

Barry Cowger

Family & Birth Order Karma

By Ken Hopkins

ASA Scribe

Those that attended the August lecture were introduced or re-introduced to another tool that can aid in counseling an astrological client. Some of the characteristics that guest lecturer Barry Cowger attributed to birth order can go a long way in supplementing an astrological interpretation and in some cases (of twins) can actually lead the way in recognizing characteristics where astrology might not be supplying the answers.

Barry started his presentation with the statement that each sibling is born into a different family—meaning that the previous-born child contributed to the family dynamics that would cause the interactions of child to parents and sibling to sibling to be entirely different for the next one to come along.

The best example I can think of is using coins. If you have a couple of quarters representing the parents and a two dimes representing brothers you have a total of 70 cents. Add a sister or another brother by adding a nickel and the sum is different for the family as it vibrates at 75 cents instead of 70 cents.

The Oldest Child

Our speaker went on to add that the oldest children pay a higher price than younger siblings do when they rebel or mutiny. The first to challenge authority has to pay the dues as the example of what happens when that authority is challenged.

In a related sub-topic presented by author-lecturer Cowger, oldest children are often saddled with traits

as a result of his or her firstborn 'status.' This often results in unyielding, dominant, compulsive, aggressive, tense, 'successful' impatient, demanding, 'guilty', jealous, over-involved and committed behavior

Younger siblings might fall into the "Kewpie" or less-disciplined category. The lower status/power or abuse often equals unconscious manipulative and self-defeating behaviors that continue into adult life. One might expect Mars and Saturn to come into play here.

Another item for contemplation was that the early loss of a parent or a parent's presence often means attractions to oldest behavioral types for the 'wrong' reasons.

The Middle Child

Barry also presented us with the observation that the amount of parental investment or attention is lowest for middle children. One of the tendencies was that these children would be more politically liberal than their older and younger and older siblings. They also quite often have the lowest functional physical power in the family and may become severely introverted and very sensitive to "unfairness" and to being disadvantaged. The middle born find it emotionally helpful and often necessary to physically distance themselves from the family/mom in order to recover themselves.

The Only Child

In the case of the only child, often the same-sex parent furnishes an excellent clue to their complexes, and the quality of the parental relationship toward them reveals all. The only child experiences less peer pressure

and is less tolerant of" kid stuff.

These topics and subtopics are just the beginning of the story.

For more be sure and pick up a Barry Cowger book such as "Reconstructing the REAL You - Applying Astrology to Family Psychology" or contact Barry at bdcowger@earthlink.net.

Thanks, Barry!

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Birth Order and Family Karma Checklist

- Each sibling is born into a different family. How and why did it change?
- What kind of ‘family identity’ existed and whom did it most affect & in what way? Family Roles & Rules will either conflict with or support one’s inherent disposition

Parent and Sibling Mapping

B(BS) The oldest brother of a brother and sister

- (S)S(BB) The middle sister of an oldest sister and younger brothers
- B(B)/S/(SS)S Only child of an oldest brother father, and a youngest sister mother

Oldests: The Captain of the Sibship (4/10)

- What kind of expectations were placed on you?
- When did such role expectations begin or what events precipitated this identity?
- Was father or mother a youngest, and if so, how does that affect you today?
- Who was the “odd man out,” the “non-mirroring” sibling of the family?
- Was there a “Mutiny on the Bounty?” Who/why; what consequences did this have?
 - Oldest children pay a higher price than younger sibs when they rebel or mutiny.
 - In what way is a parent (still) disappointed with you? What was that about?
 - Do you still harbor hostility toward your younger sibs/parent and how does this condition your life-quality at present?
 - Does he or she feel any ‘survivor guilt’ at present?
- Oldest children are often saddled with traits as a result of his or her firstborn ‘status.’ This often results in unyielding, dominant, compulsive, aggressive, tense, ‘successful’ impatient, demanding, ‘guilty’, jealous, serious, over-involved and committed behavior *patterns*. (!)

The ‘Kewpie doll,’ less disciplined Adventurer/Radical Youngest (1-7; 9; 11; 4)

- The relationship with mom is highlighted. How did she behave? Was she just worn out? Whom did she favor?
- Lower status/power or abuse often equals unconscious manipulative and self-defeating behaviors which continue into adult life
- Did you feel, or were you, abused by your older brother(s)?
- Did the family resources go in the direction of older siblings or toward you?
- What kind of support and/or judgment did you receive from older siblings?
- Gender Identity For (BB)S or (B)S ~
 - Did you learn to ‘play it cute?’ How does this work for/against you? For (BB)B or (SS)S
 - How was your gender identity affected by parental wishes for a girl/boy?
- Early loss of a parent often means attractions to oldest behavioral types for the ‘wrong’ reasons.
- What were the *parents’* ongoing or unresolved issues or conflicts?

Middles: The Moderate and Compromising (4; 7; 11)

- Amount of parental investment is lowest for middle children
- What skills do you have that you feel are assets as a result of being a middle child?
- More politically liberal than their older and younger siblings*
More openness to experience than their older sibs; extroverted
- Do they still behave in ways that reflect earlier strategies to get noticed or to 'be somebody'?
Lowest *functional* physical power in family; may become severely introverted. Sensitive to 'unfairness' and to being disadvantaged
- Did an older sibling abdicate?
- 'Jump pairing' often equals coalitions/affiances with other siblings. Who was excluded?
Age-spacing helps to understand sibling coalitions/alliances
- High-Risk Middleborns in terms of acknowledgement, identity, 'place,' self-esteem
(S)S(S) (S)S(B) (B)B(BX...) (B)SS(B) (B)BB(S) (S)BBB(S)
- Low(er)-Risk Middleborns
(B)S(BX...) (S)B(SX...) (B)S(B)—either way
- The issue of 'place' in life, in marriage, work, as it was an issue in their family.
- Can easily mirror psychology/shadow of mother: hopes, emotions, fears, desires, etc., and of the family as a whole.
- Emotionally often *very* helpful, even necessary, for them to physically distance from the family/mom in order to recover themselves or to get themselves back

The Only Child (All of the above; Ur/Ne/Pl 7 and/or 10)

- Birth order of same-sex parent is an excellent clue as to their complexes
- The quality of the parental relationship itself, and toward them, tells all.
- Too much into the adult world, and/or too isolated from their own world (w/peers). Reality testing.
- Less peer/equal oriented; less tolerant of 'kid stuff'; the socially handicapped teacher's pet.
- Less jealous, less control oriented than oldest; higher expectations than other sibs.
- Androgynous.
- If spouse is also Only, they often have 'arrangements' as singeltons rather than marriages.

Other Issues

- Twinning
- Large family
- The replacement child
- Sibling de-identification as a powerful force of early character displacement and its consequences.