

## 1<sup>st</sup> Peer post

Palmistry has been studied for decades, almost centuries. It started all the way in India and spread its roots from there. This study is a fun trick to pull out of your back pocket at a party if you're familiar with the lines of a human hand, but it lacks any scientific basis whatsoever. There are a plethora of ways for a human to obtain knowledge, not all of those being scientific as we've come to find out. The method of tenacity is one of those methods, which is where information is completely accepted as true because it has always been believed because superstitions and folklore support it. Palmistry can fall into this category, for eons, it was believed you could tell when a person was going to die by the divots on their hand. Which there are zero legitimate backings to, except the fact that it's a world-renowned superstition. The availability heuristic, which is where someone can make a snap judgment about the likelihood of an event based on how easy an example comes to mind, can play into this as well. Movies and shows have had a field day showing the general public examples of palm readers. They are typically shown as older women, sought in wrinkles that speak out on the wisdom they supposedly have, they then go on to tell a protagonist's future without even breaking a sweat. This can be an easily accessible example many people think of when imagining a palm reader, and it would more than likely add to the belief that Palmistry fanatics are real.

Furthering fanatic's beliefs is their own confirmation biases. One can simply say, "I've had a palm reading done, and it was all so accurate!" or simply just saying that they, themselves understand palm reading and can do it themselves. But the reality of all of these superstitious claims is that there is absolutely no scientific backing to any of them. There is no way someone can simply look at the lines on the skin of another's hand (which changes over time) and be able to tell them when they will wed, flourish, and inevitably die. Thus making palmistry, much like many other phenomena, a pseudoscience.

"Pseudoscience is characterized not only by not being science but also, importantly, by deviating substantially from the quality criteria of science..... An obvious starting point for this discussion is the prefix "pseudo" of "pseudoscience." Etymologically, it means "false." Many writers on pseudoscience have emphasized that pseudoscience is non-science posing as science." (Sven Ove Hansson, 2013)

In conclusion, Palmistry, albeit fun, has zero claims to legitimacy; rather, it's just a hoard of people who proclaim it to be real and true because they've been sold a blatantly false lie that could apply to anyone who believes it pertains to them.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> peer post

Palmistry, also known as chiromancy or chirosophy, is a practice of predicting the future or character by reading someone's palm lines or the shape of their hands. There were two ways to read someone's palm by examining the hand, or by taking a physical palm print. Palmistry is believed to have started in ancient India and derived from the fortune tellers and gypsies. Palmistry was extremely popular in the historical times. Some palm readers believe that by measuring a person's palm and finger-length will also tell about a person's qualities of their character or their nature. Palmistry was extremely discouraged by the early churches; it was considered to be a form of devil worshiping.

Many famous books have been written on palmistry, including some of the most famous by Edward Heron-Allen whom published books as early as the 1880's. His first book was called "A Manual of

Chirosophy: or, The Science of Palmistry". In 1886, he even published in the New York *The Daily Graphic*, and he did a palm reading on his friend Oscar Wilde's. In the book he posted a palm photo of Wilde's hand and the analysis reading of his palm. This intrigued readers during that era and increased the popularity of palmistry.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century palmistry became popular again and some psychologists began to implement palmistry into their practice such as Carl Jung. Although there is no scientific evidence that the human hand has any psychic or predictive meaning, doctors can evaluate a person's hand to look for health conditions, or cue to nervous habits such as nail-biting. Medical researchers and even crime investigators have found the importance of our skin patterns. In today's time palmistry is more widely accepted and you can usually find a palm reader located in every country in the world.

Navarre, J. (2011). Oscar Wilde, Edward Heron-Allen, and the palmistry craze of the 1880s. *English Literature in Transition 1880-1920*, 54(2), 174.

SDSU Library. Talk to the Hand! Palmistry in SCUA | SDSU Library. (n.d.).  
<https://library.sdsu.edu/scua/new-notable/talk-hand-palmistry-scu>.