

## **Antichrist Superstar**

*Marilyn Manson and the Planetary Archetypes*

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Throughout his nearly twenty-five years in the music industry, the name Marilyn Manson has been steeped in controversy. His shocking and theatrical live performances and music videos, as well as the dark content and disturbing imagery of his concept albums led Senator Joseph Lieberman to label him and his band “perhaps the sickest group ever promoted by a mainstream record company.”<sup>1</sup> Manson’s outspoken criticisms of religious institutions and mainstream American moral values have fueled protests against his performances in cities across the country, leading to lawsuits and even to his incarceration. Following the tragedy of the Columbine High School massacre in 1999, it was reported that the two killers listened to his music and he became widely denounced by the media. In response, Manson declared that he had become America’s scapegoat, “the poster boy for everything that is bad in the world.”<sup>2</sup> Rather than opposing this role as the scapegoat, Manson embraces it. He refers to himself as the embodiment of chaos, willingly accepting the role of an antichrist figure. His demeanor in numerous interviews is calm and articulate, defending his personal integrity while accepting the negative views that others hold of him as a calculated consequence of his artistic expression. He describes his notion of success as measured “not only by the amount of people that love you, but the ones who hate you

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<sup>1</sup> Marilyn Manson and Neil Strauss, *The Long Hard Road out of Hell*, (New York: Regan Books, 1998), 262.

<sup>2</sup> Marilyn Manson, “Columbine: Whose Fault is it?” *Rolling Stone*, last modified June 24, 1999, <http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/news/columbine-whose-fault-is-it-19990624>.

too. Because if you do something that everybody loves it's not really worth too much . . . I like to provoke people so they think."<sup>3</sup>

Manson's strange personal presentation and unique sense of responsibility in the media and pop culture can be better understood through an exploration of the underlying archetypal principles playing out through his enigmatic career. There is no better place to begin this exploration than with the seminal work of C. G. Jung, as he provided a theoretical framework with which to approach the archetypes in the unconscious psyche. Jung was resolute in acknowledging the complex and elusive nature of archetypes, suggesting conceptual circumambulation as a more effective method than definitive delineation. His writings contain an assortment of diverse, and sometimes contradictory descriptions of archetypes, often showing preference to mythological and metaphorical language over more traditional scientific vernacular. He emphasized their autonomy and described them as symbolic images and structural principles of the psyche that regulate and impel behaviors and experiences.

In his later work, Jung conceptualized the archetypes as psychoid. He postulated that because "psyche and matter are contained in one and the same world. . . and ultimately rest on irrepresentable, transcendental factors, it is not only possible but fairly probable, even, that psyche and matter are two different aspects of one and the same thing."<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the structuring quality of the archetypes would extend beyond inner psychic experience and into events in the material world. Or as Tarnas writes, the archetypes are "expressions not only of a collective unconscious shared by all human beings, but also of a larger matrix of being and

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<sup>3</sup> "Marilyn Manson – David Letterman 1998 (Mechanical Animals)," YouTube video, 8:32, posted by "MansonFan1969," October 23, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kFvB-SIVpiI>.

<sup>4</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, *Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche, Collected Works vol.8, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed*, tans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 215.

meaning that informs and encompasses both the physical world and the human psyche.”<sup>5</sup> Jung explored this larger matrix (or rather its correlations, as the transcendent end of the archetypal spectrum cannot be fully known) through the observation of synchronicities, or uncanny coincidences that are “connected so meaningfully that their ‘chance’ concurrence would represent a degree of improbability that would have to be expressed by an astronomical figure.”<sup>6</sup> The concurrence between planetary positions at the time of birth and the expression of their related archetypal principles in an individual’s life can then be understood in Jungian terms as synchronistic, and analyzing the birth charts of prominent figures like Marilyn Manson may then provide insight into the archetypal dynamics at play in the culture at large.

Manson was born Brian Hugh Warner on January 5, 1969 at 8:05 pm in Canton, Ohio.<sup>7</sup> The discussion below is an analysis of his career and his paradoxical role in mainstream American culture, predominantly focusing on two hard aspects in his natal chart—the conjunction between Jupiter, Uranus, and Pluto (all within 15° of one another), and the square between the Sun and Saturn. While these two aspects—expressed as a complex of the archetypal principles associated with each planet—constitute the majority of the analysis, Manson also has a Venus-Neptune square that should be mentioned, as it frequently appears in interaction with the other complexes. Critical importance is given to the expression of Jupiter-Uranus-Pluto, as these archetypes are in a T-Square as of this writing, and may provide insight into the cultural dynamics in the later part of 2016 and early 2017.

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<sup>5</sup> Richard Tarnas, “Archetypal Principles,” *Archai: The Journal of Archetypal Cosmology* 1, no. 1 (2009): 26.

<sup>6</sup> Jung, *Structure and Dynamics*, 437.

<sup>7</sup> Manson’s birth data is from *Astro-Databank* ([www.astro.com/astro-databank](http://www.astro.com/astro-databank)), source: Birth Certificate (Rodden Rating AA).

According to Keiron Le Grice, hard aspects such as squares and conjunctions indicate “potent, mutually stimulating, and sometimes challenging or antagonistic relationships between the archetypal principles associated with these planets.”<sup>8</sup> For example, in the case of the Jupiter-Uranus-Pluto complex, Jupiter’s tendency toward excessiveness in interaction with the unconscious and compulsive themes of Pluto are readily observed in Manson’s indulgent drug use, which frequently fuel his creative endeavors employing dark, taboo, and occult imagery (Pluto) for the purpose of disrupting the conventional paradigm and encouraging independent thought (Uranus). This kind of revolutionary attitude underlies much of his music, theatrics, and public persona, and seems to reflect the countercultural atmosphere during the late 1960s when he was born. Indulgent drug use was rampant then as well, and many of the artistic works of the time express the urge for liberation, transformation, and the evolution of consciousness. The desire for such an evolution can be seen in “Sympathy for the Devil” by The Rolling Stones, which depicts the conflict between Jupiter’s altruism, Pluto’s destruction, and the awakening insight of Uranus. Lucifer confesses his involvement in a laundry list of human atrocities, advising that he be met with “well-learned politesse or I’ll lay your soul to waste.”<sup>9</sup> It is as if the Devil is asking humanity to become more conscious of his influence, to understand his nature, to recognize the sinner in every saint and the criminal in every cop. Humanity could then integrate his destructive manipulations and perhaps channel them more consciously. Manson shares the same proclivity to blend saint and sinner, the same desire to increase collective consciousness around the darker aspects of human nature.

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<sup>8</sup> Keiron Le Grice, “A Last Chance Power Drive: An Archetypal Analysis of Bruce Springsteen’s Song Lyrics,” *Archai: The Journal of Archetypal Cosmology* 1, no. 1 (2009): 113.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted lyrics from The Rolling Stones, “Sympathy for the Devil,” on *Beggars Banquet*, Decca Records, 1968, MP3.

The Moon landing and the release of *2001: A Space Odyssey* also occurred during this triple conjunction of Jupiter, Uranus, and Pluto, reflecting the desire for liberation through technology, and expansion into the deeper regions of outer space.<sup>10</sup> In Kubrick's film, each appearance of the black monolith provokes a sudden and drastic leap forward in evolution, the intensity of which culminates in the film's final sequence, appropriately entitled "Jupiter and Beyond the Infinite." Ripe with Plutonic imagery, the astronaut painfully descends through Jupiter's atmosphere with violent turbulence, initiating a strange and somewhat disturbing process of death and rebirth. The astronaut appears to be obliterated while traveling through the elemental vortex, yet suddenly reemerges. The Dionysian, dismembering aspect of Pluto acts in complex with the Uranian discontinuity of the astronaut's ego identity. This discontinuity is portrayed as sudden and drastic increases in age, giving the impression that the astronaut is witnessing other people. The ego-death process concludes with the emergence of a planet-embryo out of the astronaut's deathbed, completing the transformation with Jupiterian optimism (felt so strongly in the iconic soundtrack) regarding the potential for human evolution.

In a similar spirit to *2001: A Space Odyssey*, Manson employs extreme images of death and rebirth occurring on a cosmic scale, intending to destroy unconsciously held belief systems and to encourage individuals to be more intellectually rigorous in their engagement with collective norms. Manson not only expresses this urge to destructive evolution outwardly in his artwork, but he embodies it in the creative process as well. His Plutonic intensity and Dionysian disposition are clearly evident in Tom Barber's documentary *Marilyn Manson: Fear of a Satanic Planet* wherein Manson recounts the challenges of his writing process and his desire to effectuate the contents of his dream life. On the creation of *Antichrist Superstar*, he recalls:

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<sup>10</sup> *2001: A Space Odyssey*, DVD, directed by Stanley Kubrick (1968; USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corp, 1968).

We spent a lot of time, you know, almost torturing ourselves at some points trying to put it all together, because the album is a bit of a ritual, in some sense, to bring about the apocalypse, and whether that's of the subconscious or of the real world, that's up for everyone to decide on their own. But we spent six hard months of sleep deprivation, drug experimentation, and all sorts of pain rituals and things, trying to tap into the subconscious and find this record.<sup>11</sup>

The aim of inciting an apocalypse—enacted metaphorically by Manson during the writing and recording process as well as literally by the antichrist figure depicted in the resulting album—demonstrates the extreme disruption possible as one expression of the Uranus archetype.

*Antichrist Superstar* follows the narrative of a worm's evolutionary development into an antichrist figure. The setting is that of a Plutocracy where Social Darwinism is taken to the extreme. The worms are the downtrodden and dejected in a society ruled by the elite "beautiful people."<sup>12</sup> The personal weakness of the worms warrants their own subjugation. Pluto's association with the literal underground environment manifests in the population of worms, and the Plutonic themes of extremity, power, evolution (especially evolution into a destructive antichrist), and survival of the fittest are readily apparent. The sudden and destructive changes associated with the Uranus-Pluto complex occur when the worm seizes power and transforms (Pluto) into an angel in order to liberate (Uranus) his peers. Jupiter fuels the protagonist's desire to elevate his position and successfully improve the societal conditions. However, he comes to understand that the people are content being weak, at which point he transforms into the antichrist and spirals into nihilistic rage, declaring that he "can't believe in the things that don't believe in me." In wanting everyone to see his own "misanthropy," he brings about the

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<sup>11</sup> *Marilyn Manson: Fear of a Satanic Planet*, DVD, directed by Tom Barber (2005; United Kingdom: Chrome Dreams Media, 2005).

<sup>12</sup> Quoted lyrics from Marilyn Manson's, "The Beautiful People," on *Antichrist Superstar*, Nothing and Interscope Records, 1996, MP3.

apocalypse.<sup>13</sup> The term “apocalypse” derives from the Greek *apokalypsis*, meaning to uncover or to reveal. The theme of the record and the approach to its creation reflect Manson’s desire to uncover or liberate (Uranus) the unconscious underworld (Pluto) and elevate these themes into the cultural realm of conceptual art (Jupiter). *Antichrist Superstar* marked the beginning of Manson’s mainstream success, and would develop into a three-part conceptual series, finding completion in the subsequent releases of *Mechanical Animals* and *Holy Wood*. The interconnected themes unraveling throughout the trilogy can be directly related to the Jupiter-Uranus-Pluto complex.

*Mechanical Animals* follows two protagonists, Alpha and Omega. Omega has been captured and turned into a product to be sold by his corporate masters, drowning his discontent in drug use. Alpha appears to be experiencing emotion for the first time and is disillusioned by the shallowness of those around him. They are each trying to find their own individuality, seeking both liberation from humanity as well as reconnection to it. The revolutionary attitude of rock music that originally gave them their sense of individuality has become commercialized and meaningless, and so each continually stumbles through Pluto’s underworld, numbing their desires with excessive sexual escapades and drug indulgence. The record is ripe with dark sarcasm, even condemning its own nihilistic emptiness. The destructive revolution of Pluto-Uranus has grown to such an excess (Jupiter) as to become absurd, a dynamic perhaps most strongly felt in “Rock is Dead.”<sup>14</sup>

*Holy Wood* is the final album in the trilogy. It follows a kind of superman protagonist inspired by Nietzsche as he attempts a musical revolution in a city that celebrates sex, violence,

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<sup>13</sup> Quoted lyrics from Marilyn Manson’s, “1996,” on *Antichrist Superstar*, Nothing and Interscope Records, 1996, MP3.

<sup>14</sup> Marilyn Manson. *Mechanical Animals*. Nothing and Interscope Records, 1998, MP3.

and martyrdom. However, in an ironic twist of fate, his own revolution is pervaded by the ideals he sought to undermine. In true trickster fashion (discussed in more detail below), this album, released roughly four years after the first, revealed that the story had been playing in reverse, and the nihilistic apocalypse depicted in *Antichrist Superstar* is actually the climactic conclusion. Whether or not this was intentional by Manson from the outset of the trilogy's development is unknown. However, it is apparent from interviews that the trilogy parallels Manson's own life experiences. In an interview regarding the concept of *Holy Wood* he stated:

The album's deepest elements . . . are idealism and the desire to start a revolution. If you begin with *Holy Wood*, then *Mechanical Animals* really talks about how that revolution gets taken away from you and turned into a product, and then *Antichrist Superstar* is where you're given a choice to decide if you're going to be controlled by the power that you created or if you want to destroy yourself and then start over.<sup>15</sup>

Jupiter-Uranus is evident in the lofty ambitions of the revolution—the hope of successfully liberating humanity. Pluto can be seen in the Dionysian celebrations of sex and violence, and in the will to power that is directed into the revolution, followed by the urge toward death and rebirth once the protagonist is overpowered by his own creation and longs to destroy it and start over. While the protagonist initially sought to emancipate the marginalized collective, in the end he finds deliverance from his own restrictive identity. Each record in the trilogy independently embodies the themes of the three-planet complex, and taken as a whole, they display the evolution of its expression through the development of Manson's own life and career.

Manson released a brilliantly ambiguous autobiography that complements the musical trilogy and portrays his identification with its narrative, perhaps most evident in the following

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<sup>15</sup> A.r. Goldyn, "Guns, God, and Government: Interview with Marilyn Manson," *Alternet*, last modified June 18, 2001, [http://www.alternet.org/story/11052/guns%2C\\_god\\_and\\_government%3A\\_interview\\_with\\_marilyn\\_manson](http://www.alternet.org/story/11052/guns%2C_god_and_government%3A_interview_with_marilyn_manson).



excerpt: “I believe that my life is so important that it affects the lives of everyone else. I believe I am God. I believe everyone is their own God. I dreamt I was the Antichrist, and I believe it.”<sup>16</sup>

Manson’s identification with the antichrist can be understood in terms of Pluto’s dark intensity mutually stimulating Jupiter’s inflation, resulting in the feeling of immense potential for greatness. Correlating with the Jupiter-Pluto complex’s interaction with Uranus, Manson’s greatest potential lies in his ability to disrupt the status quo. The energy of Manson’s Jupiter-Uranus-Pluto complex—his overwhelming urge for destructive revolution—is largely channeled into his artistic endeavors.

As Venus represents art and creativity, the full complexity of his artistic contribution to the culture requires a brief exploration of his Venus-Neptune square, evident in the religious imagery and idealism (Neptune) expressed through his art (Venus). Manson’s lyrical use of religious terminology (Alpha and Omega, the apocalypse, angels and antichrists), his artistic identity merging with the divine, and his way of drawing artistic inspiration from his dream life all reflect the Venus-Neptune complex. Venus-Neptune is also present in the desire for healing and wholeness, seen primarily in *Mechanical Animals*, as well as in the longing for a more idealistic society, evident in each of the aforementioned concept albums.

The time spanning the release of these three albums marked the height of Manson’s popularity, and during this time, he played a complicated and important role as a trickster in popular culture. In *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, Jung discusses the trickster in relation to the figure of Mercurius, with his “fondness for sly jokes and malicious pranks, his powers as a shape-shifter, his dual nature, half animal, half divine, his exposure to all kinds of

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<sup>16</sup> Manson and Strauss, *The Long Hard Road*, 213.

tortures, and . . . his approximation to the figure of a savior.”<sup>17</sup> Here he conceptualizes the trickster as a relic of archaic, rudimentary consciousness: crude, primitive, and animalistic. As a remnant of primal consciousness that is now split off from modern humanity, Jung suggests that the trickster asserts its autonomy by thwarting the will of the ego. While this is not Jung’s only view of Mercurius or the trickster, the sense of animalism and primitivism (Pluto) attributed to the trickster (Uranus) in this excerpt reflects Jung’s own natal Uranus-Pluto square.<sup>18</sup> Jung continues by stating that the trickster is represented by “counter-tendencies in the unconscious, and in certain cases by a sort of second personality, of a puerile and inferior character.”<sup>19</sup> He also notes that as consciousness develops, the stupidity and brutality of the trickster seems to diminish, and so long as the conscious situation is satisfactory, the trickster remains in the shadow of unconsciousness. As Manson shares a similar Uranus-Pluto complex, this particularly transgressive illustration of the trickster closely resembles Manson’s own expression of the archetype—a shadow manifestation of the trickster, an antichrist who increases the consciousness of the collective by means of destruction and brutality.

This antichrist motif is deeply woven into an overarching pattern in Manson’s life, involving also in its expression various themes from his Venus-Neptune and Sun-Saturn complexes (explored in more detail below). This complex can be witnessed in the use of his paradoxical artistic persona, drawing on the taboo and the occult to “take everyone’s ideals, common morals, flip them around and make people look at them differently,”<sup>20</sup> to undermine

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<sup>17</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, Collected Works vol.9 pt. 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 255.

<sup>18</sup> Jung’s birth data is from *Astro-Databank* ([www.astro.com/astro-databank](http://www.astro.com/astro-databank)), source: Rectified from approximate time (Rodden Rating C).

<sup>19</sup> Jung, *Archetypes*, 262.

<sup>20</sup> “Marilyn Manson Debates Bill O’Reilly,” YouTube video, 7:16, posted by “Lord Rothchild,” November 11, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUdF2CbKIa8>.

dualities and the perception of opposites in a destructive manner, and to encourage individual liberation over unconscious participation in collective traditions. One manifestation of Manson's desire to undermine common morals is the extreme and disturbing imagery of his live performances and music videos, which quickly elevated him to an icon in the shock rock genre—a term in itself expressing the Uranus-Pluto complex. The shock value of Manson's artwork often derives from his grotesque representations of the body (Pluto), frequently depicting mutilations or torture. Pluto can also be felt in the raw, instinctual energy of rock music, and Uranus in its rebellious attitude. Shock also exemplifies Uranus in its association with electricity and with the sudden and surprising. However, Manson does not choose to be disturbing solely for the shock value. True to his Venus-Neptune complex, his artwork is entwined with religious themes, and his antichrist revolutionary agenda (Jupiter-Uranus-Pluto) pursues greater wholeness by revealing the shadow side of mainstream American culture.

During the *Guns, God, and Government* tour, each performance of “The Love Song” featured Manson dressed in full garb as the pope.<sup>21</sup> The shock of the image is in the stark visual contrast between his dark, gothic make-up and the white and gold religious adornments, with his pontificating stance buttressed by a microphone stand made of a large rifle. The image provides a strong reinforcement for the lyrical portrayal of a twisted romance between an anthropomorphized bullet and pistol. The bullet is told he is an “imitation Christ,” and is encouraged by a father figure “to be faithful” to the “love songs in his head that are killing us away.”<sup>22</sup> There is a brief admonition by a mother figure to turn away, though the father quickly overpowers her influence. Manson used similar imagery during his performances of “Antichrist

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<sup>21</sup> *Marilyn Manson: Guns, God and Government World Tour*, DVD, directed by Manny Rodriguez, John 5, and Marilyn Manson (2002; USA: Marilyn Manson Records Inc., 2002).

<sup>22</sup> Quoted lyrics from Marilyn Manson's, “The Love Song,” on *Holy Wood (In the Shadow of the Valley of Death)*, Nothing and Interscope Records, 2000, MP3.

Superstar,” standing on a blood-red pulpit featuring a crucifix made of a rifle and two handguns, the rest of the band clad in military and police attire. In the song he proclaims that he is the Hydra, a regenerative serpentine guardian of the underworld, and that the coming of the antichrist is immanent. Fittingly, this blending of God and government recalls Jung’s notion that the dislocated religious instinct can be channeled into the state, pouring its energy into a zealous devotion to government. Jung states that if an archetype is not consciously recognized, “then it appears from behind in its ‘wrathful’ form, as the ‘dark son of chaos,’ the evil-doer, as Antichrist instead of Savior.”<sup>23</sup>

In “The Love Song,” the repudiation of the mother and the conflation of phallic symbolism (gun and bullet) with religious imagery parallel Jung’s own criticisms of Christianity, namely that the Father-Son emphasis of the Trinity uplifts the masculine, which becomes “translated to a sphere from which the feminine element is excluded,”<sup>24</sup> and that this doctrine “corresponded with a patriarchal order of society.”<sup>25</sup> Manson draws from this one-sided patriarchy and amplifies it (Jupiter) into the shocking and disturbing (Uranus-Pluto) image of a father’s love affair with excessive gun violence. Manson therefore seeks reintegration of the feminine by making its absence painfully obvious. Expressed another way, this violent image of the father represents Manson’s Jupiter-Uranus-Pluto complex in dialogue with his Sun-Saturn complex, as the Sun illuminates and seeks reintegration of the repressed (Saturn) feminine by means of violent trickery. Saturn is also associated with criticism, and Manson’s relentless criticism of Christianity can be traced to his childhood. In his autobiography, Manson depicts the difficulties of being raised in a small town dominated by the ideology of what is commonly

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<sup>23</sup> Jung, *Psychology*, 117.

<sup>24</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, *Psychology and Religion, Collected Works vol. 11*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 132.

<sup>25</sup> Jung, *Psychology*, 151.

referred to as the “religious right.” He portrays his ego identity as hopelessly irreconcilable with his traditional Christian upbringing. Essentially, his personality (Sun) was oppressed by a rigid and authoritative (Saturn) religious environment.

The Sun, associated with the monomyth of the hero’s journey, relates to both an individual’s assertive outward contribution to the world as well as the inner individuation process of integrating opposites within the personality. The moniker of Marilyn Manson embodies these principles, utilizing his name (an expression of the Solar archetype) as an artistic platform for pushing Saturnian boundaries, shining the Sun’s light of consciousness to expose the shadow side of traditional wisdom and authority. In a short biographical documentary, Manson explains the inspiration behind his chosen name:

I found that Marilyn Monroe and Charles Manson. . . were the two most memorable people from the Sixties. I thought it was interesting that things like talk shows put them on the same kind of celebrity status, and I thought that dichotomy of positive and negative, putting those two names together, represented what I had to say and what I was about.<sup>26</sup>

The combination of seemingly irreconcilable opposites is a leitmotif in nearly all of Manson’s work. The album title *Mechanical Animals*, for example, refers to the opposition of the sophisticated, refined, technological humanity with its visceral, animalistic, and instinctive counterpart. The androgynous protagonist of the record can be seen as a symbol of the underlying unity between the two. Manson often uses this same tactic—similarity hidden behind difference—in defending his artistic image from the criticisms of opposing ideologies. In an interview with Bill O’Reilly, Manson explains that while the two of them are drastically different

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<sup>26</sup> “Marilyn Manson Biography: Life and Career of the Antichrist Superstar,” YouTube video, 6:58, posted by “WatchMojo.com,” May 1, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PCxUIsqmCA>.

in presentation, like everyone else they both construct their appearances in a manner that is conducive to how they want to be perceived and interpreted.

Saturn is also in part associated with the psychological shadow, which Jung defines as “that hidden, repressed, for the most part inferior or guilt-laden personality whose ultimate ramifications reach back into the realm of our animal ancestors and so comprise the whole historical aspect of the unconscious.”<sup>27</sup> This definition of the shadow is rife with Plutonic themes (i.e. animalism, inferiority), reflective of Jung’s own natal Saturn-Pluto square. It is, however, an appropriate definition for exploring the role of the shadow in Manson’s life, as his Sun-Saturn complex is so intricately interwoven with elements of the Jupiter-Uranus-Pluto complex. In this sense, Manson’s worm protagonist from *Antichrist Superstar* is a fitting metaphor for his own early years. As a worm lives primarily in the dark underworld, Manson thrived only in the Plutonic shadows cast by his early Christian surroundings. Further, Jupiter’s largeness of vision and the innovation of Uranus can represent the surprising and creative confluence of diverse influences and experiences, apparent in Manson’s ability to integrate his childhood Saturnian difficulties into an artistic platform. The result of this dynamic is a larger than life persona, continually absorbing destructive underworld experiences in order to play the role of a transgressive trickster in the larger culture.

Manson considers one element of Christianity’s shadow to be a tendency toward unconscious consumerism, driven by the fear of Hell. He felt this relationship was exemplified as he watched TV and witnessed “Pat Robertson preach about society’s evils and then ask people to call him with their credit card number.”<sup>28</sup> Manson describes how the adjacent channel to the Pat Robertson broadcast featured an advertisement for a sex hotline with a similar credit card

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<sup>27</sup> Jung, *Aion*, 266.

<sup>28</sup> Manson and Strauss, *The Long Hard Road*, 95.

request, inspiring him to parallel the two in the song “Cake and Sodomy.”<sup>29</sup> This irreverent juxtaposition of a taboo sex hotline with institutional religion certainly fits Jung’s crude and malicious conception of the trickster. In its attempt to awaken the collective to its own shadow, “Cake and Sodomy” again represents an interaction of Manson’s Jupiter-Uranus-Pluto and Sun-Saturn complexes. Manson’s opinion that the fear solicited by certain forms of Christianity drives consumerism became widespread following his appearance in Michael Moore’s documentary *Bowling for Columbine*.<sup>30</sup> Interestingly, Moore also has a Sun-Saturn square in his natal chart. This aspect can represent the archetypal figure of the judge, and during their brief but potent conversation together during the documentary, both Manson and Moore pass judgment on the political usurpation of the Columbine tragedy. Both illuminate the violence of American foreign policy, deriding the fact that the bombing of Kosovo—taking place the very same day as the Columbine massacre—often goes unacknowledged. Manson questions why the media and mainstream culture hold rock and roll or video game violence accountable for their effect on impressionable youth, but do not hold the American government accountable for its violent actions.

The interview with Moore occurred while Manson was on tour promoting the *Holy Wood* record, an album featuring scathing commentary on the entertainment industry, Christianity, and conservative culture. The concept of the record is built on the notion that violence is violence, whether it appears in rock and roll lyrics or in a Biblical story. It is a satirical statement on the darkness of certain forms of Christianity that reverses roles and views Jesus as a kind of cultural icon or rock star—the first martyr turned celebrity. Manson attempts to use this narrative to

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<sup>29</sup> Marilyn Manson. *Portrait of an American Family*, Nothing Records, 1994, MP3.

<sup>30</sup> *Bowling for Columbine*, DVD, directed by Michael Moore (2002; USA: United Artists and Alliance Atlantis Communications, 2002).

dissolve the boundaries between religion and entertainment. His Venus-Neptune square is prominent here, as Neptune is related to religious themes (including martyrdom) and the dissolution of boundaries, while Venus is related to artists, musicians, and artistic performances. The album cover features Manson being crucified with half of his jaw removed as a statement regarding censorship. In interviews, Manson often defends the imagery of his artwork by referencing the crucifixion and the criticism that it could be given for its violent and sexual content. The album's artwork and dark satirical content can be understood as an attempt by Manson to illuminate the shadow of Christianity (i.e. femininity, sexuality, violence, evil) by embodying it himself—a strategy appropriate to the Sun-Saturn complex, as the Sun relates to identity and embodiment and Saturn represents that which is denied or split off. Manson has essentially constructed an entire career out of willingly embodying the shadow projections of the dominant collective paradigm, acknowledging a prevalent aspect of this role in the following excerpt from the *LA Times*:

To the people who are afraid of things like me, [the answer] is to raise your kids to be more intelligent. . . . If you want the freedom to live in a world where you can see and read and hear what you want, then you also have to take the responsibility to teach your kids properly. . . . Every house that has a Marilyn Manson record probably also has a Bible and a history book and William Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet.' If anything is taken out of context, it can cause damage. That's why you need to raise your kids to be smart. If I'm just a wake-up call to get you to talk to your kids more, then so be it.<sup>31</sup>

This single statement is replete with themes from each of the planetary complexes under discussion: Sun-Saturn appears in the emphasis on personal responsibility, Venus-Neptune in paralleling the Bible with famous artistic works, and of course, Jupiter-Uranus-Pluto in the damage leading to a wake-up call for higher levels of consciousness.

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<sup>31</sup> Robert Hillburn, "After Shock: Now That He's Grabbed Your Attention, Marilyn Manson is Proving to be an Artist of Substance," *Los Angeles Times*, last modified September 27, 1998, <http://articles.latimes.com/1998/sep/27/entertainment/ca-26847>.



In summary, the synchronistic relationship between the planetary archetypes and human experience has long been demonstrated and continues to accrue a growing body of supportive literature, both at the micro level of individual psychological experience and at the macro level of the collective zeitgeist. Furthermore, the analysis of planetary archetypal complexes in strongly polemical cultural figures can provide important insights into the psychodynamics of the individual, as well as of the culture at large. On a mass scale, the paradox of Marilyn Manson can be understood as an important psychological disruption (Uranus-Pluto) to the excessiveness and corruption of American culture (Jupiter-Pluto). By embodying the shadow (expressive in different ways of both Saturn and Pluto) cast by certain forms of Christianity and consumerism, and personally illuminating (Sun) this shadow for his audience, Manson's career has played a significant role in balancing and reconciling the tense polarities of the collective.

Early in his career when he created his paradoxical moniker, Manson made the decision for each band member to create a stage name out of a popular celebrity and a famous serial killer (e.g. Olivia Newton Bundy, Madonna Wayne Gacy). Recalling Jung's suggestion that the trickster appears when the conscious situation is no longer satisfactory, we can recognize that the rise of Manson's career occurred while the problems of gun violence and mass school shootings were beginning to impress themselves into collective consciousness. It is unlikely that he anticipated becoming the central figure in a national debate, one that would relate exactly to the phenomenon he was attempting to personify—the American media's inadvertent glorification of mass murder. While Manson gained musical notoriety early in his career, it was not until the massacre at Columbine that he was elevated into a cultural icon and his social critiques were given national coverage. Manson outspokenly attacked *Time* for putting the faces of Eric and

Dylan (the Columbine murderers) on the cover of the magazine. In his song “The Nobodies,”<sup>32</sup> he explores this central criticism of the media. He argues that the media coverage gave the killers exactly what they wanted and created a sick standard, one that tells the disenfranchised that if you kill enough people you will find recognition and adoration.

Jung writes that “only out of disaster can the longing for a savior arise,”<sup>33</sup> and while Manson is no savior, his unyielding condemnation of the excessively patriarchal culture and its traditional values implore a keener awareness of the shadow and the feminine as it is traditionally understood. As of this writing in 2016, Jupiter, Uranus, and Pluto are coming again into hard aspect, a T-square, and there is an enormous feeling of tension in the division of American politics and culture. The revolutionary attitude of the late nineteen sixties can be seen again in large-scale social movements and protests, occurring in the streets as well as online. Perhaps most relevant to Manson’s particular expression of this planetary complex is the recent rise of another controversial and divisive cultural figure—Donald Trump, who became President-elect in November as the T-square came into alignment. Like Manson, Trump has brought the shadow problems of patriarchy to the forefront of cultural discourse, albeit by very different methods and with far less awareness. Exactly how this shadow problem will develop in the collective under the current complex only time will tell. However, on the problem of the shadow, Jung notes that, “in the history of the collective as in the history of the individual, everything depends on the development of consciousness.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Marilyn Manson. *Holy Wood (In the Shadow of the Valley of Death)*, Nothing and Interscope Records, 2000, MP3.

<sup>33</sup> Jung, *Archetypes*, 271.

<sup>34</sup> Jung, *Archetypes*, 272.

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