



Asteroid Hekate and the Waves of Feminism

by Kerri Stewart

It's April, 1868 and New York is outraged.

Was it murder...mystery...mayhem? No...it was eleven women lunching together at upmarket restaurant Delmonico's. Big deal, you say. It sure was! Why? Because these women dined unescorted by men. While gatherings like this are now commonplace 150 years ago this event was considered quite shocking even when they were mature women dining in a private room. The Delmonico's Power Lunch, as this seminal event is now known, is considered to be the launch of women into the public sphere in America.

A shift in the place of women in society as signified by this lunch would likely be heralded astrologically and sure enough the discovery of an asteroid named for a potent, ancient feminine energy was announced a couple of months later. Asteroid Hekate¹ was discovered at 11pm on Saturday, 11 July 1868 by J.C. Watson in Ann Arbor, Michigan, less than 1,000 kilometres from the site of the Power Lunch.

Asteroid 100 was named for both the Greek word for 100, *hekaton*, and the Greek goddess of magic, *Hekate*. Hekate was an ancient goddess, the daughter of Titans but honoured by Zeus for her powers as an intermediary between the gods and man. Known to the Ancient Greeks as a protector of liminal spaces such as doorways, gates and crossroads the Romans revered her as the Goddess Trivia, Latin for *tri via* meaning *of the three roads*. Petitioned for both household protection and financial boon Hekate was also feared as she was known to withdraw her favour when displeased. She answered to no husband, but Hermes was often considered to be Hekate's consort. Hekate is a chthonic goddess famed for assisting Demeter on her search in the Underworld for Persephone. Ghosts, the night and the Dark Moon phase of the moon cycle are sacred to her and her symbols include lamps, keys, daggers and black dogs.

Archetypally Hekate represents the Wise Woman, the aspect of the Feminine familiar to many as the Crone of the

Triple Goddess deity. The skills and knowledge garnered in the *maid* and *mother* phases, either personal or collective, culminate at the Crone phase. The Crone ruled all the life transitions in matriarchal-centred religions with death an accepted, even a welcomed, part of the life cycle. Patriarchal Christian religions however lack the concept of rebirth or reincarnation so have a more linear view of life, *you live and then you die*, making death something to be feared and somehow conquered. The Crone came to be feared for her association with death rituals. Patriarchies had no role for mature women so the Crone was banished from society. Her natural ageing processes condemned, derided as ugly or to be hidden by makeup, hair dye or age-inappropriate clothes that attempted to recapture the Maid.

The Crone's feminine wisdom and skills with magic, plant lore and the divinatory arts were ridiculed and abandoned for not being scientific enough. Her sharp tongue, known to call out the poor behaviour of men, was not appreciated. The Crone became the Witch. Modern Western society knows Hekate best as a witch. Wiccans honour her as their goddess and others know her as the only witch of the three who spoke in the famous cauldron scene from Shakespeare's play *Macbeth*.

However, with the appearance of Asteroid Hekate the Feminine started to reclaim her sovereignty. Ultimately the Feminine is an archetypal principle but her retrieval of power began with gender. It was around the time of her discovery that women began to demand equal rights with men. The first step towards equality, the fight for *suffrage* or the right to vote, gained support across the USA, the British Empire and Europe following Hekate's discovery ultimately blossoming into the political movement we know today as Feminism.

Hekate's discovery may have powered up Feminism but it was certain of her transits that were significant to its evolution. Feminism uses the wave metaphor to define its eras and themes and, interestingly, the surge and crest of these waves correlates with key Hekate transits...well most of them as we shall see.

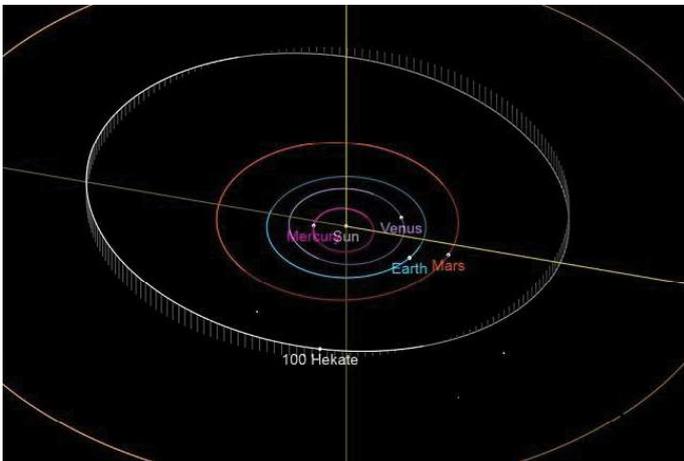
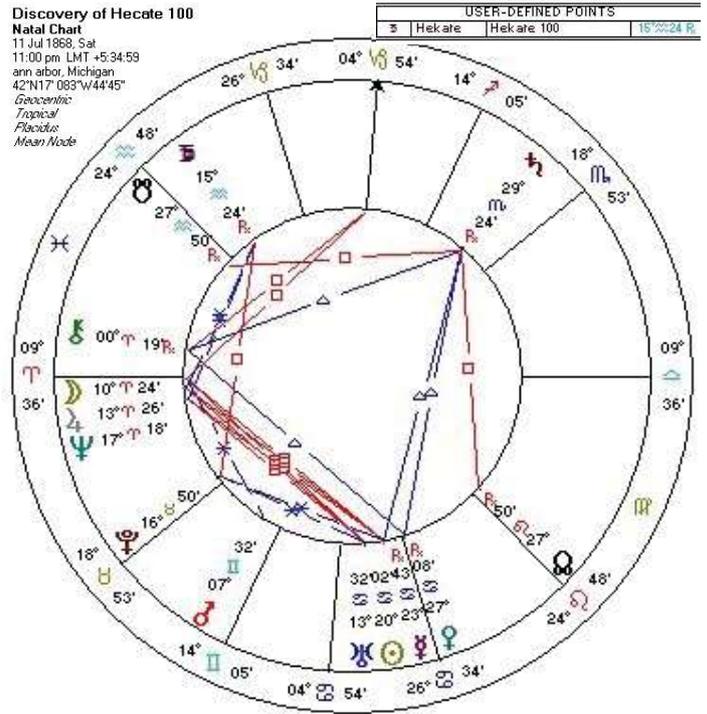
The Waves of Feminism

While there is much debate about exact dates of these waves it is generally agreed that the:

- first wave of feminism, focused on the fight for suffrage and legal rights, occurred between 1848 to the 1920s
- second wave of feminism, focused on the fight for equality and sexual and reproductive rights, occurred from 1960-1980
- third wave of feminism, focused on the micro-politics of gender, occurred in the early 1990s
- fourth wave of feminism, focused on social justice, commenced around 2012.

Astrological Hekate

Asteroid Hekate, at only 89 kilometres wide, is a small asteroid (Ceres, the largest asteroid, is 946km wide). Along with name symbolism the physical location should also be considered when reflecting on the qualities of a new planetary body. Found between Mars and Jupiter, Hekate is imbued with the essence of a spiritual warrior, courage and action are blended with wisdom and justice.



Key placements in the Hekate Discovery Chart (HDC) (above right) also echo the spiritual warrior location theme with the an angular HDC Moon rising in Aries accompanied by Jupiter, the planet of freedom, justice and wisdom, and Neptune, the planet of the higher consciousness. This Aries stellium squares the 4th house Cancer stellium featuring the Sun as well as Uranus, Mercury and Venus. The traditional roles of women, the mother and family are being challenged by the Feminine herself.

Hekate is in rebellious, revolutionary Aquarius and squares Pluto, the planet of power and wealth in conservative Taurus. Traditions of restriction and limitation are further highlighted by patriarchal Saturn in Scorpio square the Nodes. From an evolutionary perspective a planet square the nodes indicates a missed step that must now be addressed for continued evolution.

Hekate’s mythology provides us with insight into what these missed steps might involve for the Feminine. The ghosts of her restless dead that loitered at crossroads were known as Hekate’s Hordes, and they belonged to those who had died young, died violently or were not buried properly. The restless dead of the archetypal Feminine might include the

premature death of talents, skills and goals due to a lack of opportunity; the violent crushing of natural inclinations by the shame or guilt of societal expectation or unfulfilled dreams or hopes may never have been acknowledged and addressed. The time has now come to deal with these ghosts.

So which Hekate transits?

Hekate’s orbit around the Sun is 5.43 years. She generally spends between 2-4 months moving through a sign but her visits can be as brief as one month or as long as six months. Retrograde periods mean she may be in a sign for approximately 9-11 months.

After much consideration of her transits and how best to access Hekate’s influence it eventually became apparent that the year of a Hekate planetary return to her discovery degree of 15 Aquarius that coincided with Hekate then retrograding over her discovery degree were significant. These Hekate Return/Retrograde (Hekate R/R) years occur at periods of either 11, 38, 49, 60 or 109 years with 49 years being the most common across the last millennium.

The table below details the retrograde cycles from Hekate’s discovery.

Unsurprisingly, Hekate’s discovery in 1868 occurred in a Hekate R/R year. Along with the Delmonico’s lunch two significant women’s organisations were established around this time. In Britain the Manchester National Society for

Hekate Return/Rx year	Hekate Return Date	Rx conjunction with Hekate discovery degree	Direct conjunction with Hekate Discovery degree	Years since previous Hekate R/R	The Waves of Feminism
1868	26-May	12-Jul	16-Nov	49	Discovery of Hekate
1917	28-Apr	6-Sep	18-Oct	49	First Wave of Feminism culminates
1966	1-May	1-Sep	21-Oct	49	Second Wave of Feminism
2015	6-Jun	2-Jul	17-Nov	49	Fourth Wave of Feminism

Women's Suffrage held its first public meeting in 1868 and in the USA the National Woman Suffrage Association was founded in May 1869. By the 1880s women's organisations had been established in many countries so the International Council for Women (ICW) was founded in New York in 1888 with the aim of bringing them all together. The ICW's goal was to promote equality, peace and women's involvement in all spheres of life. Still in existence today it works closely with the United Nations on the rights of women, children, refugees and minorities as well as the environment.

Shortly after Hecate's discovery the women's legal rights started to be acknowledged. In Britain married women gained the right to own property and have their own money after *The Married Women's Property Act* was implemented in 1870. Two-thirds of US states had introduced similar legislation by 1887.

In the final years of the first Wave of Feminism the Suffragette movement, led by Emmeline Pankhurst who felt their traditional tactics of lobbying and petitioning were not getting sufficient results, began to pursue a more militant protest strategy. Britain was shocked as the Suffragettes started to hold noisy rallies and heckle politicians, hunger-strike when imprisoned and bomb various churches and public buildings.

The 1917 Hekate R/R, the first following her discovery, saw suffrage started to be granted. Canadian women received the right to vote in 1917, followed by British and German women in 1918 then American women in 1920. Other countries followed suit throughout the 20th century up until 2015, another Hekate R/R year, where women in Saudi Arabia, the final country that holds elections, got their first opportunity to vote. Prior to the 1917 R/R only five countries, including Australia and New Zealand, had granted women the right to vote.

The 1917 Hekate R/R also heralded the start of the second Wave of Feminism. While World War I had been underway since 1914, following Britain's introduction of conscription for married men in 1916 women were needed to fill the jobs left by men away fighting. Women workers in the UK increased from 24% of the working age population in 1914 to 46.7% in 1918, with married women comprising 40% of

those women workers². While it had been made clear that their participation in the workforce was for the duration of the war only many women had no wish to relinquish their exciting new jobs in offices, industry, transport, or in roles such as first responders once the war was over.

The war effort also offered women the chance of previously unheard-of social interactions between the sexes. Women's fashions less restrictive and more practical to meet the demands of these new work roles. Skirts became shorter, trousers for women became acceptable and shorter hair become popular. The war also saw many more women than usual become the head of their family following the husband's death or incapacitation.

World War II also required women to fill the jobs of men off fighting but this time governments actively encouraged women to stay on in the workforce to help meet the need for workers presented by the post-war boom. Whether a woman chose to work, or had to from necessity, what did not change over this period was the expectation that the focus of a woman's life would still be her family. Even if a woman worked full time she was still expected to manage the family's domestic life and duties.

The Second Wave of Feminism culminated with the 1966 Hekate R/R which was entwined with the Pluto-Uranus conjunctions of 1965/1966. This tumultuous decade saw the Sexual Revolution unfold along with the American Civil rights movement, the Vietnam War protests and the subsequent hippie counterculture.

Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, the societal assumption that women only found fulfilment through marriage, sexual passivity, housework and children, was published in 1963. The dissatisfaction so felt by many women with their lives was acknowledged just as the contraceptive pill started to become available. Sexuality's most significant advancement was initially only available to married women. It meant women were free to pursue study or careers without worrying about unplanned pregnancies, they could now choose when, and even *if*, they had children. Following the 1966 Hekate R/R the pill finally became available to single women³. Sex outside the strict boundaries of marriage now became more socially acceptable. Women were now free to marry later, if at all.

The 1966 Hekate R/R era also saw women take to the streets to protest about restrictions on abortion, beauty pageants and women's magazines that perpetuated the happy homemaker myths. Rallies to demand equal legal rights were organised by political organisations such as the Women's Liberation Movement.

Protest was again a feature of the 2015 Hekate R/R but this time on social media rather than in the streets. Hashtags such as *#oscarssowhite*, *#metoo* and *#timesup*, all originating in Hollywood but applicable globally, drew attention to the issues of workplace sexual harassment and abuse of women along with workplace discrimination.



Initially focused on the lack of racial diversity in Hollywood the scope of hashtag #oscarssowhite broadened from racial inequality to include gender inequality. Less roles for actresses, gender-related age discrimination and a gender-pay gap meant shorter, less lucrative careers even for A-list Hollywood actresses.

The #metoo hashtag, initially used in 2006 by American social activist Tarana Bourke to promote empowerment through empathy among women of colour who had been sexually abused, gained global popularity in October 2017 when used by American actress Alyssa Milano following a string of sexual abuse allegations by high-profile actresses against Hollywood heavy-weight Harvey Weinstein. Milano encouraged victims of sexual abuse to tweet using the #metoo hashtag to provide an idea of the magnitude of this issue⁴. The hashtag has been posted or tweeted millions of times⁵.

The #timesup movement, a collective founded in 2018 by 300 Hollywood women including actresses Reece Witherspoon and Natalie Portman, used donations from Hollywood A-listers, male and female, to establish a legal defence fund to help women on lower incomes to fight workplace sexual harassment and is working towards ending male-domination in workplaces⁶. Hollywood actors set up the #askmoreofhim movement in support of the #metoo movement and to engage men in ending gender-based violence. At this Hekate R/R violence against women was finally recognised as not just a problem for women.

Victoria conducted Australia's first *Royal Commission into Family Violence* in 2015. Its 227 recommendations included more focus on holding perpetrators accountable and more equitable legal access for the victim. Where once considered a matter between husband and wife Police were now expected to acknowledge family violence and intervene when it was reported. The Victorian government also funded a state-wide media campaign calling on men to address the bad behaviour of their peers.

As well as a useful tool for protest social media has provided women with a platform for the circulation of authentic, positive female images. Previously, images of women were predominantly seen in fashion or porn magazines, usually male-owned businesses. Photo-posting app Instagram has meant women of all ages, sizes, shapes and ethnicities could finally manage their own image and share it globally. Instagram currently has about one billion active users per month with 57% of them women⁷] and hundreds of thousands of these users are mature women



who use their accounts to show off photographs of their fashion style while proudly displaying their grey hair or age-appropriate wrinkles, batwings arms or saggy bellies.

These mature fashionistas garnered millions of followers which ultimately caught the eye of the fashion industry and advertising executives⁸. You may have noticed mature models starting to appear alongside younger models in fashion spreads or featuring more frequently in TV ads, often where their age is celebrated rather than ridiculed or hidden. Even young women wanted to embrace their own crones, well, that's how I like to think of the 2015 Instagram trend #grannyhair which saw young women dyeing their hair silver or grey. With grey hair fashionable many women no longer felt obligated to dye their naturally grey hair, and, in many cases they even documented their transition to grey on Instagram.

At the 2015 Hekate R/R the Feminine reclamation of power started to shift from gender to the archetypal. While the term toxic *masculinity*, the cultural norm that expect men to be aggressive, competitive, dominating and emotionally self-reliant, has been around since the 1980s it is following this Hekate R/R that the damage it is doing to men themselves, as well as to women, started to garner broader attention.

The growing imperative for men to reject the expectation they will adhere to these traits has been the subject of numerous books, all written by men, published since 2016⁹. While the idea of men rejecting these gender norms and embracing their inner feminine may be a confronting concept, especially for older generations as it leaves many, male *and* female, wondering about how a man should now *be* or *act*, many Gen-Zs (those born between 1996 and 2015) are readily embracing non-binary gender. That is, they do not feel compelled to identify strictly with being either male or female.

The term *non-binary gender*¹⁰ has also been around since the 1980s but following the 2015 Hekate R/R it has come into broader consciousness. The use of gender-neutral¹¹ pronouns such as *they/them* in place of the traditional gender-specific pronouns of *he/him* or *she/her* have gained in popularity. You may have noticed people including their preferred pronouns after their names in emails or in their event biographies. The Australian Bureau of Statistics Census offered a gender option beyond the binary male/female for the first time in 2016.



So what about the Third Wave of Feminism?

Feminism was predominantly seen as the domain of middle class, straight white women until the early 1990s when other factors including class, ethnicity, culture, religion, education, sexuality and age started to be considered when thinking of gender. The recognition that oppression has many layers is known as *intersectionality*, a term only coined in 1989.

Leaving aside the lack of a Hekate R/R around this time academics themselves are divided on whether the Third Wave of Feminism is actually a new wave or rather a broadening of Second Wave feminism. While relevant to many women and significant to feminist theory a key component of the Hekate Return/Retrograde-era waves, the activism by women seen in the other waves, is missing from this so-called wave. It just did not capture the public's imagination the way the Suffragettes, the bra-burning 60s feminists or the 2015 #metoo social media campaigners did rendering it to my mind an adjustment rather than a new wave.

Hekate Return/Retrogrades – looking forward

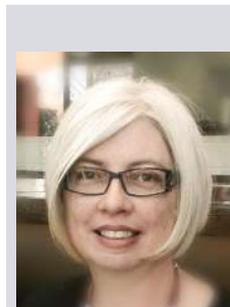
The next Hekate R/R occurs in 2075. Even now in mid-2020 the fall-out from the COVID-19 pandemic has already changed so much and that, along with gender norms likely to shift further it is almost impossible to imagine what the world will be like at the next Hekate R/R. That said, we already have a couple of clues to possible themes and both relate to powerful Feminine symbols, the Earth and the Moon.

As we have seen what is seeded at one Hekate R/R can culminate at the next. The 2015 Hekate R/R coincided with the development of the landmark *Paris Accord on Climate Change* to address climate change and limit its negative impacts by 2100¹² as well as the US government legalising space mining with the introduction of the *Commercial Space Launch Competitiveness Act of 2015*. While there are several models on how to exploit lunar resources few of them currently consider sustainability.

Kerri Stewart

Notes:

- ¹ Asteroid Hekate Discovery Chare (Solar Fire): 11pm, 11 July, 1868, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA. Moon 10 degrees Aries 24'
- ² Striking Women. *Women's work in WWI*. <https://www.striking-women.org/module/women-and-work/world-war-i-1914-1918>
- ³ Note: The Pill become available in the USA in 1961 and then Britain and Australia in the late 60s.
- ⁴ *Me Too*. Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Me_Too_movement
- ⁵ CNN. *An activist, a little girl and the heartbreaking origin of 'Me Too'* <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/10/17/us/me-too-tarana-burke-origin-trnd/index.html> and Pew Research. *How social media users have discussed sexual harassment since #MeToo went viral*. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/10/11/how-social-media-users-have-discussed-sexual-harassment-since-metoo-went-viral/>
- ⁶ People. *Reese Witherspoon, Taylor Swift, Jennifer Aniston: See Who's Given \$500k, More to Fight Harassment* <https://people.com/movies/reese-witherspoon-taylor-swift-jennifer-aniston-see-whos-given-500k-more-to-fight-harassment/>
- ⁷ Omnicore Agency. *Instagram by the Numbers: Stats, Demographics & Fun Facts*. 10 February, 2020. <https://www.omnicoreagency.com/instagram-statistics/>
- ⁸ 95 y.o style icon Iris Apfel (@iris.apfel) with 1.6mill followers, @stylecrone or @advancedlove to name a few
- ⁹ Robert Jensen's *The End of Patriarchy*, published in 2016 is an excellent read on this topic.
- ¹⁰ Originally called *gender queer*.
- ¹¹ Note: *Gender* refers to the way a person identifies their masculine or feminine characteristics as distinct from sex which are the biological characteristics.
- ¹² United Nations Climate Change. *What is the Paris Agreement?* <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/what-is-the-paris-agreement>



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