability to see the opportunity inherent in any given situation

that creates their good fortune. They trust and rely on their hunches, which may seem a dangerous and frightening way to live to those who don't or can't, but is an infallible resource to the fire signs. And if they do come a cropper, they have the capacity to pick themselves up, dust themselves down and start all over again, much to the consternation of those who would be destroyed by far less.

Aries is the first sign in the zodiac, beginning at the spring equinox in the western hemisphere, around March 21st, and their character reflects this. They like to be first and have a fiercely competitive nature that may or may not be obvious, but should never be underestimated. The desire to win runs through everything they do, as every victory, however small and insignificant, is for them a confirmation of their power to succeed. While winning is important to them, so is the way their victory is obtained and they are at all times scrupulously honest and fair. Any other kind of triumph would be hollow and meaningless to them. Besides, they are truthful because it's more effort not to be - lies and deceit make life far too complicated for an Aries.

Brave, courageous and gallant, Aries is ruled by the planet Mars, the god of war in the early Greek pantheon, and there is something warrior-like about these individuals. They have fighting spirit and there's nothing they like better than a cause; they are especially good at championing the underdog. They rally to defend those whom they deem overlooked or neglected by the rest of society. These are individuals who can mount a convincing campaign and inspire others to support it. It suits them temperamentally - they can exercise their leadership qualities and fight the good fight. This they do on behalf of others far more effectively than for themselves and there's no doubt that when they jump on a bandwagon it can become a channel for their own unresolved issues. This is not necessarily a sign with a strong political conscience, although there are

plenty of successful politicians born under Aries; it is more that human injustice galvanises them into action.

There has been an impressive line-up of successful Aries politicians in Britain in recent times. These include John Major and Neil Kinnock, who were in office at the same time, as leader of the government and opposition respectively, and William Hague and Iain Duncan Smith, the next two leaders of the Conservative Party. There is nothing about Aries to suggest they'll have conservative views as such but they are pioneers and natural leaders.

Proving their bravery is an occupational pastime for an Aries and consists of tackling all the things in life that scare and daunt them. As they go through life they overcome their fears by becoming proficient at all sorts of odd things. Some of the tasks they set themselves may have no obvious merit – they may not be career moves, for instance – but, to them, they are significant. Others may not realise how important their achievements are to them, as they don't necessarily make a fuss about their accomplishments; they simply pitch themselves in headfirst. This may be quite literal, as one Aries, who was petrified of diving, mastered it over the course of one summer.

Typically, Aries bang their heads on the glass ceiling above them and take on a particular job, role, responsibility or activity that stretches them. It is how they grow and flourish, as they need to continually test their mettle. They instinctively rise to a challenge; it brings out the best in them and they perform well in a crisis and when under pressure.

This does not mean that an Aries individual is fearless; they deal with their fears, whether these are conscious or not, by conquering them. It may be these fears lie dormant in the unconscious, which has the effect of driving them to prove themselves through acts of daring. This can become a compulsive activity; in which case, if they want to stop, they must become conscious of these inner fears. With

awareness and maturity, they become more selective about the risks they are prepared to take and can choose what activities and ventures are worth going out on a limb for.

The young and less discriminating Aries tend to rush headlong into activities with no consideration for the consequences. The saying 'Fools rush in where angels fear to tread' must have been written about an immature Arien. This foolhardiness can lead them to overextend themselves. Knowing their own limits is an alien concept to them; what they want is to surpass their previous achievements, in all areas of life. They are ambitious simply because they are driven by their conquering spirit.

The Aries writer, Erica Jong, was catapulted to fame by her book, *Fear of Flying*, which became cult reading in the Sixties. Although the book is not about flying the title implies a challenge, which is classic Aries. Maya Angelou, author of a series of autobiographical books, is another writer who has demonstrated her pioneering Aries characteristics through the life she has lead, breaking ground in all kinds of ways for a black woman from America's deep south. She typifies this sign's ability to overcome tremendous odds and become a role model and inspiration for others.

The impetuous Aries nature can be a bonus for others, as they don't hesitate to offer help when it's needed and won't weigh up the personal costs. This is a generous individual, mainly because he or she acts first and thinks later and responds in an impulsive and wholehearted way. Yet this is a sign that has a reputation for selfishness. This has come about because they know what they want and communicate it clearly and forcibly.

So, for instance, when an Aries rings for a favour, they are more than likely to skip the usual polite introductions and courtesies and launch straight in with their request. They are no good at clever manoeuvres or manipulation. Other, more indirect individuals may be affronted by their lack of

guile. Not only that, but their brisk manner cuts to the truth, so that those who are less candid can feel exposed. Perhaps the label of selfishness has emerged as an insult from those who cannot cope with their transparency. Self-centred is a more accurate description, with both its negative and positive connotations.

On the positive side, by placing themselves at the centre the Aries individual emanates integrity and certainty. This is one of the few signs that does not necessarily need others to like them – an Aries does not seek others' approval. This independence of action inspires the confidence of others. Aries appear sure of themselves, which doesn't mean that they actually are, deep inside, but it's more than convincing from the outside. In fact they are as likely as anyone to have a fragile ego or low self-esteem and those who are impressed often fail to see this vulnerability.

Aries are in essence simple souls, with their raw and primitive drives only too apparent to others. What they lack in sophistication, they make up for in sheer energy; this is the human dynamo of the zodiac. Their problem can be in knowing when to stop; they thrive on activity and don't listen to the messages of their body. Some might argue this is displacement activity, that they are running from more complicated feelings.

In fact, as an intuitive type, the world of sensation is fraught with difficulty for Arians and their relationship to their body exemplifies this. The need to feed it, rest it, take it to the gym or partake in some kind of exercise does not impress them. It's not that they are slothful. For them, the gym is boring, and the 'high' afterwards is soon forgotten, so there is no motivation for going again. The best way to keep them interested in working out is if there's some kind of competition involved; competing with a friend, or even with goals they have set for themselves. Unlike the earth signs, they don't find pleasure in physical activity for its own sake.

Neither do Ariens pay much attention to food and are one of the worst signs for eating on the hoof, in snatched and hurried ways. Gourmet food is wasted on them; food is a necessity and a requirement, not a pleasure. They eventually do learn to respect the needs of their body, but this comes after much abuse and self-neglect. Fortunately, they have a strong constitution and their body puts up with a lot. One young client, who I counselled on this very problem, assured me he had no interest in taking care of his physical needs – his interest was to astral travel, to leave his body behind entirely. He was extreme, but this desire to be rid of the body and its needs lies just below the surface for many an Arien.

Aries generally have a strong vitality that affords them good health; this is just as well considering how impossible they are when ill. When under the weather their first impulse is to ignore their symptoms and soldier on regardless. This may not be as heroic as it first seems. It's because they can't bear to surrender to their physical needs and prefer to deny them. If their illness does reach a point where they become incapacitated they make the world's worst patients. Melodramatic and convinced they are at death's door; they can be demanding and ungrateful. Keep in mind that this is because they are terrified by the feelings of helplessness that go with being laid up. The mental difficulties associated with their loss of autonomy and independence tip them over the edge.

Part of Aries' problem when ill is that they stop functioning rationally. They are so full of fear that the state they are in will last forever, that they lose all perspective. They are desperate to get better immediately. An Aries with a serious condition is suffering doubly; first from the illness itself and secondly from their reaction to being confined.

Much of this can be attributed to the highly developed 'flight or fight' mechanism found in Aries. They are strongly attuned to primitive survival instincts, upon which human

life depended in ancient times. Even though this is usually no longer the case it doesn't stop it kicking in forcibly for Aries when they feel in danger. It remains a powerful unconscious drive. When psychologically under threat they can behave in a primitive way, and be overly aggressive and ruthless. Their desire to win at all costs is also linked to this basic survival strategy.

The problems Aries have with the physical realm also intrude on their capacity to handle practical matters. They are notoriously bad at managing their personal paperwork. Filling in forms can be something that fills them with fear and loathing, which they deal with by ignoring. Paying bills (apart from the direct debit facility, which must have been invented for the fire signs) is a haphazard affair. They either pay them immediately, or forget them entirely. Chores such as getting the car serviced and putting air in the tyres are all met with huge resistance.

One Arien has had two car engines seize up because she failed to put oil in the engine. Another who 'forgot' to put in the antifreeze found the radiator frozen and his car a write-off. They often rely on others to help them in these areas and are vulnerable and surprisingly helpless when it comes to most practicalities. Those who do manage the pragmatic and mundane aspects of life have either learned how to do this from experience and do so in a rather mechanical way or they have other features in their horoscope, like planets in earth signs, that give them this facility.

Ariens are notoriously impatient, frequently in a hurry and consequently irritable. They lack patience with themselves as well as with others and because of their high expectations, experience a fair degree of frustration. This, too, is a characteristic that improves with maturity. Until then, they are not likely to keep quiet about their discontent and will voice their annoyance, much to the consternation of more sensitive signs. Fortunately, outbursts of anger pass quickly and are soon forgotten. Temperamentally they

resemble blustery weather, when the climate changes are rapid and showers – even hailstones – pass quickly and give way to bright sunshine. They never nurse grievances or hold grudges; if they've been displeased others know about it immediately. They are open and explicit and expect that others can cope with what they have to say and may underestimate the upset and offence they unwittingly cause.

What Aries have in abundance is energy and they enjoy most competitive sports provided they are reasonably good at them (there has to be the possibility of winning). They can be team players too, although in football, for instance, they do better playing forward rather than in defence. They like to have a proactive role. They may participate in some of the more dangerous sports, like car racing, parachuting, skydiving and bungee jumping. The sense of freedom and the adrenaline rush is the motivation. Remember that they feel compelled to conquer their fears and prove that they are courageous.

Aries drive at breakneck speed, with little consideration for their passengers, let alone other road users. They are always in a hurry and bring all their competitive thrust to being behind the wheel. Circumstances permitting, they'll choose a sports car every time and those with small children may even have them cramped up in the small seats in the back. Giving up their two-seater for family life is a major milestone in the life of an Aries and some manage to maintain two vehicles rather than make the sacrifice.

When it comes to domestic chores, Aries individuals fall into two distinct categories: either they are super-quick and efficient or they are totally oblivious to what needs doing. Some may alternate between both. Whichever mode they operate in it is likely to be uncomfortable for those they share domestic space with. Typically, when cooking, they want others to stay out of the kitchen, so that they can get on unimpeded with the job in hand. They don't want anyone

under their feet or blocking the route from the cooker to the work surface, which they zip between in their inimitable speedy fashion. If help is offered, they sit their assistant down, somewhere out of their way, and expect them to get on with the job allocated to them. Aries is in charge; their helper is the skivvy. Cooperation and equality are not their strong points.

The other mode, of being unaware of what needs to be done, comes out of Aries' difficulty with practical matters. Because it's an arena they are less than proficient in, they can kid themselves that it's unimportant and beneath them: not a good attitude to have if they want to experience domestic harmony. Check them out before moving in.

The Arien desire to be in control applies in the home and at work. As an employee, they need to be given a fair amount of autonomy and responsibility to carry out their job. They do not do well with someone constantly looking over their shoulder and scrutinising what they are up to. A flexitime working arrangement suits them best. They can't abide being unduly restrained by externally imposed time constraints or petty rules; they have to see the sense of work regulations or their hackles rise and they become uncooperative at best and out and out defiant at worst. Neither do they accept fools gladly – that would be hypocritical – so it's essential that they have genuine respect for those above them and vice versa.

If given enough of a free rein, Aries is a diligent and enthusiastic employee. When working in a team, it's important that the areas of responsibility are clearly defined and that credit can be given where due. They are generous but object to doing more than their fair share if their efforts are not properly acknowledged. They gravitate toward positions of leadership and, because of their own enthusiasm, are good at motivating others.

As the boss, Aries comes into his or her own; they are good at initiating and are dynamic and inspirational. These

are naturally bossy individuals and when given the authority to call the shots they rise to the occasion. They make hard taskmasters, not least because this is the standard they set for themselves and they don't see why others should be exempt. Provided employees give one hundred per cent then the Aries employer is satisfied. While they may come across as rather demanding, fierce and uncompromising, they are never petty or mean-spirited. And they get results, big time.

Aries are champions against injustice and, as an employer, this includes in the workplace. They are honourable and principled individuals, who are fair and just, if a little intimidating at times. Perhaps the worst sin is to lie to an Aries boss, so never attempt a false sick day. They would far rather an employee asked them straight for a day off, than be given an excuse which would insult their intelligence. What's more, they are very likely to grant a direct request, as they admire honesty.

One of the biggest assets an Aries employer has is their intuition. Many of their business decisions are based on this, including their choice of whom they employ. They can't easily explain or justify why they act in a particular way - that's one of the difficulties of the intuitive process, it does not bear rational scrutiny. And it means the boss may have a way of knowing more about their employees than they'd wish.

Aries are best suited to careers where initiative, enthusiasm and autonomy are welcome, such as business, politics, the arts, sales and marketing. Aries are good in a crisis, so thrive in any of the emergency services, including medicine, where their speedy reactions compensate for their lack of patience. They have a heroic urge to help those in distress, so any kind of rescue work, especially if it involves an element of danger like at sea or in difficult terrain, can suit them.

Whatever their work or position in life, Aries brings a directness, clarity and simplicity. These are people who always make life seem less complicated. Their take on the world cuts through to the bare bones of a situation, they see through the gloss and the trimmings. They have an innate aptitude to deconstruct. This is their gift.

Negative Aries

Many of Aries' positive characteristics can become negative. They only have to express more extreme or distorted everyday traits for them to be deemed difficult and problematic. Most Aries will at times fall into this and become a very bad example of their sign; when under pressure or dreadfully upset for instance, they can be impatient and aggressive. Some Aries predominantly manifest the more negative pole of the spectrum of possibilities that are available to them. These are likely to be the more damaged individuals. Not that this is an excuse, but it can help when dealing with an objectionable individual to understand why they behave like this. So, this is a look at the negative expressions of those born under this sign, with speculations as to how they got that way.

Aries are optimistic by nature, so some may wonder how this can become negative. Well, if it's so out of touch with reality that the individual is living in cloud cuckoo land, it becomes negative. For some their capacity for initiative dwindles into a search for the next lucky break, which they expect to find just around the corner. They believe that the hard luck they are experiencing is not their fault and will change magically without them having to do anything. They refuse to take responsibility for their situation, blaming it on outside forces and equally they expect something or someone to change their life for them. They've never heard of the saying that 'We create our own good luck.' Such an individual may waste away their life by failing to recognise

and seize the opportunities that do present themselves. Rather than be proactive, which is typical of this sign, they become passive and wait for someone else to rescue them.

As an intuitive type, most Aries have keen hunches that they can rely on. However that is no substitute for hard work. Some may live too much in their head, or the future, but fail to pay attention to their body and the here and now. Neglecting their body to some extent is normal for an Aries but if this is sustained over long periods then various more serious problems arise. They are prone to skipping meals and eating hurriedly, so digestion problems like irritable bowel syndrome and the highs and lows of snacking on sugary foods are common, with worst-case scenarios developing into full-blown eating disorders like anorexia. Anorexia is a complex problem but the deeper underlying issues can be triggered by a chaotic eating pattern.

Aries may dislike their bodies and certainly are not comfortable with bodily functions, which they feel are messy. They are squeamish and some of their self-neglect is based on a denial that these are normal natural aspects of being human. They would rather they weren't. They may well feel encumbered by their physical needs with a tendency to ignore them.

None of this is helpful, to put it mildly, in Aries' relationships. Their difficulty with the physical realm can be problematic in sexual relationships. They are not naturally sensual (that is the domain of the earth signs) and do not automatically enjoy stroking and caressing for its own sake. Intimate contact with someone else's body may only be a means to an end, to sexual gratification. Bodies can literally disgust them. Such an individual is not an attractive proposition and those sexually involved with an Aries may well feel undermined, failing to realise that it's not their problem. Nevertheless these are the issues that have to be addressed for the duration of the relationship. Sex can be a form of athletics for Aries, where they can enjoy the

performance but not necessarily the process. This is a negative caricature and with an average Aries, while there may be glimpses of these extremes, it won't be their main mode of operation.

Hugh Hefner, of Bunny Girl notoriety, is an Aries with a lifestyle that illustrates some of these issues with the physical realm. While some men might envy him, others might think that he props up a rather fragile ego by surrounding himself with numerous scantily-clad women. Putting aside questions of exploitation, Hefner seems to think that the more women the better, which has to be a measure of his competitiveness rather than an ability to relate meaningfully.

Another Aries trait that can turn nasty is their lack of patience. They are extremely quick mentally, often getting the point and grasping a situation way ahead of anyone else and are exasperated by slower individuals. Their impatience can make them poor teachers as they pace themselves with the brightest students and leave the slower ones trailing. An Aries mum attempting to help her daughter with her maths homework traumatised the child with her ferocious criticisms – if the daughter failed to understand she was assumed stupid. In fact she was far from stupid, just not as quick as her mother expected her to be. Aries grasp things intuitively and their unpleasantness is partly a cover up because they can't explain their method in a logical way. And they find it hard not to display their annoyance.

Aries impatience can also be directed at physically slower individuals. They hate being kept waiting. So, on a family outing, they can become irritable if others are not ready when they are, failing to recognise that it's in their nature always to be ready first. They tend to walk briskly and anyone who moves at a more leisurely speed can irritate them. Even with young children and the elderly, who are bound to step out at a slower pace, there is zero tolerance