

Palmistry class reveals mystical art

By NICK GALLO
Of the Emerald

It was a Saturday Market afternoon. A young, slender man with a beard and no moustache, and a small earring in his left ear sat behind his booth. Suddenly, a man appeared and began shouting at him:

"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast

and the false prophet are and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life . . ."

Some people read eyes, others gestures. Daniel Sadoff reads palms — an abomination to some, an avenue to truth for others.

"I'm not a fortune teller," explains Sadoff, "which is what I was trying to tell that Jesus Freak who accused me of being an agent of

Satan. I'm really more of a counselor than a fortune teller."

Sadoff, 23, is teaching a SEARCH course in Personal Palmistry this term. The son of two scientists, he says he grew up with a healthy dose of skepticism, but has chosen to pursue the oldest of sciences such as astrology, tarot and palmistry.

It isn't easy to be neutral about palm reading. People think it is either a scurrilous fraud or an act of divination. Sadoff prefers to take what he calls a humanistic approach to cheirognomy and cheiromancy, two branches of palmistry which read a person's character in the shape and lines of the hand.

"I believe there is such a thing as free will," Sadoff says, "which will blow away any prediction." It's like a droplet of water climbing a tree trunk, he adds. While it may be possible to predict which path it might take, it is less useful to forecast which leaf will release the droplet.

To the normal eye the palm appears to be a senseless bundle of lines, a pictorial riddle of highways out of a Kerouac novel, zigzagging every which way. And it is a map of sorts to palmists. External markings are manifestations of internal happenings.

Much like doctors "read" symptoms such as jaundiced nails, livid hands or prominent veins, palmists read character, and at times can't resist a word about the past or the future.

Sadoff talks of body electricity. The fingers are like antennae which attract and pass energy. A stronger current digs a deeper channel, an unconnected line blocks energy, wavy lines represent a wavering current.

Skeptics of palmistry call the lines of the palm nothing but creases or folds produced by the action of the muscles. The lifeline, probably the most well-known feature of the palm, is caused by the thumb's activity.

Sadoff does not argue that point, but adds that the way peo-

ple use their hand reflects the way they are.

But what of the lifeline, the bottom line which hooks downward toward the wrist? It is surrounded by myth, says Sadoff. "The length of a person's lifeline bears no relation to the length of a person's life even though its length and con-

tinuity may indicate a person's vitality."

The top line of three main lines crisscrossing the palm is the heartline. Irregularities such as a buckle in the line can mean a crisis at that point. Pain is trapped in the offshoots of the heartline says Sadoff.

The middle line is the headline. Occasionally the heartline and headline will coincide, a mark of great sensitivity according to Sadoff.

But there are all kinds of factors in interpreting these markings. It sounds confusing, but Sadoff

rather I'm like the cataloger who puts the components together to reveal what is going on now, not in the future."

Some of the factors include width, length, texture and color of lines and sections of the palm. For instance, if clients wish to have their futures translated in terms of sex or money, two things Americans seem preoccupied with, Sadoff says he would talk of trends rather than issue specific predictions.

These trends are often reflected in the fingers and the mounts, or bumps which are at the base of the fingers. They are associated with planets, as in astrology.

The forefinger is called Jupiter and Sadoff refers to this as an assertiveness index. The middle finger, Saturn, refers to discipline, the ring finger correlates to the sun and creativity. The last finger is linked to Mercury, communication.

The mounts also have a system which correlates to specific characteristics, as do the finger-nails. Sadoff claims he can trace troubles in a person's past to a specific time by spotting "notches" in the nail.

The thumb is not forgotten in palmistry. Analogous to the nose, it gives the hand its individuality. The section of the thumb closest to the palm reflects logic. The upper phalanx represents pure force and strong will.

Sadoff pulls out his hand and presents his palm. He smiles sheepishly. His thumb is proportionately bigger than any other thumb he's ever seen. Sadoff refers to himself as headstrong.

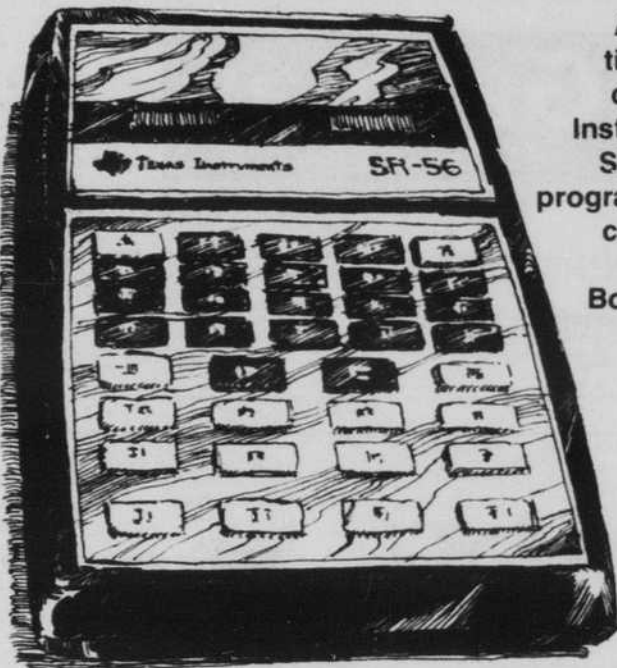
A good measure of palmistry is based on telepathy, according to Sadoff. "The body is really the entire map, the palm is only a section of it," he says, pausing for a moment. "And the palm is probably the easiest section to read."

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Photo by Steve Sandstrom

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