

Venus ♀

*'All charming people have something to conceal,
usually their total dependence on the appreciation of others.'*

Cyril Connolly

'When you feel bad about yourself you reverse your magnet and repel people.'

S. A. Grafio

Astronomy

Known since prehistoric times and visible to the naked eye (though not more than three hours after sunset or three hours before sunrise), Venus is the brightest object in the sky after the Sun and Moon. Reflecting about 80% of the sunlight hitting it (the Moon reflects a mere 7% of sunlight), Venus would appear much brighter than our Moon were it not for the fact that the Moon is about one hundred times closer to us. Our nearest planetary neighbour, Venus is often thought of as our sister planet, being similar in size, mass and density to the Earth. Its environment is extremely hostile, though, being very hot (hotter even than Mercury) and completely dry. Venus is covered with swirling dense cloud composed of sulphuric acid droplets which not only trap heat but produce acid rain which evaporates long before it reaches ground level. The cloud contributes to the planet's yellowish colour which has been the inspiration for poets for centuries. The majority of its surface is thought to be composed of volcanic material and live volcanoes may still be erupting there. Many of its surface features are named after female figures. Its orbit is the most nearly circular of any planet (round, like the female form) and its rotation rate is the slowest of all planets (reflecting perhaps the lazy quality that is sometimes attributed to Venus). In common with Uranus, but unlike every other planet, Venus rotates from east to west which means that its dawn is in the west, instead of the east. As an inferior planet (its orbit lies between the Sun and the Earth), Venus shows phases when viewed from the Earth through a telescope. As with the Moon, these phases vary from a large, bright crescent when it is nearest the Earth to a small, silvery disk when farthest away. As with the Moon, Venus is associated with the feeling realm and of course feelings, by their very nature, go through phases.

- Mean distance from the Sun: approximately 67 million miles/108 million kilometres.
- Diameter: approximately 7521 miles/12,104 kilometres and therefore only slightly smaller than the Earth.
- Sidereal period (approximate time for planet to orbit the Sun): 225 days. Due perhaps to its very slow rotation of 243 days, Venus has no magnetic field, reflecting the psychological quality of passivity with which it is associated.
- Retrograde motion: no more than 43 days in a year. Some years not at all.

Mythology

Venus to the Romans, Ishtar (literally 'brightest star') to the Babylonians, Freya in Nordic mythology and Aphrodite to the Greeks, mythology surrounding this planet is inevitably feminine. The Fates decreed that Aphrodite had but one divine duty, namely to make love and to encourage others to do so, and therefore she presided over the survival of the species. Once she was caught by Athene working at the loom (Athene's province), apologized profusely and never did any work again. Similarly, Venus in the horoscope can describe areas where we choose to be passive, if not downright lazy. There are various versions of Aphrodite's origins, the Homeric one being that she was the daughter of Zeus and the sea nymph Dione. Another more popular version from Hesiod describes her as having risen as a fully formed goddess from the sea on a scallop or oyster shell, out of the foam in which Kronos had tossed Uranus's genitals. In this version of the story, she was a goddess without parents. *Aphro* means foam but presumably in this instance semen is implied. From the name Aphrodite we get the word 'aphrodisiac' – a food, drink or other substance that arouses or intensifies sexual desire. Aphrodite is supposed to have appeared on a scallop shell, and many seafoods (notably oysters) are credited with having aphrodisiac properties.

Aphrodite's constant companions included doves, sparrows and the three Graces (or Charities) – these were the beautiful, smiling, some say dancing, daughters of Zeus and the Oceanid Eurynome: Aglaia (radiance and splendour), Euphrosyne (joy and merriment) and Thalia (abundant cheerfulness). The Graces were always charming, gentle, polite and graceful. They dressed Aphrodite, soothed her, bathed her, arranged her hair and massaged her with ambrosial oils. Wherever they went, they ensured peace and happiness and instilled in others the joy of living that comes from art, music, dance and love.

A most beautiful goddess, when Aphrodite arrived in Olympus all the gods wanted to marry her, making many of the other goddesses jealous of her. To try to stem possible trouble, Zeus married her off to Hephaestus (the Roman Vulcan), the club-footed craftsman and god of the forge. Thus, this was an arranged marriage between the ugliest god and the most beautiful goddess. Hephaestus was lame, ugly and usually described as bad-tempered but his skill as a craftsman was matchless. Robert Graves tells us: 'Every Bronze Age tool, weapon or utensil had magical properties, and the smith was something of a sorcerer.'³ Hephaestus's forge was housed inside a volcano, hinting perhaps not only of strength but smouldering passion. Hephaestus used his skills to make lavish jewels and adornments for Aphrodite, his greatest gift being a girdle made of fine gold, in which he wove magic filigree fibres. The magic girdle ensured that gods and men would fall hopelessly in love with its wearer. The already beautiful Aphrodite seldom loaned the girdle to others and hardly ever took it off.

It seems that Aphrodite didn't mind being married to Hephaestus; in some versions of the story, it is said that she liked being married to him because she thought she might enjoy greater freedom to pursue her affairs. Of course he did notice her philandering and he did mind, once setting a trap for her and Ares and causing all the gods to laugh at the pair of lovers when they were caught together naked in a net. One might conjecture that Aphrodite would seem more beautiful when cast against someone so obviously physically flawed as Hephaestus. Or one might say this marriage was a union between outer and inner beauty or between art (Aphrodite) and craft (Hephaestus). Of course she would have valued the adornments he gave her, just as many a woman has

stayed married for the economic advantages to be gained from so doing. The marriage might also be viewed as a marriage between opposites, as most partnerships are. Perhaps another reason why Aphrodite stayed with Hephaestus is because he thought she was wonderful. How difficult it is to turn our backs on those who truly love and admire us.

Aphrodite had countless affairs, both with gods and mortals. Her most famous liaison, and one which seemed to last, was with Ares (Mars). Hephaestus was peculiarly Martian too, working as he did in a forge. With Ares there is the quality of Mars in Aries; with Hephaestus, Mars in Scorpio. Aphrodite had three children with Ares (and children also with Adonis, Dionysos and others) but none from her union with Hephaestus.

Aphrodite was frequently the cause of jealousy. Sometimes she experienced it herself, and her rivalry with Athene and Hera set in motion the Trojan War. Since Aphrodite was in charge of continuing the species, it is not surprising that rivalry was so often part of her behavioural package, for it is frequently rivalrous feelings that hurtle people into liaisons, given that potential partners become much more attractive when everyone else fancies them, too. The competition speeds things along, for if people had time for their feelings to cool off, they might think twice about getting involved.

Enjoyment, Pleasure and Happiness

Our capacity to enjoy life and to be happy has surprisingly little to do with our life experiences but is largely decided by our intrinsic nature. The Venus principle says much about our capacity to appreciate beauty, to appreciate the world around us and those within it. Venus shows where and how we get pleasure out of life and, to a large extent, what we enjoy doing. It shows what gives us joy (Jupiter can also have a bearing here) and makes us happy. Aspects to Venus will show how easy we find it to accept what we have been given by others or the cards that life has dealt us. The strength and flavour of our Venus will show how easy or difficult we are to please (though the Moon, with its desire to accommodate others, and Jupiter as indicator of both faith and buoyancy are also relevant). Our Venus placement will also show what steps we take to make others happy. Words like please, pleasing and pleasure all have the same root and all come under the Venusian umbrella. When considering your Venus, ask yourself what gives you pleasure, what makes you excited and aroused, what makes it worth getting out of bed in the morning? Your Venus - its sign, house and aspects - may not be descriptive of all the answers to those questions, but will provide a good starting point.

The symbol for Venus looks like a hand mirror (and Aphrodite is often pictured carrying one) and the planet, alongside the Moon, seems to signify something of the mirroring process. For instance, when people fall in love, they do so at least partially because the other person is falling in love with them. People usually find each other mutually attractive or unattractive. It rarely happens that an individual likes a person who dislikes them; not for long, anyway. Similarly we feel pleased when we please another.

The Feminine Principle

Whereas the Moon describes that aspect of the feminine which might be termed 'maternal', Venus represents women in the role of maiden or femme fatale. In a heterosexual man's chart, it will often be projected outwards and very literally describe his female lovers. A man's Moon will also describe the women in his life and the two images, lunar and Venusian, may harmonize or clash with each other. A classic scenario occurs when a man marries one of his female images but, feeling deprived of the other, has an affair with a woman who embodies the missing characteristics. Gay men are more likely to fall for men who are described by their Sun or Mars than their Venus, and gay women may be drawn to women who embody their Moon, Venus or Mars. With everyone, the Fifth and Seventh houses, and their rulers, also give many clues to relationship choices.

The Principle of Giving

Venus describes a person's desire and capacity to give, whether they are giving their time, their affection, their money or giving way in a dispute. At such times, the needs of the other are given precedence and priority over the needs of the self. Our Venus says much about how easily we yield under pressure. The person who vibrates strongly to this planet tends to cave in easily. While giving usually arises out of a desire to show love (using the word 'love' in its widest sense), it is possible to be giving for more dubious motives; in Venus mode we may submit merely because it is easier to do so and because we want to avoid opposition. We may merely be too passive to fight. Or maybe our need to be popular is too great. We may even be prepared to buy our way into another's good graces. Of course, Venus is as much concerned with sharing as it is with giving. When studying your Venus, ask yourself how easy is it for you to share? What aspects of yourself or your possessions do you share with others and how? What is easy to share and what is more difficult? Venus is about accepting as well as giving, whether it be accepting another's love, help, time or gifts.

In ancient times, in Greece, and the Middle East, the word talent was used to describe a weight or a coin. Our talents and accomplishments, and money itself, all come under the umbrella of Venus, possibly because there is a relationship between how we 'spend' our time, our energy, our money and our affections. Our way of giving of ourselves, our way of loving the world we find ourselves in, is through our talents, whether these are artistic or otherwise. We may have a talent for gardening, so a stranger may walk past our garden and derive pleasure from our flowers, or maybe we are grinding coffee beans or frying bacon, and the smells we create potentially give pleasure to others, however fleetingly. As Bolen⁴ tell us, Aphrodite always did what pleased her, similarly, we don't usually grow flowers or grind coffee beans solely to please others, we do it because we want to. Nevertheless, grinding the coffee beans or growing the flowers in our garden are a way of giving to the universe; arguably, a way of giving pleasure and a kind of love back to the planet. Shopping comes into this category, too. When we purchase something, we are in effect saying that whatever we have bought is of value to us. If we buy a loaf of bread we are saying we want bread. Sharing and reciprocity comes in here as we give the money and in turn receive the loaf.

How We Give and Receive Affection

Still basically on the subject of giving, our Venus describes how we feel about being close to another person and how we achieve this. How easy is it for us to give and receive the love and affection of others? For example, the Venus-Jupiter person may pour affection over everyone while fearful Venus-Saturn, perhaps no less loving in the right circumstances, may be more cautious and self-protective. Venus-Neptune may express their love by rescuing you, Venus-Pluto by encouraging deep intimacy very quickly. Of course, such scenarios will inevitably come complete with a much larger psychological pattern as described by the whole complex surrounding the planet.

Venus, Love and Intimacy

There are many different types of love: erotic, fraternal, spiritual (agape) and maternal love. Relationships may be characterized by feelings of strong liking, affection, tenderness, devotion or, especially with the input of Mars, lusty passion and desire. Venus is signifier or at least co-signifier of all expressions of love, and especially so when it comes to the romantic variety. While romantic love may or may not have a sexual outcome, it always has a sexual aura. Venus represents the passive, attracting, sharing aspect of the sexual act unlike its partner, Mars, whose job is to chase and make conquests. Venus can be associated with flirting and foreplay, Mars with penetration.

More generally, Venus is the signifier of love and enjoyment in the widest possible sense. The planet describes our attitude to all social interactions. It describes whether we are a party animal and whether we are sociable, asocial or antisocial.

Venus is similar in size to the Earth and is also a planet that is quite near to us in terms of relative distance, although not as near as our Moon. Both planets are close to us in the way that our feelings are close to us. Little wonder that Venus is a planet to associate with intimacy and not just in the obvious relationship sense. The artist is also being intimate with us by sharing something of their inner self.

The Cosmic Peacemaker

The psychology to be associated with Venus can result in either war or peace. On the one hand, the astrological Venus describes the urge for harmony and peace and our ability (or not) to achieve this. In Venus mode we find points of agreement and similarity; as we have seen, here we are prepared to give in. Here we want to equalize and balance and are willing to yield. There is an urge to reciprocate and co-operate with others. The principle of co-operation is key to the planet and also to the success of all relationships. Moreover, greater potential for peace comes with equality as, arguably, so does happiness.

The Civilizing Effect

The more civilized an individual or a society is, the less likely they are to engage in war or other kinds of dispute. Manners and courtesy are distinctly Venusian attributes and are characteristic of civilized behaviour. The need to be liked and loved civilizes people by knocking off the raw edges in their behaviour. Coarse and discourteous behaviour is decidedly anti-Venusian. Polite, civil behaviour increases good feelings between

people, minimizes discord and maximizes the chances for agreements to be made. On the other hand, overly courteous behaviour leads easily to sycophancy and insincerity. Overly sweet, fawning behaviour and the tendency to flatter are also potential behavioural traits that can be laid at the door of this planet.

The Charm Offensive

In Mars mode we might say 'I want what I want', whereas in Venus mode, we say 'I want what you want'. However, the Venusian principle is not necessarily an unselfish one; it can be quite the reverse. We are more likely to get our own way by setting out to please (and certainly not to displease or offend) the other party. When charming, we are more likely to get our own way and Venus is very much the signifier of charm. To charm someone is to appeal to them personally, to cause them to be enamoured and entranced by you. In other words, in true Aphrodite style, if we are very charismatic, we catch and captivate, perhaps almost bewitch the other person. The word 'charm' actually means magic spell; the spell used to be given in the form of a chant or verse which was recited in order to make something happen. Perhaps like Aphrodite's girdle, it was used to make someone fall in love. Later a charm came to mean an amulet to ward off evil or bring good luck, and from that came the charm bracelet.

Jealousy, Rivalry and Self-Valuation

In the same way that we can't determine intelligence from a horoscope, we cannot easily measure depth of feelings from the horoscope either. However, what we can determine are motives and outcomes. In any event, the experience of passionate feelings for another represents the very antithesis of feeling safe and secure. When 'in love', feelings of jealousy and insecurity are so easily aroused, and feelings of safety and security fly out of the window. The degree to which we may or may not feel threatened when the object of our desire so much as talks to or even looks at another person is largely based on the extent to which we do or do not feel OK about ourselves. The equation roughly goes: insecurity plus desire equals jealousy. Our Venus (its sign and house placement and, more especially, any tight aspects it might be receiving) has a bearing on our self-valuation, especially in terms of whether we feel attractive, lovable and, possibly, sexy to others. If we feel reasonably attractive and lovable, then we will be less prone to feeling threatened by potential rivals. If we don't feel confident in such matters (perhaps Venus is receiving hard aspects from Saturn or the outer planets) then we will more easily feel threatened, provided also that we have strong feelings for the other person. Thus, Venus attributes are often causative factors behind conflict, in the same way that quite often wherever Aphrodite went, war often ensued. Conflict often occurs in response to jealousy, whether that jealousy is fuelled by love, money or some other valuable commodity. It can occur both on an individual basis and also provide the true motives that propel a country into war.

Money, Self-Worth and Violence

Along with the Second House and its ruler(s), our Venus says much about our values and therefore can also be associated with money. Are we tight with a buck or do we have holes in our pockets? How easy is it for us to earn and spend generally, and what

do we spend our money on and why? (But note that the Second House is frequently an even stronger indicator of our earning and spending potential.) What we find beautiful, or for some other reason value highly, we will be willing to pay for. When we are in love we value the other person and, to some extent, find them beautiful. Beauty is indeed in the eye of the beholder. When we are well-paid, we feel valued and we value ourselves more. When depressed, spending money often lifts the spirits, at least temporarily. How much people charge for their services provides a strong clue as to how much they think they are worth. Venus is a planet to associate with equality and inequality, and perceived inequality in terms of our looks, our income and our ability to attract love can, as we have seen, stir up feelings of jealousy and, in turn, conflict. Wearing her magic girdle as she did, rarely lending it to others and hardly ever taking it off, Aphrodite operated from an unequal vantage point.

Richard Wilkinson, a professor of social epidemiology, has shown, using many examples, that however rich a country may be, that country will be more violent, dysfunctional, sick and depressed if the wealth gap between the social classes grows too wide. For instance, according to Wilkinson, people living in Harlem have shorter lives than the people of Bangladesh who live in greater poverty but whose lack of wealth is equally shared among the overwhelming majority of the population.⁵

How We Attract Others

Our Venus describes those attributes that others find attractive or admirable about us, usually without any special effort on our part. Birds sing and other animals make noises to attract a mate (Venus is a co-significator of music); other species use other attributes such as size, colour or pheromones to attract. Our Venus shows our own particular human equivalent of birdsong or plumage. So when considering our Venus, we need to ask what have we got that others want, admire or desire? This can apply to the possessions we own, the people we attract, our looks or our character. Because of its mirroring effect, Venus also describes, to some extent, what we are attracted to. Our attributes can make us more valuable but, as we have seen, can also have the potential for arousing jealousy and envy in others.

Venus and Magnetism

In the same way that Venus shows how we attract others, the planet probably literally has rulership over magnetism in the physical sense. The link with Uranus may provide a clue. We know that Venus concerns itself with the principle of attraction, while Uranus is the planet of repulsion. Uranus was, for instance, revolted by his children. Possibly the two planets symbolize the positive and negative poles of a magnet.

Tastes and Values

Venus has much to do with our capacity for comparison and ability to evaluate and make choices. We are coming from a Venusian position whenever we consider whether we like this or we like that. In other words, who or what do we value most, what is our taste, who do we choose? Our Sun sign seems to be at least partially descriptive here but Venus is a major component, too. Our taste (as shown for instance by our choice of lovers and friends, the clothes we choose, the adornments we wear, the paintings we buy, the

music we listen to or play) gives out a message of exactly who we are. Knowing what we value and showing what we value is a way of defining ourselves. The people we knock around with help us to define who we are, too. The person we have on our arm (so to speak) can increase or decrease our value in the eyes of others. When we love someone, that person may not necessarily make us more valuable, but we certainly feel more valuable. Little wonder that the Sun – the body we most associate astrologically with identity – is close to Venus in the sky, for our identity is very much linked to our taste and our values. Self-valuation is intimately linked to the extent to which we are able to live according to our value system. As a rule, we feel bad about ourselves – our self-valuation plummets – when we act contrary to our values. We also don't feel good if we have to dress in something we'd rather not, perhaps to wear a relative's cast-offs if their style of dress is widely different from our own.

Venus by sign and aspect will say a lot about our likes and dislikes; to some extent it describes what we find beautiful. Aphrodite insisted on being valued and admired and inflicted horrid punishments upon those who neglected her. This perhaps gives a clue to the importance of surroundings and appearances. People who live in run-down areas or less than beautiful housing estates sometimes complain about the way that the estate gets vandalized, covered with graffiti, and so on. Arguably, this wouldn't happen if people were living in homes they found aesthetically pleasing.

Venus and Dress

Related to our aesthetic sensibilities is the way we choose to dress. Do we dress to please ourselves or to please others? Either way, our Venus placement and aspects significantly contribute to our dress sense and also may describe what we find pleasing in the way that others dress and present themselves. Venus with Jupiter may over-dress (flounces, bright colours, high fashion or opulence), while Venus-Saturn may choose to under-dress (toned-down colours, natural fibres, old clothes, traditional styles), while Venus with one of the outer planets may seem to follow the fashions and/or go for the avant-garde.

Vanity and Avarice

Aphrodite's mirror and her penchant for getting into contests to decide if she was 'the fairest of them all' all point to the fact that she took excessive pride in her appearance. Conceit and vanity are major Venesian traits and one is reminded that vanity comes from a Latin source meaning 'empty'. Venesian behaviour can also be overly-indulgent (of the self or others) and ingratiating. The individual with Venus run rampant may be given to flattery and is easily flattered themselves. Adolf Hitler had his Sun, Mercury and Venus in Taurus, and Libra on his Ascendant, making Venus one of the most powerful planets in his horoscope; and (speaking very simplistically) surely avarice was a strong motivating factor with him. According to Steven Erlanger in *The New York Times*,⁶ Hitler amassed huge wealth, lived on a grand scale and very much enjoyed the luxuries his wealth brought him. Apparently he earned about eight million reichsmarks from *Mein Kampf* alone: 'From the time he became chancellor until his death in 1945, Hitler received some 700 million reichsmarks in corporate payments.' It was money that would have been donated for the growth of Germany as a whole, but money to which he seemingly had unlimited access.

The Arts and Music

Many parts of the horoscope potentially have a creative or artistic side (e.g. the Fifth House, planets in Libra and Pisces, Neptune), but one of the contributions of Venus is that of harmony. Not all artistic, creative or musical forms are harmonious but, where they are, the Venus placement and aspects will be the reason. Music and the arts generally are major vehicles for the giving and receiving of pleasure. Additionally, songs are a frequent way of expressing love.

Physical Characteristics

The Venus principle leans towards the soft, round and sweet. Prominently placed or linked with the Moon, it may describe a sweet tooth, for instance. When linked with Mercury it suggests sweet words. The Venusian principle is accumulative and given to ease, indulgence, luxury and comfort. It dislikes anything rough or harsh and is generally passive in nature.

Metal

The Venusian metal is copper. The Latin word *cuprum* comes from the island of Cyprus where Aphrodite first appeared. The metal is reddish and lustrous and easy to mould and shape, being flexible and very malleable (as we have seen, all things Venusian 'give'). A good conductor of heat and electricity, copper is second only to silver in its ability to conduct electricity. The electrical industry is one of the greatest users of copper – a fact that makes the link between the severed genitals of Uranus tossed into the sea, and the birth of Aphrodite out of that sea, all the more interesting. Another link with Venus and Uranus can be found in the fact that a major homœopathic remedy for epilepsy (surely a major Uranian disorder) is *cuprum*. Copper and money go together as many coins are copper alloys. Apparently, many gunmetals also contain copper and it is widely used as a component in agricultural poisons and water purification. It is also used in chemistry tests for sugar. A policeman's truncheon used to be called a 'copper stick' – at best, the job of the police is to keep the peace.

The Body

Venus is associated with venous blood and female genitalia. Venus will be one of the signifiers in venereal (sexually transmitted) diseases. Its main contribution to ill health lies in its penchant for over-indulgence (e.g. of food or sex) and inclination to sloth and laziness.

Venus Through The Signs

Venus can never be more than 48 degrees from the Sun in the horoscope, which means that it will always fall in the same sign as the Sun or in any one of the two signs before, or two signs after, it. As with Mercury, it can be difficult to spot the sign of a person's Venus, unless the planet is strongly placed or prominent for some other reason. Not surprisingly, people with Mercury and/or Venus falling in the same sign as their Sun usually resonate more strongly to their Sun sign than those whose Mercury and Venus are in different signs. The following notes must therefore be used very cautiously. As always, aspects to Venus will be much more important than its sign placement. The oft-used word 'relationship' in the following pages can often be used to mean all kinds of relationships – not just romantic ones.

Venus in Aries - ♀♈

The myth of a knight on a white charger rescuing a damsel in distress is a likely motif in relationships but there is no way of knowing whether the Venus in Aries person is the knight or the damsel (gender doesn't come into it here). A certain amount of excitement – danger, even – can feature in the love life and competition is often a theme; many with Venus here will get themselves pursued or fought over. Falling in love feet-first is a common manifestation and, as with Venus-Mars contacts, there can be a tendency to love in haste and repent at leisure. Venus and Mars are in detriment when found in each other's signs, as is the case here, and yet the feminine (Venus)/masculine (Aries) mixture seems to lend a certain sparkle to many with this placement. Many are gifted at the charm offensive and this is often a very popular and alluring Venus (Hollywood stars George Clooney, Marilyn Monroe, Doris Day, Audrey Hepburn and many others have it). Those with it can attract by virtue of being very direct and seeming almost innocent. Straight men may be attracted to the full-on type of woman, someone who may prove to be more than they can handle.

This can be a selfish and uncompromising placement, and some with Venus here give off signals that seem to say 'If you love me, you will give me what I want' or 'If you love me you will let me be myself'. Commonly, the Venus in Aries person is showered with gifts and surprises from their partner who is usually trying to prove that, to them, their beloved comes first.

Making rapid emotional and financial decisions is the norm as Venus in Aries individuals usually make strong, instant decisions as to whether they like something or someone. This person spends (emotionally and financially) on impulse.

Some will make strong statements in matters of taste, perhaps by wearing bold colours or dramatic styles. Typically, Venus in Aries types tend to cut their hair or hem-lines. It's a good placement for a hairdresser, if other chart factors concur.

Venus in Taurus - ♀♉

Venus is strong and at home here in its own sign, suggesting a marked capacity for enjoying life's many pleasures. Indeed, a love of the good life, certainly the comfortable life (good food, fine wines, art and music), often applies. Equally, many others gain pleasure from the simple things in life: nature, gardening and the countryside. There is