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DATEBOOK



Stella Starsky and Quinn Cox co-wrote "Sextrology," an explicit look at the sexual implications of the various astrological signs.

Are you sexy? Well, what's your sign?

One hesitates to shock more sensitive readers before they've had time to finish their morning coffee, so let's open with this anecdote: Stella Starsky, co-author of the very explicit new book "Sextrology," is the only person who's ever guessed my rising sign correctly on the first try. And she did this within five minutes of my sitting down with her and her co-author, Quinn Cox, at Cafe Claude.

In other words, not only is this the most sexually forthright astrology book you may ever read, but its authors also really know their stuff.

"Sextrology" offers descriptions of the sun signs' general physical characteristics, sure — but how had the observant Starsky done it? "It's the way you carry yourself," she shrugged, noting that I'd also mentioned that I dislike planning. Whoa! It was a little disconcerting, like being observed by a pair of psychiatrists.

A discussion of rising degrees and sun signs followed; Starsky is a Capricorn with a Sagittarius ascendant and is one of those slightly severe-looking, high-cheek-boned women who make glasses sexy.

"I am a Libra, so I would order a drink if I wanted one," added Cox, who was wearing an immaculately pressed blue striped dress shirt.

The authors met while studying in France — when, oddly enough, they also became friends with J.K. Rowling, then pre-Harry Potter fame — and now live together in New York. Starsky credits its similar "eccentric" upbringings for their bond, and Cox notes they both have Celtic blood; they're so in tune that they finish each other's sentences, interrupt to expound on each other's ideas and claim they don't care if their quotes are mistakenly attributed to each other. "Sextrology," their first book, is based on their astrologically revolutionary theory that there are, for all practical purposes, 24 signs of the zodiac, not 12: "It's not information that we had stored in an archive somewhere for 20 years," said Cox.

"It's nothing we'd been taught, really," interjected Starsky.

"It's something that we meditated on —" said Cox.

"Yeah," agreed Starsky.

"— over the last five years," he finished.

Starsky and Cox — who got their start writing the astrology column for Teen People — believe male and female natives of each sun sign will express the basic energy of each sign in profoundly different ways, depending on whether the sign itself has a masculine or feminine polarity. Their book also looks at differences between the way this energy is ex-

Leos and lesbians, Sagittariuses and str8s

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pressed by straight and gay sign natives.

From there on, things get even more specific: lists of "str8" and gay turn-ons for each sign — most of which are entirely unsuitable for a general newspaper audience — as well as detailed discussions of mythological archetypes, psychological makeup and romantic propensities. "Taurus woman," we learn, "practically meet[s] men] at the door with a clipboard" — the ringletted hussy! — while, in contrast to the male Capricorn's accepted image as a driven careerist, Starsky and Cox contend that he is actually a dandy and an epicure, besides being an eccentric who "simply cannot cope with competition." They also make the blunt assertion that "gay Gemini is 'between jobs' much of the time." Meanwhile, "[n]obody is more devoted than Leo woman" — in contrast to a lesbian Scorpio, who "lands herself in relationship after relationship, never alone for long, often overlapping her liaisons."

Still, said Cox, "There's a range of where your sexual proclivities might lie. It's not like every Virgo is, you know, on their knees."

"Though I'd say 90 percent," Starsky said.

The current political climate of censorship has them worried; sex, they say, is so fundamental to personality that it's crucial we talk about it — while we still can. "It's almost fueled us more," Cox said. "Because your sexuality is your freedom, it is your liberation, it's who you are."

Starsky, meanwhile, points to the conflation of sex, greed and violence on reality television as evidence of repression — a trend that's come to dominate in the five years since they first conceived "Sextrology." "We didn't know, upon writing the book, how the world was shifting, especially in this country," Cox said.

Still, every time the pendulum swings, it has to swing back again, and he thinks that swing may already have begun. "The fact is that the last time there was a sexual revolution, sex and astrology sort of went hand in hand in that subculture, which became pop culture," he said. "Here we are, and it's a strange cultural *deja vu*. We're in the midst of cultural wars again."

The possibility that we could be seeing the faint glimmerings of a redawning of the Age of Aquarius is a more optimistic view than has been recently popular, and I, for one, needed to see a dessert menu.

"In order to enjoy life, we

should not enjoy it too much," wrote Nabokov, and though I agree in general, even the I Ching counsels moderation in moderation. Anyway, I'm fairly sure he couldn't have meant this statement to apply to chocolate *creme brulee*.

On the subject of "Sextrology," Starsky suggested a similarly temperate outlook. "The book can be pure entertainment," she said. "It can be enlightenment; it can be empowerment. It can be, I think, an epiphany."

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