

Actionable Foreknowledge: Fate Management Among Modern Astrologers

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Master's Degrees by Examination and Dissertation

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Abstract

This masters dissertation explores whether modern astrologers are still as concerned with fate as their Graeco-Roman era forebears. With those who engage with fate as part of their astrological practice, it seeks to ascertain the focus of fate management efforts, explore differences by school of practice, and assess the attitudes of those who are not concerned with fate or who actively reject it. Research methods include a literature review, with social media mining, a questionnaire, and interviews to gain primary information.

Previous literature focuses on fate beliefs and assumes all astrologers believe in and engage with fate. For those astrologers for whom this is at least partially the case, this research also explores the purpose and intent of fate management efforts and astrology's role in these efforts. The research focuses on astrologers, students, and enthusiasts on social media, at astrology conferences, and in professional astrology spaces.

Generally speaking, findings indicate that not everyone calling themselves an astrologer or leveraging astrology in social spaces is still concerned with fate; furthermore, among some who are, it is only to actively reject fate as superstition. Four sub-groups of astrology users were identified in social media mining: Pop Astro Opportunists, Identity Seekers, Community Seekers, and Professionals, with the latter group splitting into Transformation-Focused and Fate-Focused Professionals.

Among Fate-Focused Professionals, modern Hellenistic astrologers have more mutable views of fate than their forebears, and the majority of these modern astrologers believe fate can be influenced to at least some extent. Astrologers engaging with fate use multiple methods to do so. The focus and purpose of their efforts varies by school, but most are using astrology to identify likely impactful or (un)desirable areas to engage with.

Finally, three recurring themes connecting astrology and fate arose in the research: spirituality, personal growth, and coping with difficult events.

Introduction

This dissertation investigates whether modern astrologers are concerned with using astrology to identify future outcomes indicated by an individual's natal chart—i.e. ascertaining one's fate by the position of the stars and certain calculated points at the date, place, and time of the individual's birth—or if astrology serves a different purpose in the modern age than it did at its Hellenistic roots. The research question is: Are astrologers still concerned with fate in the 2020s? If yes, what is the focus of their concern and the purpose of any efforts to engage with fate via astrology? Given the proliferation of different schools of practice, does this differ by school? For those astrologers not accepting fate, how does this impact their practice?

Based on previous research I conducted for the Researching Contemporary Cosmologies module at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David in March–May 2023, I hypothesised that astrologers are still concerned with fate despite shifts in the practice and changing attitudes about both fate and astrology stemming in part from widespread social media adoption of the practice. I also hypothesised that there would be differences by school, due in part to observed comments and discourse between astrologers on social media.

While there is existing research on the fate beliefs of modern astrologers, most notably the PhD dissertation of Bernadette Brady,¹ there is a gap in the research on what actions modern astrologers then take based on these beliefs and their intent. There also seems to be an assumption that fate remains the main concern of modern astrologers; Brady writes that she found a perceived link between celestial determinism and human life to be a recurring theme,² and that the 'common thread' for practicing astrologers regardless of personal views on astrology itself is 'that they all live with fate, a fate they view as imparted into their lives through their relationship with the heavens.'³ However, based on my experience as a chronically online astrologer, the rise of social media since

¹ Bernadette Brady, *Theories of fate among present day astrologers*, Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Wales Trinity Saint David (2012) <<https://moodle.uwtsd.ac.uk/mod/folder/view.php?id=28815>> [Accessed 20 February 2023].

² Bernadette Brady, 'The Horoscope as Imago Mundi', in *Astrologies: Plurality and Diversity*, ed. by Nicholas Campion and Liz Greene (Ceredigion, Wales: Sophia Centre Press, 2011), p. 49.

³ Bernadette Brady, *The Shape of Fate: From Classical Philosophy to Astrological Practice* (Ceredigion, Wales: Sophia Centre Press, 2025), p.85.

the 2010s has caused the proliferation of astrological (and pseudo-astrological) information, often outside of historical contexts or formal spheres of practice. This increases engagement with concepts but at shallow, even nonsensical levels which may reduce or remove fate as a concern for at least some astrology users in the 2020s. Therefore, the goal of this dissertation is to contribute to scholarship on both fate and astrology with a deeper understanding of whether the concept of fate still intersects with the practice of astrology in the 2020s and if so, what the concern with fate is and how modern astrologers work with it, with a comparison to the Hellenistic/Graeco-Roman-era roots of astrology for context.

Background: Astrology and Fate

This research focuses on the astrological practices and philosophies originating in the Mediterranean, southwest Asia, and northern Africa, with Tamsyn Barton noting evidence of natal astrology in these areas dating back to the Babylonians in the late fifth century BCE.⁴ According to Dorian Greenbaum, techniques and beliefs from Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt later blended to become what is now called Hellenistic astrology, with the earliest extant horoscope examples dated to the first century BCE.⁵ Greenbaum and Micah T. Ross write that “Hellenistic” astrology combined elements from Egypt and Babylon (and perhaps other cultures such as Persia) into a system which grew and flourished in the Mediterranean world of the Greco-Roman eras’ using Greek as its ‘vector language’.⁶ Logically, this blending would likely have involved not only different technical aspects and religious beliefs, but also philosophies, including the concept of fate.

Connecting Hellenistic astrology with fate begins with the Mesopotamians. Erica Reiner notes the use of mathematical astronomy in Mesopotamia beginning in the fifth century BCE in part with the aim of guiding ‘magic machinations’.⁷ According to Otto

⁴ Tamsyn Barton, *Ancient Astrology* (New York: Routledge, 1994) p. 14.

⁵ Dorian Gieseler Greenbaum, ‘The Hellenistic Horoscope’ in *Hellenistic Astronomy: The Science in Its Contexts*, ed by Alan C. Bowen and Francesca Rochberg, pp 443-471 (p. 452) (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2020).

⁶ Dorian Gieseler Greenbaum and Micah T. Ross. ‘The Role of Egypt in the Development of the Horoscope’ in *Egypt in Transition: Social and Religious Development of Egypt in the First Millennium BCE*, ed. by L. Bareš, F. Coppens, and K. Smolarikova, pp. 146-82 (p. 153) (Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, 2010).

⁷ Erica Reiner, ‘Astral Magic in Babylonia’, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 85, No. 4 (1995), pp. i-150 (pp. 2-3).

Neugebauer, early astrology as ‘celestial omnia’—omens derived from connecting observations of the sky with events in human lives on earth—was more concerned with ‘luck or misfortune in store for Mesopotamian society’ and was probably not used to ascertain luck or misfortune for individuals prior to the fifth century BCE.⁸ However, with the development of natal astrology, questions about the future could be answered for individual lives, not just the ruler or society. This has further ramifications: with a belief that an individual’s future and the outcomes in it can be known, could the future and its outcomes then be changed by and for individuals?

Many ancient astrologers believed fate to be unchangeable. For example, first-century CE astrologer Manilius says that all things are fixed by the immutable laws of fate.⁹ Vettius Valens writes in the second century CE about finding acceptance toward outcomes, given ‘the immutable working out of events’.¹⁰ The fated outcomes ancient astrologers examined were not only related to themes or events in an individual’s life, but the life’s ultimate direction, up to and including the timing and circumstances of its end, given techniques shared by Valens¹¹ and other astrologers from the Hellenistic period and their inheritors in the medieval Islamic period.

In Babylonian astrology, Tamsyn Barton notes the similarities between astrological delineations for individuals and the format of omen texts (i.e. if x, then y) in discussing one’s family and fortunes.¹² This foreknowledge would have been sought with an aim to take action, as fate is often written about with foreboding. For example, Stefan Maul says that based on writings about omens in Babylonian society, ‘the future was ultimately considered as a threat, something that had to be reified in time in order to deal with it,’¹³ but that ‘The danger predicted in an astral event could be averted by the appropriate rituals.’¹⁴ This idea that dangerous outcomes could be mitigated or averted is echoed by bishop and philosopher Nemeseus of Emesa, who writes in the late fourth

⁸ O. Neugebauer, *A History of Ancient Mathematical Astronomy II* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1975), p. 613.

⁹ Manilius, *Astronomica*, trans. by G. P. Goold, Loeb Classical Library 469 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997 reprint), IV.14-15, p. 223.

¹⁰ Vettius Valens, *The Anthology*, trans. by Mark T. Riley, (Denver: Amor Fati Publications, 2022), V.6, p. 205.

¹¹ Valens, *The Anthology*, III, pp. 119-146.

¹² Barton, *Ancient Astrology*, p. 16.

¹³ Stefan M. Maul, ‘Divination Culture and the Handling of the Future’ in *The Babylonian World*, ed. by G. Leick, pp. 361-72 (p. 363) (New York/London: Routledge, 2007) <<https://d-nb.info/1230412107/34>> [accessed 28 February 2025].

¹⁴ Maul, ‘Divination Culture and the Handling of the Future’, p. 365.

century CE that ‘the Egyptians say that fate is truly [predicted] by the stars, but that it can be averted by prayers and expiatory sacrifices,’¹⁵ which Suzanne Bobzien refers to as ‘Egyptian fatalism’ in citing Nemesius.¹⁶ These contrasts between Stoically accepting fate and using foreknowledge to avert it may be reflected in divergences between modern day practitioners’ schools of practice.

Reflexivity

I am a practicing astrologer with a background in Hellenistic, medieval Islamic, and some modern techniques. In addition to having connections to the astrological community via a blog, a membership space, and social media accounts, I am a member of the International Society for Astrological Research (ISAR) and a repeat attendee of the Northwest Astrological Conference (NORWAC). I also engage in fate management practices with the belief that fate is, to some extent, mutable, if not completely changeable. This research therefore has an emic approach, which may help with gaining candid answers due to speaking with a fellow insider, as well as with understanding and interpreting those answers.

Literature Review

This study focuses on natal astrology. The research scope is astrologers and enthusiasts engaging with astrology in “social” spaces, largely on social media but also at conferences and in professional groups, with a comparison to practitioners of Hellenistic-era astrology. Fate in the context of astrology is defined following Brady, that some component of the moment of birth has a bearing on the future and can be explored via one’s horoscope.¹⁷

¹⁵ Nemesius, *On the Nature of Man*, trans. by R. W. Sharples and P.J. Van Der Eijk (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press 2008), p. 186.

¹⁶ Suzanne Bobzien, *Determinism and Freedom in Stoic Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 49.

¹⁷ Brady, *The Shape of Fate*, p. 88.

Fate and Astrology in the Hellenistic Era

Valens' and Manilius' views on fate have already been introduced. Astrologer Julius Firmicus Maternus agrees with fate's immutability, writing in the fourth century CE that 'he who is harmful has sinned through the causation of Fate; and he who is condemned though innocent has suffered the severe sentence of punishment compelled by fatal necessity.'¹⁸ Astrologer Claudius Ptolemy, writing in the second century CE, says that 'the change of earthly things is subject to a natural and mutable fate, and in drawing its first causes from above it is governed by chance and natural sequence'¹⁹ but that 'the lesser cause always yields to the greater and stronger' with other events occurring in accordance with individual temperament.²⁰ He further says that 'certain things, because their effective causes are numerous and powerful, are inevitable, but others for the opposite reason may be averted.'²¹ There are two key ideas here. First, that fate exists, but that it is mutable up to a certain extent. Smaller causes, or those with a great deal stacked against them, must come to pass according to the possibilities afforded by greater events. Within these constraints, individuals may be able to act—but perhaps only as far as Nature or their natures allow. The second is that Ptolemy speaks of a combination of chance and determinism (i.e. a 'natural sequence' of events) as driving outcomes. Considered this way, taking action based on astrological foreknowledge might be both acting on and creating the effective cause of a future outcome, with chance possibly in play in the expression of the final outcome. Questions 7 and 8 in the research questionnaire were partially informed by this position.

Extending Ptolemy's idea that greater causes outweigh lesser ones raises the question of whether a nation or ruler may limit the expression of an individual person's fate. In such cases, especially in times of upheaval and intense change, people may seek not just reassurance but also power in foreknowledge. Tamsyn Barton writes that, 'It is hardly an accident that the rise of astrology coincides with the fall of the [Roman] Republic' and that 'Crucially, horoscopic astrology is associated with the struggle for

¹⁸ Julius Firmicus Maternus, *Mathesis*, trans. by James Herschel Holden (Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 2011), I.7.13, p.25.

¹⁹ Claudius Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos*, trans. by F.E. Robbins, Loeb Classical Library 435 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1940), I.3, p. 23.

²⁰ Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos*, I.3, p. 25.

²¹ Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos*, I.3, p. 27.

individual power.’²² If this was true in ancient times, it may remain true in the modern day, with astrologers and their clients continuing to turn to the stars to assess what can be done about their fates in tumultuous times, using astrology as a map to guide their focus and efforts.

Astrology in the Modern Era

Practitioners believe astrology offers the power of foreknowledge, raising a question of whether astrologers seek to increase their personal power via fate management actions or if they have goals other than greater control.

In her research, Brady finds a ‘theme of individual participation with a sympathetic cosmos’, where modern astrologers may be seeking some level of control, but with an aim toward greater engagement with life rather than surrender to higher powers.²³ This suggests that for modern astrologers, the value of foreknowledge lies in empowering co-creation of the future self or world, rather than an attempt to control outcomes. It also contrasts to some extent with Valens’ stated aim—to use astrological foreknowledge to weaken the evils of fate by effectively surrendering to, and living in greater equanimity with, the decrees of higher powers,²⁴ rather than being in active participation with these decrees. This prompted a question in the interviews to tease out possible motivators for action. Additionally, considering whether political, social, or economic events of the six months prior to the survey influenced the frequency of any actions taken (Question 15 in the questionnaire) offers some further insight on the idea of co-creation versus control and whether greater events serve as impetus for personal action.

Briefly surveying the work of modern Hellenistic astrologers reveals an effort to translate ancient concepts of fate in more flexible terms for modern audiences. For example, Demetra George says that the planets don’t force action, but often describe results, leaving a ‘gap where some kind of free will exists’.²⁵ Chris Brennan writes that Hellenistic astrology ‘includes information not just about a person’s character or psyche,

²² Tamsyn Barton, *Power and Knowledge: Astrology Physiognomics, and Medicine under the Roman Empire*, (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002) p. 38.

²³ Brady, *Theories of fate among present day astrologers*, p. 290.

²⁴ Valens, *The Anthology*, V.2 p. 196.

²⁵ Demetra George, *Ancient Astrology in Theory and Practice, A Manual of Traditional Techniques, Volume One: Assessing Planetary Condition* (Auckland: Rubedo Press, 2019), p. 38.

but also about the concrete external circumstances and events that take place during the course of their life', calling this 'a system for studying fate' that 'actually works.'²⁶ Patrick Watson says, 'Believing in determinism doesn't mean you sit on the couch forever and you don't do anything with your life forever.'²⁷ Samuel Reynolds writes, 'I decided that fate—all that seems to happen beyond your control—has two arms. One of those arms is your own, though.'²⁸ For the most part, notable modern Hellenistic astrologers offer some ambiguity as to the extent of fate's mutability which may open the door for modern learners to develop less fatalistic or deterministic beliefs about astrology than their Graeco-Roman forebears. Some may take this further and reject any connection between fate and astrology.

With regard to connections to fate, Nicholas Campion writes that astrology 'could be more or less deterministic, but it invariably required active human participation' in negotiating fate, with human agents who 'assume a lack of control over their lives but then set out to create choice, negotiate with nature, and enter into a dialogue with time.'²⁹ These factors of both assumed lack of control and human participation form the basis of exploration in this study, as does the belief that there is at least some flexibility in the outcomes spelled out in a natal chart. Brady's research further supports the view that astrology is a negotiation with fate, finding that the views of practising astrologers include

all versions of incompatibilism and compatibilism, with the significant caveat that astrologers, by and large, do not accept the assumption that fate equals determinism. For astrologers, fate is negotiable and personal, whereas determinism is fixed and universal.³⁰

However, all of this assumes that fate continues to be the central reason to engage with astrology. Assessing interviews, papers, and social media posts by practitioners and

²⁶ Chris Brennan, *Hellenistic Astrology: The Study of Fate and Fortune* (Denver: Amor Fati Publications, 2017), p.xxiv.

²⁷ Patrick Watson on the *Big Sky Astrology Podcast*, 'TRANSCRIPT Ep. 309 | Podathon Day 4: Hellenistic Astrology, with Patrick Watson!' <<https://www.bigskyastrology.com/transcript-ep-309/>> [accessed 26 December 2025].

²⁸ Samuel Reynolds, *Unlock Astrology* (2018) <<https://www.unlockastrology.com/>> [accessed 26 December 2025].

²⁹ Nicholas Campion, *Astrology and Cosmology in the World's Religions* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), p. 16.

³⁰ Brady, *The Shape of Fate*, p. 74.

enthusiasts in the 2000s, 2010s, and 2020s sheds light on the extent to which this may or may not be the case.

Practicing Astrology in the Early 2000s

In interviewing astrologers and researchers in the years leading up to 2000, Garry Phillipson noted eight ways that people got into astrology: they had curiosity about occult knowledge, felt challenged by the predictive possibilities, had a talent for it exposed by dabbling, sought tools for self-knowledge, had a desire for power, were skeptics seeking to disprove it, stumbled across it and got hooked, or were introduced by a known person (family or friend).³¹ Stumbling across something is easier than ever in the age of social media; a person simply opens an app and shows interest in something the algorithm can connect with astrology. Therefore, someone may not be thinking about fate or seeking to learn about their fate when they are first exposed to the practice.

Frances Clynes discusses the developing potential for practising astrology online in the mid-2010s, finding that online communities were forming as spaces for astrologers to connect with others, to be emotionally supported, and to share information e.g. events or uniting against skeptics.³² Since the widespread adoption of smartphones and social media platforms like Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and Facebook in the 2010s, and now with TikTok, Threads, Bluesky, and other platforms in the 2020s, astrology is more accessible than ever to a broader audience for both learning and consumption, which may have influenced its use. This broadening of the audience may come with a general ignorance, a dilution in understanding, or an outright rejection of the foundational Hellenistic frameworks of astrology as it is commonly practiced in the West, as well as associations with fate.

This concern was also noted by astrologers Clynes interviewed, namely that astrology ‘may become more superficial to suit the medium of the Internet.’³³ Social media mining of astrology communities, identified by keywords, topics, and hashtags, enables a broader assessment of attitudes toward fate and astrology in the 2020s and demonstrates that astrology is no longer practiced solely by professionals, or consumed

³¹ Garry Phillipson, *Astrology in the Year Zero* (London: Flare Publications, 2000), pp. 11-27.

³² Frances Clynes, *An Examination of the Impact of the Internet on Modern Western Astrology*, Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Wales Trinity Saint David (2015), p. 315
<https://moodle.uwtsd.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/40562/mod_resource/content/3/Frances%20Clynes%20-%20final%20with%20corrections.pdf> [Accessed 27 November 2025].

³³ Clynes, *An Examination of the Impact of the Internet on Modern Western Astrology*, p. 322.

only by laypeople looking for Sun Sign horoscopes in the newspaper or booking professional readings to learn about future events. The findings section covering astrology on social media below shows where it has indeed become more superficial, or even usurped in a way by people using it on an ‘intuitive’ basis rather than one based on study. As barriers to entry have fallen, so too has the concern with natal astrology as determining one’s fate in some spaces, replaced with a focus on personality and identity as a way to drive potentially lucrative social media engagement.

Uses for Astrology in the 2000s – 2020s

Phillipson’s research offers clues to why and how astrology may have shifted to be less focused on fate in modern times than it was in the Hellenistic era. Astrologer Maggie Hyde notes in an interview with Phillipson that Sun Signs give readers something to identify with.³⁴ Reviewing social media in 2025 reveals that there is now an entire subsection of users who seek out astrology for personality testing or for personal identification, but that as a result of its popularity and the reach of social media, the astrological information shared has become less tethered in foundations and more sensational or vague as non-astrologers leverage it. For example, the X user @astroinrealtime writes, ‘libra, fate wants to help you fall in love. let it.’³⁵ Posts like this take advantage of the popular interest in astrology with the use of a star sign, and they may mention fate, but do not actually engage with either fate or astrology in any meaningful way while garnering significant engagement of over 91,700 views, more than 1,700 likes, and 398 shares as of May 2026.

Phillipson also notes the use of astrology as therapy³⁶ and, in a discussion with astrologer Robert Hand, as a developmental tool.³⁷ A discussion between Phillipson and Campion also raises questions asked by journalists at the time as to whether astrology serves as a replacement for religion.³⁸ Fate may play a role in each of these uses, but it is possible that it is no longer the main consideration. This will be covered further in the discussion section.

³⁴ Phillipson, *Astrology in the Year Zero*, p. 42.

³⁵ Astro in Real Time (@astroinrealtime, 30 July 2025, tweet), <<https://x.com/astroinrealtime/status/1950715787976561067>> [accessed 10 May 2026].

³⁶ Phillipson, *Astrology in the Year Zero*, p. 63.

³⁷ Phillipson, *Astrology in the Year Zero*, p. 76

³⁸ Phillipson, *Astrology in the Year Zero*, p. 169.

Methodology

Methods

The literature review informs past scholarship, establishes definitions, and aids in survey development. It also offers a starting point for social media mining. Based on this information, an online questionnaire was administered to astrologers (not enthusiasts) via Google Forms, with a goal of 100 responses. Starting with a questionnaire allowed developing a broader representative sample to start, which Alan Bryman notes allows the inferring of findings to larger groups.³⁹ Interviews completed the research, as Monique Hennink, Inge Hutter, and Ajay Bailey write that doing a questionnaire first and then following up with interviews offers opportunities to interpret, understand, and explain findings and patterns, as well as contextualize behaviour.⁴⁰ To gain deeper context for the questionnaire results, six questionnaire respondents who opted in to participating further were emailed with an invitation to interview and expand on their responses. Interviews were conducted via Microsoft Teams. Interviewees received the questions in advance to allow them to consider and prepare thoughts; additionally this is an effort to reduce any anxiety about being interviewed on relatively personal topics such as beliefs and practices that may be considered spiritual.

The questionnaire was piloted in March 2025 by astrologers who self-selected in a private Instagram story, then updated to incorporate their feedback. The final version was delivered from May 19–May 29, 2025, online and in person at the NORWAC 2025 conference. Interviews were carried out in June 2025 based on selection criteria outlined below.

Further assessment of the broader social astrological community was carried out via social media mining, which Reza Zafarani, Mohammad Ali Abbasi, and Huan Liu define as ‘the process of representing, analyzing, and extracting actionable patterns from social media data.’⁴¹ A combination of search terms (e.g. ‘fate astrology’) and hashtags (e.g. #fate

³⁹ Alan Bryman, *Quantity and Quality in Social Research*, (Oxon: Routledge, 1988), p. 100.

⁴⁰ Monique Hennink, Inge Hutter, and Ajay Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 2nd edn. (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2020), p. 43-44.

⁴¹ Reza Zafarani, Mohammad Ali Abbasi, and Huan Liu, *Social Media Mining: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 2, <<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139088510>> [Accessed 18 April 2026].

#astrology) was used to identify posts outside my existing network for inclusion in the study.

Respondent Selection

Astrological practice involves mathematical calculations, knowledge of basic astronomical concepts, and the use of technical jargon in addition to a philosophical consideration of one's fate and other beliefs. According to Shaun Gallagher and Dan Zahavi, respondent explanations in phenomenological research can be complicated by the context between people within a given cultural setting,⁴² so between this and the different building blocks of the practice, the respondent pool is limited to private or professional astrologers and students in an effort to account for the technicalities of the practice, increase shared understandings, and reduce points of confusion that may arise with general enthusiasts of popular astrology who have not undertaken studies. In addition to having undertaken formal study, a professional astrologer is defined in the questionnaire as one making money from their practice—which may or may not include conducting consultations with clients—while private practitioners are those who have moved beyond studying the basics but use astrology for personal purposes. Astrological study of foundational frameworks differentiates these astrologers from the Pop Astro Opportunists discussed in a later section.

Limiting the respondent pool also allows greater confidence in responses derived from a smaller number of interviews. Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey write that narrowly defined study populations and studies focusing on core and concrete issues, as well as those intending to generate thick data, likely reach response saturation more quickly, requiring a smaller sample size.⁴³ This study's focus on a specific topic within the practice of astrology as perceived by astrologers (as opposed to those in the general public who have an interest in astrology), combined with the consistency of interview responses, lends confidence in the representativeness of the responses despite the relatively small number of interviews.

My previous research used only social media to source respondents, but this may have skewed the respondent pool given the Millennial generation (born 1981-1996) are

⁴² Shaun Gallagher and Dan Zahavi, *The Phenomenological Mind*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2021), p. 182.

⁴³ Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*, p. 111.

more likely to use these platforms according to Pew Research.⁴⁴ Additionally, recruitment via social media runs the risk of getting more astrology enthusiasts—such as those who commonly follow popular astrology meme accounts or the social media accounts of practicing astrologers in search of updates on transits or basic delineations of natal placements—rather than active astrology students or practitioners. As such, this research expanded beyond social media to recruit respondents online via my astrologer-focused website and email newsletter, outreach to astrology practitioners and organizations for newsletter or social media inclusion; posting to the ISAR forums; and in person at NORWAC in Seattle, Washington, USA from May 23–26, 2025.

Respondents were required to be 18 years of age or older to participate in the questionnaire, as well as actively practising or studying astrology. Interviewees were selected primarily with the aim of representing and deepening understanding of larger trends uncovered in the questionnaire (e.g. reason for acting, action taken) and secondarily of getting a diverse set of responses (e.g. astrological school practiced, age, gender) to see if there were any nuances for larger trends.

Limitations

The research was conducted in English only, despite having an international respondent pool. It is possible that some concepts do not translate well or were unclear without a localized equivalent. Additionally, it is possible that there are those who would have liked to respond, but did not feel confident doing so in English. Further research could be conducted with a localized questionnaire.

The nature of recruitment—via a conference and online—restricts respondents to the pool of those who can either afford to attend the conference and have geographic proximity and/or the means to travel, or those who have access to a stable internet connection, particularly for video interviews. This may have limited the respondents to those who have a certain level of financial security, as well as the time to either travel or spend an uninterrupted hour in an interview.

All of the interviews were conducted with respondents based in the United States, as this was the bulk of the questionnaire respondent pool. It is possible that a more varied

⁴⁴ Emily A. Vogels, 'Millennials stand out for their technology use, but older generations also embrace digital life', *Pew Research Center* (2019) <<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/09/09/us-generations-technology-use/>> [accessed 12 January 2025]

set of responses or beliefs would be evidenced if international perspectives were included, particularly those outside of the West or Global North, or outside of a country with a majority Christian population such as the U.S. has⁴⁵ given the spiritual focus of astrology for many questionnaire respondents evidenced in the findings. Similarly, respondents were not asked about their racial or ethnic background due to the constructed nature of this demographic marker and its differing construction across countries or regions.⁴⁶

Ethical Considerations

The concept of fate or fated outcomes—i.e. the idea that certain outcomes are potentially inevitable or unavoidable—may be sensitive or emotionally distressing for some individuals, particularly those who have experienced traumatic events in the past or who have dealt with difficult personal or relational situations. Respondents were informed of this possibility in advance and provided the option to either skip questions, pause the interview, or leave the study altogether. They were also provided with my contact information in the event they opted to be excluded from research as a result of any delayed discomfort.

Research Findings: Astrology and Fate on Social Media

Mining posts to Threads, Instagram, and X reveals a divergence in the purpose of astrological practice that splits online astrology communities into four groups. I define these as follows based on the content of the posts and my seven years of experience engaging with astrology in social spheres.

The **Pop Astro Opportunists** may call themselves astrologer or ‘astrologist’ in their social media profile, but do not demonstrate evidence of having actually studied astrology. They post popular astrology memes with no internal cohesion for quick consumption and high engagement. More recent accounts and their posts may be bots or

⁴⁵ Pew Research Center, *Religious Composition by Country, 2010-2020* (9 June 2025) <<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/feature/religious-composition-by-country-2010-2020/>> [accessed 5 July 2025].

⁴⁶ Herman Gray, ‘Race’ in *Keywords for Media Studies*, ed. by Laurie Ouellette and Jonathan Gray (New York: NYU Press, 2017), pp. 161-165 (p. 162) <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1gk08zz.56>> [accessed 3 Aug 2025].

AI-generated. Alternatively, they follow a different metaphysical practice like Tarot, and tack on astrological terms in their posts. An example is a post like that by X user @iamannapepe:

✉️🌌 Virgo, Aries, Capricorn, Pisces, Leo, Aquarius

a wave of good fortune is coming into your life - expect for many things to begin to fill your life at this time. you may see things moving slower right now, or you may feel the need to rest more. slow down & rest to receive.⁴⁷

Posts like these use star signs as a hook in illogical ways (there is no astrological framework that includes all of Virgo, Aries, Capricorn, Pisces, Leo, and Aquarius, which are connected to different modalities, elements, sects, and seasons) and therefore betray a likely lack of astrological study. They are often posted as ‘intuitive messages’, demonstrating where those using astrology to gain followers, engagement, or even money in social spheres may not actually be astrologers in the traditional sense, or thinking about fate in any conscious or meaningful way. The apparent lack of foundational astrological study, evidenced by lack of cohesion in their statements and their reliance on stereotypes and/or ‘intuitive’ interpretations, prevents them from being classified as professional astrologers, despite the possibility that they may earn income from social media engagement.

The **Identity Seekers** are enthusiasts who want to know what it means to have a placement, usually at a superficial or stereotypical level, without digging into the actual practice of astrology. They share pop astro posts and parrot astrology stereotypes, using them to justify or excuse behaviours, as well as trying to achieve goals, often related to work or relationships. Examples include Threads user @scottiebeam, who posts, ‘Hi, I’m a Libra and i reaaaaallly want a healed cancer’,⁴⁸ followed by, ‘WELL SINCE YALL KNOW EVERYTHING TELL ME WHO MY LIBRA (Aries moon) ASS SUPPOSED TO BE WITH?’⁴⁹ They are not astrologers in the traditional sense, but astrology has become part of the personality for these individuals. It is also used to assess others’ personalities on a

⁴⁷ Anna Pepe (@iamannapepe, 16 July 2025, tweet)
<<https://x.com/iamannapepe/status/1945348716329570769>> [accessed 26 December 2025].

⁴⁸ scottiebeam (@scottiebeam, 25 November 2025, Threads post)
<<https://www.threads.com/@scottiebeam/post/DRgCi4ijQer>> [accessed 26 December 2025]

⁴⁹ scottiebeam (@scottiebeam, 25 November 2025, Threads post)
<<https://www.threads.com/@scottiebeam/post/DRitkY0DTKu>> [accessed 26 December 2025]

superficial level. This is effectively the evolution of those who read Sun Sign horoscopes in previous eras, as noted by Maggie Hyde in the literature review.

Community Seekers are looking for people like them, whether by common astrological connections (e.g. rising sign) or, as they get deeper into astrological study, by practice (e.g. those engaging in ‘traditional’ versus ‘modern’ astrology, or those using sidereal rather than tropical placements), which they may strongly identify with. They often comment on other posts with their personal placements and stories, and the astrological connections. They may not have engaged in formal/taught astrological study, but as they seek deeper connection, they begin to do so (e.g. start taking courses or going to conferences both to learn and to feel like they are part of a community of similar people).

This is where some engaging with astrology begin engaging with fate as well. Threads user @shinelikethundercrylikerrain writes, ‘My friend in pain- we all have circumstances we have no control over and it’s all in the chart.’⁵⁰ In response, user @dewitt.fe says,

I feel this so deeply. The chart is fate coded in symbolism - our circumstances, our shadows, our soul contracts. It does not limit, it reveals. Free will exists, yes - but within the boundaries of what the soul agreed to learn.⁵¹

In this case, the sense of community is built around astrology-influenced concepts of fate.

Lastly, those who position themselves as professionals on social media fall into two main camps, the **Transformation-Focused Professionals** and the **Fate-Focused Professionals**. Both have undertaken some form of astrological study. They may or may not consult for money. Professionals may also have spiritual, religious, and/or divinatory practices which support fate management efforts. They attend events or join forums as speakers or researchers, or to (re)connect with fellow professionals. They are generally looking to understand personality or psychology to help or guide others, but the Fate-Focused Professionals also tend to look at the quality of time and what can be done about

⁵⁰ Bambi (@shinelikethundercrylikerrain, 21 May 2025, Threads post)
<https://www.threads.com/@shinelikethundercrylikerrain/post/DJ6h_qpO6DR> [accessed 26 December 2025].

⁵¹ FireEagle DeWitt (@dewitt.fe, 21 May 2025, Threads post)
<<https://www.threads.com/@dewitt.fe/post/DJ6so-5xNCU>> [accessed 26 December 2025].

the future in a way that has closer alignment with the Stoics, while the Transformation-Focused Professionals tend to approach from a position of libertarianism (i.e. humans have free will⁵²) or incompatibilism (i.e. a denial of infallible foreknowledge⁵³).

As an example of the latter, X user @CosmicShakti37 rejects the idea of fatedness:

I'm not an astrologer who fuels fear or superstition. #Jyotish

I read for people who are ready to grow, who see their birth chart not as a curse, but as a map for healing, self-awareness, and real transformation.

#Astrology isn't fate, it's a tool.

Use it wisely. 🙏⁵⁴

An image accompanying the tweet speaks to growth based on one's natal placements. A similar perspective is presented by Threads user @greicyhoo:

What every astrologer learns is that Astrology predisposes, but does not determine.

That is, any prediction system is merely a possibility, not fate.

After all, people have free will.⁵⁵

In these examples we see practicing astrologers outright rejecting not only fate itself but also the potential for astrology to predict fate, reducing it to the realm of possibility or superstitious fear-mongering rather than the immutable outcomes accepted by Graeco-Roman era astrologers.

Alternatively, some of those positioning themselves as astrology professionals mention fate, but lack clarity on what that means either for themselves or for others. For example, in posting about Mars entering the sign of Libra, Threads user @narayanamontufar writes that the 'Kite' pattern formed with other planets,

⁵² David Hunt and Linda Zagzebski, 'Foreknowledge and Free Will', in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2026), ed. by Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman, <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2026/entries/free-will-foreknowledge/>> [Accessed 18 April 2026].

⁵³ Hunt and Zagzebski, 'Foreknowledge and Free Will'.

⁵⁴ 🙏🙏🙏 AstroTarot YogMaya of Cosmos 🙏🙏🙏 (@CosmicShakti37, 5 October 2025, tweet), <<https://x.com/CosmicShakti37/status/1974926056613429461>> [accessed 26 Dec 2025].

⁵⁵ Brief Therapy and Spirituality (@greicyhoo, 1 September 2025, Threads post) <<https://www.threads.com/@greicyhoo/post/DOFVgFOAKfh>> [accessed 26 December 2025]

has been connected to the concept of “fate,” which now seeks to create a new version of our reality. As the old, outdated paradigm collapses, the sky begins to open new doors, alternate pathways, and even brand-new ways to connect with our unique purpose.⁵⁶

Posts like this reveal that the *idea* of fate may still be connected with astrology in a general sense, but that the *meaning* of fate—whether as a defined concept or in terms of impact—has become disconnected from the practice of astrology for some.

The Fate-Focused Professionals remain connected with concepts of fate, however, like Threads user @aligninglightastrology:

Hi, I'm a partial determinist (I believe in fate & free will). I liken astrology info to weather info. If I can't stop the rain, or getting a little wet if I go out, I can still choose to listen to a weather forecast & bring an umbrella for the day. The astrology helps acknowledge and accept what's real, to see reality as clearly as possible, to respond most skillfully & timely. The stoics [sic] used astrology for acceptance & preparation.⁵⁷

Astrologers like this retain some of the original Stoic considerations in Hellenistic astrology, while making adjustments similar to George, Brennan, and Reynolds as cited in the literature review.

This research reveals the use of astrology for timing and foreknowledge of future outcomes by some professionals and serious students; a rejection of fate by others; and the use of astrology for identity and social currency, clique-seeking, or engagement-farming by opportunists and enthusiasts. The question of whether astrologers are still concerned with fate may therefore depend whether the definition of ‘astrologer’ includes only those who have undertaken formal study.

The divergence in astrology’s purpose means that fate is not the focus of all enthusiasts, and among professional astrologers, that it is only a concern for some insofar as they are vocal about rejecting it, at least as far as those engaging with astrology online.

⁵⁶ Narayana Montúfar (@narayanamontufar, 6 August 2025, Threads post) <https://www.threads.com/@narayanamontufar/post/DNB6i_xyZF3> [accessed 26 December 2025].

⁵⁷ Claire Moon (@aligninglightastrology, 26 September 2025, Threads post) <<https://www.threads.com/@aligninglightastrology/post/DPDUDL1Dg84>> [accessed 26 December 2025].

Part of this could be related to what modern Hellenistic astrologer Leisa Schaim notes on the idea of fate versus destiny, in that, ‘people love to hate on the word “fate,” but they adore destiny.’⁵⁸ Further reviews of social media content (see Appendix 1) support this view in the sense that those considering but ultimately rejecting fate connect it negatively with superstition, fear-mongering, or disempowerment. Views on fate may also be connected to where a practitioner places the locus of control for outcomes, with Transformation-Focused Professionals leaning more into a personal locus of control (i.e. people have free will and the potential for self-transformation) and Fate-Focused Professionals leaning more toward an external or blended locus of control (i.e. people can influence outcomes up to a point, but ultimately external forces determines how far that influence extends).

The answer to the first part of the research question is that not all of those using astrology are concerned with fate, demonstrating how the concerns raised by the astrologers Clynes interviewed were correct to consider the possible rise of more superficial astrological usage. Some practicing astrologers who have undertaken study *have* retained a concern with fate and future outcomes, however, and the next section’s findings explore how Fate-Focused Professionals engage with fate in a modern context to answer the second part of the research question.

Research Findings: Fate-Focused Astrologers

This final analysis includes 160 questionnaire responses and four interviews with Fate-Focused astrologers.

Respondent Demographics

Demographically, 59% of respondents are cisgender women, 11% each are cisgender men and non-binary, with the remainder being another gender. The majority are between the ages of 25–34 (37%) or 35–44 (35%); the smaller proportion of respondents in the 25–34 range and the greater number in respondents aged 45 and up compared to my

⁵⁸ Leisa Schaim, *The Astrology Podcast*, ‘Ep. 489 Transcript: Astrology, Fate, and Destiny’ (16 May 2025) <<https://theastrologypodcast.com/transcripts/ep-489-transcript-astrology-fate-and-destiny/>> [accessed 26 December 2025].

previous study supports the hypothesis that moving away from social media as a primary recruitment vehicle improves the age diversity of respondents.

Seventy-four percent of respondents are from the United States, with the next largest groups coming from the United Kingdom (5%) and Canada (4%). The remainder come from countries in Europe, South America, the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, Oceania, and the Southwest Asian and North African (SWANA) region, suggesting that there could be value in translating this or similar questionnaires to other languages to gain a greater understanding of astrological and fate management practices outside the USA or outside primarily English-speaking countries.

Practices of Modern Astrologers

Questionnaire respondents primarily practise Hellenistic astrology, with 63% reporting that they consider it their primary school. Several of the 'Other' responses also indicate some Hellenistic study. Most respondents (44%) have been studying or practicing astrology for between three and five years and more than half of respondents say they have been studying or practicing for more than five years, suggesting they have had time not only to learn astrology but also see longer-term outcomes which may spur thoughts on fate.

In terms of focal areas, nearly all respondents (97%) include natal astrology in their practice. For the purpose of this study, it is inferred that respondents are generally considering fate and fate management in the context of individual lives, given the strong focus on natal astrology, and that electional astrology, or the selection of auspicious times based on astrological factors, may be used as a fate management tool. This will be explored in a later subsection.

When asked about the reason for practising astrology, the greatest proportion of respondents (24%) say that they are looking to identify larger patterns and themes. A further 19% indicate that astrology is part of a larger spiritual practice, 18% that it is in service of accepting a given path in life, and 16% say it is to guide themselves and/or others toward better outcomes. This diversity of responses suggests that there could be a similar diversity in astrologer cosmologies and fate beliefs, which could impact their concerns with and intentions for engaging with fate.

Findings on Astrologer Cosmologies and Fate Beliefs

In considering the source of fate, 41% of astrologers surveyed say that the source of fate is ‘Your life being part of, and contributing to, a bigger pattern’ with a further 21% indicating a belief in ‘A divine cosmos/nature e.g. deities, spirits, energies, celestial bodies’, demonstrating that nearly two-thirds of those surveyed believe fate is derived from a greater power of some kind, whether divine or as part of a pattern that goes beyond human life. In contrast, almost a fifth (18%) have a more deterministic view, i.e. that past events and the laws of nature are responsible for outcomes. Only three respondents believe a single divine entity is the source of fate, and none of the astrologers surveyed believe that a human desire for a pattern is the source of one’s fate.

The pattern-contribution response seems outsized compared to the proportion of responses for pattern-seeking as the reason for practice, although this could indicate a difference in approach to thinking about the larger pattern and about fate. I raised this in an interview in an effort to add context to the apparent disconnect.

Respondent 150, a Vedic astrologer, says that the source of fate is ‘your life being part of, and contributing to, a bigger pattern’ but did *not* select ‘to identify larger patterns and themes’ as their reason for practicing astrology. When asked about this response, they said,

...working with astrology, it makes sense that so much of what we’re experiencing in our lives is outside of our control. I’m trying to use astrology to figure out pockets of time to influence my experiences. My understanding of the karmic framework is that everything I’m doing will yield results but maybe not in this life.

In this case, the respondent connected their belief in the larger pattern with their spiritual beliefs and practices; in other words, the pattern-seeking behavior is an effort to action personal spiritual beliefs toward personal experiences rather than to take action on or with the larger pattern.

In contrast, there is an inclination among some Transformation-Focused astrologers to see astrology as pure pattern recognition, not a map of future outcomes (whether in this life or another). An example of this attitude is expressed by Threads user @farstellar: ‘Astrology isn’t fortune-telling. It’s pattern recognition. Once you know your

pattern, you stop mistaking repetition for fate.’⁵⁹ This comment implies that fortune telling and fate are related and not to be taken seriously, potentially splitting astrology from its divinatory roots. Other Transformation-Focused Professionals see astrology as a ‘guidance system’ without calling out what the guidance is for or where it is taking the practitioner or their clients. As an example, Threads user @motherofmayhem says, ‘Astrology is a 🧐 GUIDANCE 🧐 SYSTEM. Not fate.’⁶⁰ Both Transformation-Focused and Fate-Focused astrologers seem to have a broad subset of practitioners interested in astrology as pattern recognition, and while notions of improvement (whether of self or of circumstances) seem to be shared across both groups, there is a divergence in what the existence of a pattern actually means and what can or should be done about it.

Breaking down Fate-Focused Professionals’ beliefs about fate by astrological school lays a foundation for determining where differing attitudes about fate between some modern astrologers may come from. Forty percent of responding Hellenistic practitioners believe in the ‘larger pattern’ source for fate. There were not enough respondents from other schools to make meaningful comments about their fate beliefs in general, but it is notable that for each of Esoteric, Evolutionary, Medieval Islamic, Medieval Latin, and Other practitioners, about half of respondents also chose the ‘larger pattern’ option. A greater sample of non-Hellenistic astrologers is needed to determine whether this is a common belief for other astrological schools.

Assuming the results hold when scaled up to larger sample sizes, this indicates that astrologers from modern practices such as Esoteric or Evolutionary have similar beliefs to those practicing Hellenistic astrology, potentially removing school of practice as a reason for different attitudes about fate. With regard to the Hellenistic practitioners, this may be the result of more modern free will beliefs overlapping with Hellenistic astrological practices; while, for example, Brennan covers Stoic philosophies of fate as a mechanism underlying astrology⁶¹ and of astrological determinism⁶² in both his book and his course on electoral astrology,⁶³ these are presented as historical views. Further

⁵⁹ FarStellar (@farstellar, 10 November 2025, Threads post)

<<https://www.threads.com/@farstellar/post/DQ5DnZkpoq>> [accessed 26 December 2025]

⁶⁰ Hailey (@motherofmayhem_, 28 November 2025, (Threads post)

<https://www.threads.com/@motherofmayhem_/post/DRnuOQmgeCZ> [accessed 26 December 2025]

⁶¹ Brennan, *Hellenistic Astrology*, pp. 153-158.

⁶² Brennan, *Hellenistic Astrology*, pp. 158-162.

⁶³ Chris Brennan, *The History and Philosophy of Electoral Astrology* [Lecture 1 in *The Electoral Astrology Course*] Available at: <https://courses.theastrologyschool.com/courses/electional-astrology-course> [Accessed 21 December 2024]

research may examine this alignment between those studying more Stoic-influenced forms of astrology and those engaging with modern schools.

In considering the extent to which it is possible to change fate, 39% of respondents believe ‘Some things we can change, some things we cannot’, while 33% believe ‘There is a given outcome to certain things, but the severity or impact of the final outcome can be managed or influenced’. Slightly fewer respondents chose ‘Things happen because of preceding events, actions, or environmental influences’ than would be expected from the preceding question on the source of fate with, again, about 18% of respondents saying that ‘The combination of all that has happened in the past with the physical laws of nature, which fixes a unique and possible future’ is the source of fate and about 14% of respondents saying ‘Things happen because of preceding events, actions, or environmental influences’.

Breaking out responses by fate source and future outcome beliefs reveals that of those who said the source of fate is more deterministic (i.e. based on the past and the laws of nature), most shifted to either ‘Some things we can change, some things we cannot’ or ‘There is a given outcome to certain things, but the severity or impact of the final outcome can be managed or influenced’ in their beliefs about the occurrence of the actual outcomes, rather than continuing with a more deterministic outcome belief focusing on preceding events.

Part of this disconnect may come down to personal preference, expressed as a rejection of the idea that outcomes must be accepted regardless of preceding events, which supports Brady’s findings on astrologers and determinism⁶⁴ and could help explain the above finding that there is generally alignment on the source of fate between different schools. For example, Respondent 135, a Hellenistic astrologer who believes that past events and the laws of nature are the source of fate but also that some outcomes can be changed and some cannot, says,

Of course there’s the Stoic belief where it’s decided and you just have to accept it. I don’t think I believe that. I like the idea of a roadmap—like you’ve got Mars energy coming but it doesn’t have to cut you if you’re conscious of it and you can try to harness that energy in a way that’s like, what do you need to cut out of your life? What do you need to shed? What

⁶⁴ Brady, *The Shape of Fate*, p. 74.

do you need to disconnect from? What do you need to take action on?

This respondent also says that with regard to difficult transits, they know they cannot change the transit itself, but they can change how they respond to it. This is somewhat aligned with what Ptolemy, Valens, and Firmicus say about astrologers managing their responses to outcomes. It also suggests a possible way in which astrologers holding these beliefs may be reconciling them: past events and the laws of nature determine that something will come to pass, but individuals may exercise free will in either their mental or psychological approach to dealing with it, or in the actions they take to confront or redirect the inevitability of the event or the tone of the energy in its impacts (e.g. managing difficulties, a need to sever, or a need to shed something from the life).

No respondents selected the option ‘Things happen by chance’, suggesting that while the majority have a belief that some future outcomes can be changed to at least some extent, none believe that there is an element of chance in what outcomes or events occur in their lives. These findings further imply that if outcomes can be changed, then action will, or at least can, be taken to do so, and it appears that Fate-Focused astrologers are indeed doing so.

The greater number of responses from Hellenistic astrologers allows a broader assessment of views for this school and reveals a diversity of future outcome beliefs within it, suggesting that at least in this regard astrological school is not a stand-in for beliefs about future outcomes, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Future outcome beliefs by astrological school

Astrological School	Future Outcome Beliefs, Count by School					
	Complete choice	Some things we can change	Given outcomes can be influenced	Preceding events	Things happen for a reason	Other
Archetypal		1				
Eclectic			1			
Esoteric		4	4			
Evolutionary		3	4			3
Hellenistic	1	33	37	15	5	10
Humanistic		3		1		
Medieval Islamic		3	3	1	1	
Medieval Latin		4	1	1		
Other		6	1	2		2
Psychological		5		2		
Vedic		1	2			
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>15</i>

Stoicism may have had an influence on the development of Hellenistic astrology, but modern astrologers of all schools appear to be far more inclined to believe in at least some room for free will or mutability, rather than Manilius's set-in-stone declaration of an unchangeable fate. Indeed, 84% of those surveyed responded to a question about the extent to which it is possible to manage fate with the selection, 'It depends; sometimes it is possible, sometimes it is not.' Only 8% say that it is completely impossible to do so, replicating a finding from Brady's work.⁶⁵

Modern Fate-Focused astrologers may be using some of the same playbooks as their forebears 1,000-2,000 years ago, but they have more flexible views about future

⁶⁵ Brady, *Theories of fate among present day astrologers*, p. 216.

outcomes. The next sections demonstrate the various ways in which these beliefs are put into action.

Fate Management Methods Used by Astrologers

Astrologers are using multiple methods in their efforts to manage fate, with a maximum of 16 methods used and a mode of eight methods used in the six months prior to the survey. Aside from astrology itself, the most commonly used methods include divination, prayer or devotions, external actions on oneself (e.g. baths or anointing the body), and external actions on the environment (e.g. washing or smoking a space to cleanse it physically and/or energetically). Methods are generally intended to impact one's physical, spiritual, or temporal realities—sometimes in combination—with the goal of influencing particular areas of life. A wide range of methods is used by the average astrologer toward fate management; school of practice does not appear to correlate with a tendency to use more or fewer methods.

Interviews reveal that the wide range of methods used may be due, at least in part, to a sense that the methods are connected or support each other in some way. Respondent 135 states, 'As an outsider you think Tarot and astrology are separate but then you realize they're related', a comment that may also be connected to the number of Pop Astro Opportunists practicing Tarot, but leveraging astrology for their posts on social media despite an apparent lack of formal astrological training. Similarly, Respondent 150 says they use multiple methods because 'it's part of the tradition. Different aspects hit different points. The astrology lays out the map of one's karma and the actions hit different parts of the chart'. Both responses reflect the idea that methods may not be viewed as an either/or choice, but rather as a both/and selection of options toward a larger goal. The variety of methods are effectively either complementary when engaged simultaneously toward the same goal, or they are employed separately with a selection of method to purpose, like selecting a hammer and nails to join one thing to another rather than a screwdriver and screws.

As is to be expected, astrology plays a critical role in several aspects of fate management efforts.

Focus of Fate Management Efforts

With a view of what actions astrologers are taking, the next question is on their focus and purpose. Respondents were asked to select up to three options from a list; however, several respondents selected more than three. Future research might benefit from asking for a forced ranking rather than allowing for multiple selection.

Most respondents (53%) say that ‘Personal growth or development, including remediation of difficult themes or enhancement of fortunate themes’ was an area of fate management focus for them in the preceding six months. This suggests that rather than using astrology as a way to control external factors, many of those surveyed use it as more of a psychological tool, reflecting Phillipson’s findings in interviewing Robert Hand as well as comments by Transformation-Focused Professionals. Health and spiritual connection come in second and third with 50% and 49% of respondents respectively selecting these. Astrology for spiritual purposes and as a tool for personal growth are covered further in the discussion section below.

Breaking out by school reveals differences between the schools. Table 2 demonstrates the main focus of fate management efforts for a sample of schools with seven or more respondents. The most frequent response for each school has been outlined in black.

Table 2: Focus of fate management efforts by school

Astrological School	Focus of Fate Management Efforts											
	Work	Health	Justice	Money	Non-financial resourcing	Results	Personal growth	Protection	Relationships	Spiritual	Status	Other
Esoteric	2	2	3	3	2	1	4	3	3	6	0	1
Evolutionary	4	3	0	4	0	0	6	3	2	6	0	0
Hellenistic	40	57	3	39	6	6	51	42	35	45	9	3
Medieval Islamic	2	2	2	1	1	0	4	6	0	4	2	0
Psychological	2	3	0	3	1	0	3	3	3	6	1	0
Grand Total	57	80	9	53	11	9	85	65	54	78	12	4

Spiritual connections, e.g. with spirits, deities, the divine, ancestors, or guides, was the top response for all three of the modern schools, with Evolutionary astrologers also including personal growth as a tied top option. However, Hellenistic astrologers prioritized health (including physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual)—skewing outcomes for the survey as a whole—followed by personal growth and spiritual connection. Medieval Islamic astrologers prioritized protection (including safety or security of the home, reputation, or body), followed by personal growth and spiritual connections.

This reveals that while spirituality and personal growth are important components across several schools, those following more traditional practices have different priorities than those following modern teachings.

Despite this propensity toward action, among Transformation-Focused Professionals there seems to be a perception that to accept fate means to do nothing. Threads user @neptvnevisions writes, ‘I’m looking to teach people how to work *with* astrology & not let it determine their fate.’⁶⁶ This comment might be understood as, in effect, a rejection of predetermined outcomes, with the implication that accepting those outcomes is to do nothing about them. This harkens back to Cicero’s rejection of the Idle Argument, in which he says that to accept fate and do nothing ‘will lead to the entire abolition of action from life.’⁶⁷ However, given that Fate-Focused Professionals are looking at different areas of life and taking action, it reveals another divergence in how fate is perceived by different sets of modern astrologers. Fate-Focused Professionals may have accepted a certain level of fatedness, but they also actively reject the Idle Argument, finding space to work within a set of perceived constraints rather than rejecting the concept of foreseen future outcomes altogether as Transformation-Focused Professionals do. In other words, Fate-Focused Professionals are navigating their astrological practices and lives with more nuance and, perhaps, a greater psychological acceptance of life’s difficult events. This will be covered more in the section on astrology as a coping mechanism.

⁶⁶ Neptune Vision (@neptvnevisions, 27 November 2025, Threads post)
<<https://www.threads.com/@neptvnevisions/post/DRkmBy6AYDo>> [accessed 26 December 2025]

⁶⁷ Cicero, *On Fate (De Fato)*, trans. by H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 349 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), 29 (p. 225).

Purpose of Fate Management Efforts

Respondents were also asked to choose no more than three options describing the purpose of fate management efforts (although, as above, several chose more). Sixty-eight percent—the greatest proportion by far—seek to identify the best action to take. Forty-one percent aim to dispel or mitigate existing misfortune, and 28% want to either bring greater balance or fairness to a future situation, or identify the root of future concerns. This suggests that while astrologers look to the future to see possibilities, actions are also grounded in past and present, and are more focused on dispelling harm, than, for example, maintaining existing fortune (13% of respondents) or influencing others by either enabling them in (5% of respondents) or blocking them from (12%) having an effect. In this regard, fate management may be something of an apotropaic practice for astrologers, but one that is focused on the higher powers that the majority consider the source of fate rather than on other human individuals, or if not on higher powers than on the impacts of the outcomes they are perceived to deliver.

Examining intentions by school reveals that there is an alignment between different schools in using astrology to identify the best action, indicating the purpose it serves as a fate management method. However, practitioners diverge in their secondary intentions: Hellenistic and Medieval Islamic astrologers are working to dispel perceived misfortunes, Evolutionary and Esoteric astrologers are working to bring greater balance, and Psychological astrologers are looking for the root cause of a future concern, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Intent of fate management efforts by school

Astrological School	Intent of fate management efforts									
	Dispel / mitigate misfortune	Defend against predicted misfortune	Bring greater balance	Maintain existing fortune	Secure predicted good	Enable / enhance someone else	Block / reduce someone else	Identify best action	Identify root of future concern	Other
Esoteric	0	1	3	1	2	0	0	4	2	1
Evolutionary	1	1	4	0	2	0	0	9	2	0
Hellenistic	48	27	24	18	27	4	15	61	32	6
Medieval Islamic	4	3	3	1	2	0	2	6	2	0
Psychological	2	2	3	0	0	1	0	6	4	0
<i>Grand Total</i>	65	39	45	21	43	8	19	104	50	8

This suggests that comments about fate management as an apotropaic effort may only or best apply to those engaging in more traditional astrological practices. However, interview responses indicate that even when apotropaic in nature, actions to secure or improve outcomes are an effort toward co-creation with greater non-human powers rather than an effort to control either powers or outcomes, in line with Brady's findings.⁶⁸

For example, Respondent 135, a Hellenistic astrologer says,

I think maybe there's a core belief that I have that ultimately the universe is working for you and not against you. If you're playing default mode with your chart—like a game—it'll hit you with the biggest, largest expressions of the energetics.

This response offers an example of where, even when fate itself is not attributed with negative or harmful qualities, the outcomes themselves may still be experienced as threatening or undesirable and represent something to be worked with, redirected, or mitigated. In this vein, Respondent 133, a Psychological astrologer, says that,

Life chooses for me and sometimes it's fine and sometimes it's not what I would have wanted and it's way harder to like— Once like life has chosen something for me, to get out

⁶⁸ Brady, *Theories of fate among present day astrologers*, p. 290.

of it or to like redo it or like actually assert, “No, actually this is what I really wanted to co-create.” Like, it’s harder the second time around.

The idea of life or fate potentially bringing something unwanted, and the need to be proactive in co-creating the desired outcome, seems to be the general reason why astrologers, in the belief of solid foreknowledge of an outcome, engage in fate management actions. Interview responses are unified in the idea that external factors cannot be controlled, but human responses can be. Further, human response in the form of action must be taken, according to Respondent 150, for full potential to be realized:

The astrology, which I would associate with fate, is kind of like laying the foundation of what’s possible, but if I don’t jump on the opportunity, then nothing is going to come of it.

This aligns with Champion’s statement from the literature review that astrology requires human action to negotiate fate and rejects the Transformation-Focused astrologers’ perception that accepting fate means doing nothing.

Additionally, if fate management is to some extent an apotropaic practice, it may partially explain the finding that nearly half (48%) of respondents have been more or much more active in their efforts due to public political, social, or economic situations in the six months prior to the survey in May 2025, with a further 44% stating there has been no change in their activity level. If people feel impacted by the power of greater fates, i.e. those of nations or powerful individuals as suggested by Ptolemy, then it makes sense that they would look for ways to act to secure outcomes on their own behalf.

Nearly all respondents (91%) are engaging in fate management on at least a monthly basis, with the greatest proportion (40%) undertaking actions on a weekly basis and 28% on a daily basis in the six months preceding the survey. For example, Respondent 135 says,

I like the idea of petitioning and doing things to ritually honor the planetary energies or deities. It helps me get dressed through the week or pick jewelry. I feel awkward at social events, so to boost my confidence, I wear a solar ring.

Generally speaking, this demonstrates commitment to taking action on a regular basis and suggests that fate management is a serious practice for Fate-Focused Professionals, approached with dedication. This offers further evidence that for these astrologers, believing in fate does not necessitate compliance with the Idle Argument as suggested by some Transformation-Focused astrologers.

Role of Astrology in Fate Management Efforts

Respondents were also asked what role astrology plays in their fate management efforts. Keeping with the theme of identifying patterns as the most frequently chosen reason to practice astrology, being part of a larger pattern as the greatest belief in the source of fate, and seeking to identify the best action as the top purpose for fate management efforts, 73% of respondents say that astrology's role is to 'Identify areas or topics likely to be more or less impactful to the overall life', closely followed by 'Identifying areas more likely to see either especially desirable or especially difficult events' (69%) and 'Identifying natal chart placements for mitigation or emphasis' (65%). However, looking at the role of astrology by school shows a divergence as demonstrated in Table 4.

Table 4: Role of astrology in fate management efforts by school

School	Role of astrology									
	Identifying impactful areas	Identifying desirable/difficult areas	Identifying mitigation opportunities	Informing on personal inclinations	Magical practice	Predicting outcomes	Directly influencing outcomes	Taking advantage of auspicious timing	No role	Other
Esoteric	4	3	4	6	4	3	2	4	0	0
Evolutionary	5	2	5	7	2	1	3	7	0	1
Hellenistic	78	73	67	58	51	54	63	57	0	1
Medieval Islamic	6	6	8	7	6	6	6	4	0	0
Psychological	4	7	5	5	1	3	2	2	1	0
<i>Grand Total</i>	117	111	104	103	76	83	90	87	1	2

Again we have the Esoteric and Evolutionary astrologers demonstrating overlaps in their practices, with these modern schools using astrology to inform on personal or psychological inclinations, and with Evolutionary astrologers also prioritizing taking advantage of auspicious timing (without actively choosing a future date/time to initiate an action). Hellenistic astrologers skew the entire data set with their use of astrology to identify areas or topics likely to be impactful to the entire life. Medieval Islamic astrologers prioritize finding natal chart placements for mitigation or emphasis, and Psychological astrologers use astrology to identify areas more likely to see either especially desirable or especially difficult events.

These differences reveal that although Fate-Focused astrologers are consistent in believing in fate and the possibility of taking action to manage it, astrology has different purposes for each school. This could be related to factors like the different techniques used by each school or the views and philosophies of the originators. Of note, however, is the fact that no school prioritised 'directly influencing likely outcomes' or 'predicting the nature or details of likely outcomes' in their use of astrology. The focus is more on the self/individual and the natal chart than the external event or impact, so even if modern astrologers reject Stoic immutability, they are still prioritising their internal or personal reaction to fate and its impacts.

The finding on 'directly influencing outcomes' creates a contrast with the earlier finding where 39% of respondents believe some things can be changed and 33% believe that the severity or impact of final outcomes can be managed or influenced; it appears that modern Fate-Focused astrologers may reject the Idle Argument, but that their actions are still operating within a framework that contains a belief in some level of immutability which personal attitudes or actions must accommodate. Given astrology's omen-based origins, the finding on prediction is similarly notable, although it is more of a priority for traditional astrologers than modern and could reflect a core difference in how astrologically identified patterns are applied.

Further Discussion: Recurring Themes in Spirituality, Personal Growth, and Coping

The findings on Fate-Focused Professionals indicate that these astrologers approach fate management as a co-creative, and to some extent possibly apotropaic, act to reduce negative outcomes seen for themselves or others in the natal chart. Broader themes arising from the research confirm the literature review findings that astrology is used for spiritual engagement, as a tool for personal growth, and/or as therapy or as a coping mechanism, all in service toward mitigating or influencing further future outcomes or finding acceptance if that fails.

Astrology and Spirituality in Fate Management

Astrology and fate management as tools for spiritual development being one of the top three focus areas for fate management efforts invites a closer look at the connections between these topics. Some of the focus on spirituality as part of astrological practice may be linked to a larger spiritual awakening, such as that experienced by Respondent 135. In describing their experience, they say,

That's what a lot of our society is lacking and it is sick from this lack of spirituality and connection. The universe came alive to me and then the idea of like, okay, well, how does astrology work? Because the universe is alive.

This reflects comments made by astrologer Demetra George in an interview with Brady, notably 'that astrology can only work in a model where there is soul, intelligence, and conscious in the cosmos.'⁶⁹ Respondent 135 later adds, 'With my spiritual awakening, it was the first time I understood people who have religious faith.' While respondents' religious beliefs are not part of this study, this example shows where astrology may be either part of what this respondent described as akin to a deep religious experience despite personal skepticism, or an extension of revelations arising from this or other experiences.

In other words, if modern astrologers believe the universe is a living or active presence then so are the stars, creating an opportunity to work with them for spiritual

⁶⁹ Brady, *Theories of fate among present day astrologers*, Ch. 9, p. 252.

development that is not being sought, or not available (either at all or in the desired form), in a formal religious practice. This sense of aliveness reflects Stoic attitudes; third century CE biographer Diogenes Laërtius, in discussing the Stoics, notes their use of ‘cosmos’ in the sense of an intelligent and divine craftsman.⁷⁰ For modern astrologers, spiritual development may have impacts on future outcomes, with Respondent 135 also giving the example of ‘New Age manifestation’ beliefs around bringing forth or receiving something related to the energy or attitude put out. These beliefs may also be part of why prayer or devotions are the third most-used fate management method, coming closely behind astrology and divination.

There is also the rejection of formal religion to consider in the context of astrology. Respondent 150 grew up in a deeply religious Christian household, ‘realized the church was nonsense’ as they got older, and then rather than leaving spirituality behind altogether found themselves moving deeply into the academic study of Hindu mythology and beliefs, which in turn led them to Vedic astrology and spiritual practices. In both this example and the preceding one, the respondents are speaking to astrological or related spiritual practices filling a gap that organized or traditional religion no longer satisfies or never satisfied. This reflects a possible response to the questions Phillipson reports Campion fielding, as to whether astrology is a replacement for religion, noted in the literature review.⁷¹

These experiences may be connected to findings in research undertaken by Itai Ivtzan, Christine P. L. Chan, Hannah E. Gardner, and Kiran Prashar on the connection between religion, spirituality, and psychological well-being, where they find that ‘for most people, meaning is a product of creation and individuals must find it and construct their own sense of order themselves’.⁷² In the absence of a religious framework for personal spiritual practices, astrology may be providing the foundations for spiritual meaning-making, which in turn supports navigating fate in terms of creating understanding for why events or outcomes occurred as well as pointing to how to confront or co-create fate in the future.

⁷⁰ Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives of the Philosophers*, 7.135-138, in *The Stoics Reader*, trans. by Brad Inwood and Lloyd P. Gerson, (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc, 2008), p. 52.

⁷¹ Phillipson, *Astrology in the Year Zero*, p. 169.

⁷² Itai Ivtzan, Christine P. L. Chan, Hannah E. Gardner and Kiran Prashar, ‘Linking Religion and Spirituality with Psychological Well-being: Examining Self-actualisation, Meaning in Life, and Personal Growth Initiative’, *Journal of Religion and Health*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (September 2013), pp. 915-929 (p. 925) <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/24485040>> [accessed 5 July 2025].

Given the bend toward spirituality in responses to multiple questions, it could be worth exploring more in depth whether astrological practices are in some way replacing a dedicated or formal religious practice as raised with Campion in Phillipson's interviews, if spirituality is something inherent to practicing astrology, or both, as well as whether there is a connection to school of practice. This could be especially useful in the United States (again, accounting for 74% of respondents for this research) where the Pew Research Center notes a 16% decline in the percentage of adults identifying as Christian, from 78% in 2007 to 62% in 2024, an increasing trend in adults identifying with non-Christian religions, and a finding that 22% of US adults raised as Christians no longer identify with that religion.⁷³ While it is not *all* astrologers who are using astrology as a spiritual replacement, as evidenced by the 81% of respondents to the questionnaire for this study choosing an option other than 'As part of a larger spiritual practice' as their reason for practicing astrology, this option being the second most-selected indicates that the intent of a significant number of astrologers is to engage with fate as a spiritual rather than secular practice, at least among natal chart astrologers. It is possible that those using astrology for other purposes, such as financial speculation or horary (the use of astrology to answer questions, e.g. to find lost objects) may be less spiritually inclined given a reduced focus on the philosophies or effects of being human.

Connecting Personal Growth, Fate Management, and Astrology

Ivtzan, Chan, Gardner, and Prashar's study may also provide insight into the strong response of 'Personal growth' as a focus for astrologers' fate management efforts, a finding echoing Phillipson's interview of Hand. Ivtzan et al write, 'individuals with higher levels of personal growth initiative tend to explore, seek, meld, and create their personal meaning' and that the combination of the structure offered by religion and the personal interpretations driven by spirituality is where there is the most opportunity for individual growth initiative.⁷⁴ Similarly, Yakov A. Barton and Lisa Miller find that personal spirituality seems to be a basis for positive psychology traits, including finding

⁷³ Gregory A. Smith, Alan Cooperman, Becka A. Alper, Besheer Mohamed, Chip Rotolo, Patricia Tevington, Justin Nortey, Asta Kallo, Jeff Diamant, and Dalia Fahmy, 'Decline of Christianity in the U.S. Has Slowed, May Have Leveled Off: Findings from the 2023-24 Religious Landscape Study', Pew Research Center (February 26, 2025) <<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2025/02/26/decline-of-christianity-in-the-us-has-slowed-may-have-leveled-off/>> [Accessed 1 June 2025].

⁷⁴ Ivtzan, Chan, Gardner, and Prashar, 'Linking Religion and Spirituality with Psychological Well-being', p. 926.

meaning in life.⁷⁵ If, as above, the spiritual structure offered by a dedicated astrological practice stands in for religion, this may indicate another use for that structure and demonstrate why personal growth and astrology are linked for many of the astrologers surveyed: astrology provides a framework and context in which to work, and the individual's own effort in seeking to understand the sources of fate come from the internal drive of spirituality and a desire to create meaning from events and outcomes.

This may also indicate a source of difference between those who visit astrologers without becoming students or practitioners and those who commit to studying astrology, perhaps with the former looking for ways to troubleshoot areas of immediate need or impact and the latter continuing their engagement with astrology as a way to address the 'big picture' issues they believe to be causing or related to those troubles. As Anthony Giddens notes, 'fateful moments also often mark periods of reskilling and empowerment.'⁷⁶ Having a higher personal growth initiative may incline someone to take up astrology to empower themselves, while a lower personal growth initiative may incline someone to simply consult with an astrologer and be told about themselves (rather than pursuing their own understanding of the texts and concepts upon which astrology is based), or to remain in the sphere of the Identity Seekers pursuing answers or validation on social media. Further research could assess differences in beliefs and approaches between those who are clients or enthusiasts versus those who are students or practitioners, and the extent to which the former engage in fate management actions compared to the latter.

Astrology and Fate Management as a Coping Mechanism

While not all journeys to astrology are the result of traumatic events, some interviewees mentioned that they turned to astrology as a way to either make sense of or deal with difficult or traumatic life events, including deaths, injuries, accidents, or threats to their personal safety, or these events occurring to others in their lives. For example, Respondent 66 spoke of losing three siblings before the age of 20 and being powerless to do anything about that, then turning to astrology as a teen, at first seeking a sense of

⁷⁵ Yakov A. Barton and Lisa Miller, 'Spirituality and Positive Psychology Go Hand in Hand: An Investigation of Multiple Empirically Derived Profiles and Related Protective Benefits', *Journal of Religion and Health*, Vol. 54, No. 3 (June 2015), pp. 829-843 (p. 840) <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/24485453>> [accessed 3 August 2025]

⁷⁶ Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991), p. 142

understanding and later seeking greater control ‘of myself, my feelings, my PTSD, my health’. For Respondent 150, the traumatic event was not for themselves, but for a family member; they say, ‘Astrology’s been able to help me put a lot of [the event and the outcomes] in context in a way that like therapy or just logic wouldn’t have been able to’.

For situations like these, astrology and efforts toward fate management may serve as an avenue toward meaning-making not only in the spiritual or personal growth senses described above, but also in an effort to give meaning to what otherwise seems random, unfair, or uncontrolled. In their work on how severe accident victims attribute blame and cope with outcomes, Ronnie Janoff Bulman and Camille B. Wortman find that being able to make connections between personal behaviors and outcomes is part of effective coping.⁷⁷ Julio F. P. Peres, Alexander Moreira-Almeida, Antonia Gladys Nasello, and Harold G. Koenig write that spirituality may support resilience and growth in trauma survivors with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD),⁷⁸ allowing for possible connections between coping and the spiritual and personal growth components of astrology.

In identifying astrological patterns (recall that 24%, the largest proportion of respondents, stated identifying larger patterns and themes is the main reason they practice astrology), some astrologers may be using pattern-seeking as a way to make those connections between behaviour and outcome, for example connecting Mars with angry outbursts or risky behaviour. With a further 18% saying their reason for astrological practice is to find greater acceptance of a given life path for themselves or others and 16% saying they are working to guide themselves and others toward better outcomes, there are multiple possible ways for astrology, and the fate management actions derived from it or used in tandem with it, to be considered a coping mechanism either in the practicing of it for oneself or in using it to guide others. In other words, the purpose of focusing on fate is, for these astrologers, to better manage trauma and its impacts.

⁷⁷ Ronnie Janoff Bulman and Camille B. Wortman, ‘Attributions of Blame and Coping in the “Real World”: Severe Accident Victims React to Their Lot’, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 35, No. 5 (1977), pp. 351-363 (p. 362) <<https://doi-org.proxy.lib.duke.edu/10.1037/0022-3514.35.5.351>> [accessed 5 July 2025].

⁷⁸ Julio F. P. Peres, Alexander Moreira-Almeida, Antonia Gladys Nasello, and Harold G. Koenig, ‘Spirituality and Resilience in Trauma Victims’, *Journal of Religion and Health*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (September 2007), pp. 343-350 (p. 348) <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/27513020>> [accessed 3 August 2025].

Relatedly, Margaret E. Madden and Ronnie Janoff-Bulman find that in marriage conflicts, women who blame themselves for the conflicts feel more satisfied with their marriages⁷⁹ and that those who exercise control via personal behavior modification and thereby feel in control with regard to avoiding and resolving conflicts also experience greater satisfaction.⁸⁰ Although not connected to a marriage, these findings are mirrored in the statement of Respondent 66 in navigating a friendship conflict: ‘I could feel it in my bones that something had to change. *I had to change.*’ Rather than blaming the friend, this respondent looked at what about themselves needed to change in order to make peace with the situation, using astrology as the framework for coming to that understanding and determining their subsequent decisions and actions.

This also links back to the personal growth themes, in that Bulman and Wortman write that self-blame predicts the ability to cope more successfully with difficult or traumatic events.⁸¹ People who identify themselves as the locus or origination of a problem or event may be more motivated to seek out tools, including astrology, to try understanding what about them as individuals may have contributed to the event or outcome as well as looking for tools like divination or magic to identify, mitigate, and/or prevent future occurrences—or if nothing else, find greater acceptance and thereby coping.

Additionally, astrology may offer practitioners a feeling of control that further empowers coping. Daniel M. Wegner writes that when a person has a sense of control in one part of their life, they may reasonably think there is the possibility of control in other areas,⁸² adding, however, that perceiving control is not the same as having it.⁸³ Astrologers seem to understand this to some extent, for example with Respondent 133 likening astrology to external and emotional weather conditions:

There are times when I might have the drive, desire, or will to do something or move something forward, but the weather isn’t there. I can’t go out and garden in the dead of winter in [their location]. So I feel like that’s the best

⁷⁹ Margaret E. Madden and Ronnie Janoff-Bulman, ‘Blame, Control, and Marital Satisfaction: Wives’ Attributions for Conflict in Marriage’, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (August 1981), pp. 663-674 (p. 670) <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/351767>> [accessed 10 Dec 2024].

⁸⁰ Madden and Janoff-Bulman, ‘Blame, Control, and Marital Satisfaction’, p. 672.

⁸¹ Bulman and Wortman, ‘Attributions of Blame and Coping in the “Real World”’, p. 360.

⁸² Daniel M. Wegner, *The Illusion of Conscious Will: New Edition* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2018) p. 313.

⁸³ Wegner, *The Illusion of Conscious Will*, p. 315.

metaphor—trying to be collaborative with the time instead of trying to impose goals upon reality.

In this sense, astrology-as-coping-mechanism may offer greater support to being able to attribute blame or claim agency in relation to events perceived as fated, in the way one would look at the weather forecast and either take weather-appropriate gear or deal with the consequences. This also lends further support to Champion’s comments about astrology being a negotiation or dialogue with nature, time, or fate. It is not always the correct time for a dialogue, or the conditions or resources are not always right or available to engage in a negotiation, and the outcomes of actions undertaken by astrologers would reflect that, with the chart of the individual or the moment elected for the action allowing for a satisfactory explanation or locus of blame as needed. Even when the goal is the co-creation of an outcome, some sense of control via personal agency must be present for an individual to act—even if, as Wegner writes, there is no actual ability to control a situation, *believing* that one has control can help in coping with dire or traumatic situations.⁸⁴ Astrology and the further fate management actions taken may function as a way for practitioners to say, ‘At least I tried’ when confronted with the occurrence or outcomes of one of life’s many difficulties, thus offering the acceptance sought by some survey respondents, the opportunity to seek a better path sought by others, or the underpinnings of spiritual practices for those integrating astrology into their belief systems.

Conclusion

This dissertation explores whether modern astrologers are concerned with fate and what the focus of their concern is, the purpose fate management efforts serve, and differences or lack thereof between astrological schools.

Generally speaking, astrological practices have evolved, as evidenced by a review of social media posts and the comments responding to them. Not everyone using astrology on a regular basis is what we would previously have called an astrologer—even if they are posting about it on social media from large, astrology-focused accounts—and even among those who are professional astrologers, some consider fate only to take a

⁸⁴ Wegner, *The Illusion of Conscious Will*, p. 315.

strongly libertarian or even incompatibilist position, rejecting fate as superstition. A revelation around fate and the predictive powers of astrology may be what drives an individual from enthusiast to student to Fate-Focused Professional.

Fate management actions seem inherent to the practice of Fate-Focused Professionals in modern times, whether or not the practitioner actively thinks of it this way. Although some ancient astrologers like Manilius believed in the immutability of fate and others like Ptolemy, Valens, and Firmicus believed the goal of astrology was to learn the future so that it could be accepted, modern astrologers concerned with fate appear to reject the rigidity of these positions in favor of taking action on what they see. While the vast majority of astrologers do not go so far as to say there is free will, nor do they claim to be able to change outcomes simply because they are foreseen, possession of foreknowledge continues to inspire action. These actions are generally, in line with Brady's previous finding,⁸⁵ an effort toward co-creation with the cosmos. Notably, modern Hellenistic astrologers have shifted from the Stoic roots of acceptance and seeking inner peace; while it remains part of the goal, there is also active work to change future outcomes.

Findings indicate that a majority of the astrologers surveyed believe the source of fate is their life contributing to a larger pattern, but that different motivations for taking action mean that pattern-seeking is not always the primary reason for astrological practice. What astrologers want to *do* with the idea of there being a larger pattern generally outweighs basic human pattern-seeking. These motivations appear to be largely intrinsic, with themes around acceptance, guidance, and participation in spiritual practices foremost in responses. None of the astrologers surveyed believe that luck is a source of future outcomes, which could be an avenue for further research.

Astrologers are not simply assessing the future and then taking a single action to manage outcomes. They are reaching into an extensive toolbox of additional practices and techniques, from magic to divination to prayer, to work toward influencing the future. Fate-Focused Professionals primarily use astrology to identify the best fate management action to take, to act against misfortune, to seek balance, or to identify the root of future concerns by defining the most impactful or disruptive areas in an individual's life, although this varies by school. Astrology is also used to ascertain what

⁸⁵ Brady, *Theories of fate among present day astrologers*, p. 290.

tools or methods an individual might best use to achieve fate-shifting goals. In this sense, it is not so much a blind-faith belief system for practitioners—as may be implied when sceptics ask if one ‘believes’ in astrology—as it is a map or framework. Determining the best methods or areas to work in seems to be critical to the use of astrology for fate management, given that astrologers are using multiple tools to achieve their aims. Tools are used in a complementary sense, in that they are often used together to identify and take action on a perceived fated event, or a selection is made from a range of tools by assessing the best one for the task or the desired outcome.

The focus, secondary intentions, and role of astrology for fate management varies by school. Further research could explore connections between the philosophical origins of each school, the techniques available, and the way astrologers of each school use their practice in greater depth. For example, does the Stoic foundation and availability of length of life techniques in Hellenistic astrology dispose these practitioners to greater acceptance of future outcomes?

Three themes arise in how modern Fate-Focused astrologers approach fate management, involving a spiritual component, an element of personal growth, and/or the use of astrology as a coping mechanism for dealing with adverse outcomes either for oneself or in guiding or understanding the situations of others. In thinking about how astrology and spirituality intersect with fate management, astrology as a spiritual practice may be a source of both meaning-making and resilience for some practitioners. Here we see hints of Hellenistic-era Stoicism around finding acceptance of, and working with, one’s fate—even if some modern astrologers would reject that idea, at least in part, as overly fatalistic.

Personal growth stands out as the primary area of focus for the surveyed astrologers’ fate management efforts. This may be contextualized as identifying or breaking patterns that result in undesirable outcomes or outcomes that are worse than the individual perceives they could have been. It may be tied to efforts toward co-creation, with the belief that better outcomes are possible when one is working toward and achieving self-improvement. It may also be something of a side effect of the benefits of maintaining a spiritual practice that are noted in some of the cited studies on religion and health.

For those who have experienced traumatic events or witnessed them occur to others, astrology may also serve as a post-event coping mechanism for themselves or a

way to guide others through the fallout of the event by offering either or both of a spiritual anchor or a framework upon which meaning and structure can be imposed on what might otherwise look like a random or inevitable event. In this sense, fate management takes on a retroactive component, one which again brings in Stoic notions of managing one's *response* to fate, rather than future outcomes themselves, regardless of school.

While the layperson familiar only with Sun Sign astrology horoscopes might think of astrology as a predictive practice, and while the Identity Seekers on social media may think of it in terms of what it can say about their personalities, these three themes show where astrology is used to understand past outcomes, delineate and define current events, and make efforts toward co-creation of future outcomes. In other words, while fate might be defined as 'future outcomes', the fluidity of time and the practice of astrology as an understanding of time renders fate accessible as not only future, but also past and present—and Fate-Focused modern astrologers are navigating fate in all three senses in efforts to improve, mitigate, change, or otherwise influence outcomes in their lives or their clients'.

The main research issues are related to noted limitations, i.e. research being conducted only in English for an international audience, technological and resource considerations with regard to interviews or conference attendance, demographic considerations, and the focus on the United States as the predominant respondent pool. Given the varying cultural and societal contexts of a spiritual or astrological practice, it may be that replicating this research in different countries or languages would offer different findings (for example, conducting the research in India where there may be more Jyotish or Vedic practitioners operating outside of the more Hellenistic-derived frameworks more common to North America and where there is a different dominant religion). Additionally, the predominance of responses from Hellenistic astrologers and the relatively low numbers from several other schools means it is not possible to make strong comments about nuances between astrological schools, only about modern Fate-Focused Professionals in general. Further research could focus on the fate beliefs or fate management efforts of modern astrologers by school, rather than in aggregate, with comparisons to the beliefs of foundational texts or authors just within that school to draw out greater understanding of the differences between schools. Additionally, this study did not ask about respondents' race, but race can be tied to outcomes ('future outcomes' is part of the definition used for 'fate' in the questionnaire). Using maternal mortality in the

U.S. as an example, studies show that Black women are four times more likely to die in childbirth.⁸⁶ If the idea of ‘outcomes’ is extrapolated to other topics like health outcomes—which was a priority for Hellenistic astrologers in particular—it may be that not including race as a demographic factor misses important nuances in how some modern astrologers conceptualize and act on fate based on things like having a higher statistical likelihood of mortality for themselves or in their communities.

The evidence suggests that many astrologers are still using the stars as a tool to negotiate with the cosmos, despite the diversion away from fate as the main reason for some to use astrology. While there is general acceptance among Fate-Focused Professionals that not all outcomes can be changed, or that some outcomes can only be changed or mitigated to a certain extent, the possibility of change inspires action with astrology as the tool of choice for fate management efforts. These astrologers are not passive observers of the stars, nor are they using astrology for purely psychological, social, or entertainment-driven pursuits; this research indicates that they are still concerned with fate and act on the foreknowledge offered by their astrological practices, with these practices serving as a framework or scaffolding to support actions, as a map or guide to direct those actions, or both.

⁸⁶ Rolanda L. Lister, Wonder Drake, Baldwin H. Scott, and Cornelia Graves, ‘Black Maternal Mortality-The Elephant in the Room’, *PubMed Central* (27 July 2020) <<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7384760/>> [accessed 3 August 2025].

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🔮 ♀ 🐱 🍷 AstroTarot YogMaya of Cosmos 🐱 🐱 🐱 (@CosmicShakti37, 5 October 2025, tweet), <<https://x.com/CosmicShakti37/status/1974926056613429461>> [accessed 26 Dec 2025]

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Additional Social Media Posts Consulted as Examples for Development of Astrology User Typologies

Pop Astro Opportunists

Astro Wicca (@Astrowicca0, 20 Mar 2025), 'Pisces, Gemini, Libra, Cancer, Taurus, Leo Your fate is leading you someplace new - over the next 12 days you're going to find yourself somewhere new, surrounded by new people and things. a new version of you is being birthed from these new experiences' (tweet), <<https://x.com/Astrowicca0/status/1902726330820567071>> [accessed 26 December 2025]

Raven Withy (@ancientTarot3, 24 June 2025), 'Leo, Aries, Cancer, Capricorn, Taurus, Libra Luck in love - take a chance, follow your heart...it will pay off. this may be manifesting in a literal sense, bringing forth luck with a lover. this may also manifest for you in ways where you're having luck doing what you love.', (tweet), <<https://x.com/ancientTarot3/status/1937455915118080191>> [accessed 26 December 2025]

THE JAMN (@thejamn, 30 November 2025), 'Ranking the Top 3 zodiac signs of women most likely to fight you like a man / zodiac + astrology 101: these are the zodiac signs y'all should avoid getting angry 🥲 all fire signs & Cancer women as an honorable mention 🧑 they think it's a fake or something. what zodiac signs am I missing?' (Instagram reel) <<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DRsVCYYEimP/>> [accessed 26 December 2025]

Personality Testers

Informed by comments sections generally, but with specific examples below.

Comments section on Sarah France (@_thecosmicyogi, 6 November 2025), 'When a water sign (Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces) think they did a good job at hiding their true feelings but in reality when their vibe is off it's so palpable you could cut it with a knife 🥲' (Instagram reel) < <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DQuZApZiTVS/>> [accessed 26 December 2025]

Comments section on Typewriter Astrology (@typewriter_astrology, 6 November 2025), 'The fixed signs and the most dramatic of the bunch / The mutable signs and the most unhinged of the bunch / The cardinal signs and the most flustered of the bunch', (Instagram post) <<https://www.instagram.com/p/DQuwcDqkg1i>> [accessed 26 December 2025]

Community Seekers

Jill Diane (@jilldianepope, 17 October 2025), 'Yes I loved what @lschaim said in TAP episode about astrology and fate and how even when we find out about/start practising astrology is part of the story of our destinies. That was such a light bulb moment for me!' (Threads post), < <https://www.threads.com/@jilldianepope/post/DP6KzalCLCk> > [accessed 26 December 2025]

Professionals

Anna Bertrand (@astrology_with_annie, 25 September 2025) 'First, I absolutely LOVE that you're having this conversation and embracing the possibility as a doctor 🥰 As both an astrologer and energy healer, I explain fate vs free will like this; we incarnate with a pre-planned mission that has all these experiences and checkpoints to bring us along this destiny path (aka transit astrology). This is "fate", however, we do also have free will as humans. 1/2' (Threads post), <https://www.threads.com/@astrology_with_annie/post/DPCGJ9ogLNI> [accessed 26 December 2025]

imani la martienne (@youwomanyou, 6 July 2025), 'I really don't see astrology as causal as much as I see it as reflective. In the same way that I don't see Octavia E. Butler as prophetic as much as she is a student of history, which she's said herself. It's just pattern recognition. I personally feel like fate (whether it be partially or fully deterministic) is reflective of systemic things that shape people's life outcomes.' (Threads post) <<https://www.threads.com/@youwomanyou/post/DLxXxMhgZLJ>> [accessed 26 December 2025]

Jeffrey Diaz (@brothercazimi, 23 October 2025), 'At the beginning of my journey, I approached astrology as a way to "control" or take over the course of my life, soul, and fate. As my practice and understanding deepened, I began to see it instead as a theurgical art, one that requires no control at all. Through surrender, the soul evolves toward unity with the divine. It becomes a meditative act designed to transform the soul into likeness with the divine order.' (Threads post) <<https://www.threads.com/@brothercazimi/post/DQKVdMEkUiC>> [accessed 26 December 2025]

Appendix 2: Research Questionnaire

Comments in square brackets [] are my coding notes and were not shown to respondents.

Section 1: Study Information and Consent

Thank you for your interest in this study. This project seeks to understand the actions taken by astrologers, if any, to influence, manage, or mitigate the events and outcomes that occur in their lives. You may skip questions or quit the survey at any time without submitting your answers.

You must be at least 18 years old to participate.

Your email address is required to enable you to request a copy of your responses at the end of the survey if you toggle “Send me a copy of my response”. It will not be shared and you will not be contacted unless you request a copy of your response at the end of the survey or opt in to being considered for a further interview and are selected.

Your information and responses will be confidential and anonymous, and securely stored. By submitting this form, you consent to your anonymized data being used in this research project, including for analysis and publication.

Questions or requests to withdraw/delete your submission may be emailed to:

2209673@student.uwtsd.ac.uk with the subject line: Fate Management Astrology Participant.

This survey should take about 10 minutes to complete.

- I have read and agree to the terms above. [required – if they don’t agree there’s no point in them taking the rest of the survey]

Section 2: Your Practice and Fate Beliefs

Instruction: Please answer the following questions according to your currently held astrological practices and beliefs about fate (not what you think most people believe, and not what you think you “should” believe).

1. What is your primary school of astrology? [radio / one option]

Instruction: If you practice more than one form, please select the one that has the most influence on your practice, studies, or philosophy.

- a. Esoteric
- b. Evolutionary
- c. Hellenistic

- d. Humanistic
- e. Medieval Islamic
- f. Medieval Latin
- g. Psychological
- h. Uranian
- i. Vedic
- j. Other _____

2. What areas do you focus on? [checkbox / multiple selections possible]

Instruction: Please select all that apply.

- a. Natal
- b. Horary
- c. Electional
- d. Mundane
- e. Locational (e.g. Astro*Carto*Graphy)
- f. Medical
- g. Relational (e.g. synastry)
- h. Financial
- i. Other _____

3. How long have you been practicing or studying astrology? [radio]

- a. 0-2 years
- b. 3-5 years
- c. 6-10 years
- d. 11-20 years
- e. More than 20 years

4. Do you consider yourself... [radio]

- a. A student
- b. A private practitioner (not deriving income from astrology)
- c. A consulting professional (deriving income from astrological consultations)
- d. A non-consulting professional (deriving income from astrological work, but not consultations)

5. What is the main reason you currently practice astrology? [radio, randomize]

- a. To identify larger patterns and themes
- b. To help myself and/or others find greater acceptance of a given path in life
- c. To guide myself and/or others toward better outcomes
- d. To understand past events in retrospect
- e. To predict future events
- f. As part of a larger spiritual practice
- g. As part of a larger magical practice
- h. To take control of my life and future
- i. To find opportunities to actively influence future events
- j. Other _____

6. What do you believe is the main source of one's fate? [radio, randomize order]

For the purpose of this study, "fate" is defined as a future outcome for a person's life or actions.

- a. A single divine entity e.g. God
- b. A divine cosmos/nature e.g. plural deities, spirits, energies, celestial bodies

- c. A choice your soul made to be incarnated in a physical state at a certain place/time
 - d. Your actions in a previous life
 - e. The combination of all that has happened in the past with the physical laws of nature, which fixes a unique and possible future
 - f. Previous events in your own personal history, and/or your family history, and/or your cultural history
 - g. Your life being part of, and contributing to, a bigger pattern
 - h. The human desire for a pattern, which strings coincidences together into something that only appears meaningful
- 7. Which statement most closely aligns with your beliefs about future outcomes? [radio button, randomize order]**
- a. People have complete choice or control in creating outcomes [free will]
 - b. Things happen because of preceding events, actions, or environmental influences [determinism]
 - c. Things happen for a reason or because they must [fatalism]
 - d. There is a given outcome to certain things, but the severity or impact of the final outcome can be managed or influenced [mutable fatalism]
 - e. Things happen by chance [luck]
 - f. Some things we can change, some things we cannot [limited free will]
 - g. Other _____
- 8. To what extent do you believe it is possible to manage, mitigate, ameliorate, or otherwise influence one's personal fate? [radio, randomize]**
- a. It's completely impossible to manage fate; what will be, will be [100% fate]
 - b. It depends; sometimes it's possible, sometimes it's not [mutable fate]
 - c. It's completely possible to manage fate; we make our own outcomes [100% free will]

Section 3: Actions

This section will ask about your habits and activities with regard to influencing events and outcomes in **your life** over the last 6 months. Please focus on **actions you have taken for yourself and on your own behalf**, rather than those for or by a collective group or society.

For this study, 'fate management actions' are defined as actions taken in an effort to influence, improve, mitigate, or change the direction of outcomes your life.

- 9. Which methods have you used in the last 6 months to influence, improve, mitigate, or change the direction of your life? [checkbox / multiple choice]**
- Instruction:** Please choose any and all that you feel comfortable sharing.
- a. Actions at significant cultural, religious, or seasonal times (e.g. seasonal events like Solstice, saint days, holidays)
 - b. Actions on external environment (e.g. purifying, washing or smoking a space, energy work)
 - c. Affirmations, written or spoken

- d. Astrology (e.g. elections, planetary days/hours, predictive techniques, natal or psychological techniques, timing techniques)
- e. Candle magic
- f. Charity
- g. Consecrated objects or objects created or activated for a specific purpose but not ensouled (including poppets, figurines, plaques, jewelry, horseshoes, etc)
- h. Crystals
- i. Divination (e.g. bibliomancy, cartomancy, geomancy, pendulums, omens, oneiromancy/dreams, pyromancy, scrying)
- j. External actions on self (e.g. baths, smokes, scrapes, sprays, anointing, lotions, body butters, perfumes)
- k. Glamour magic
- l. Internal actions on self (e.g. edibles, intoxicants, foods, infusions, internally consumed products)
- m. Offerings to external entities, including deities, spirits, ancestors, or guides
- n. Magical working (e.g. a structured spell, casting, ritual action)
- o. Prayer or devotions (e.g. Orphic Hymns; addressing ancestors, deities, spirits, or guides)
- p. Remediation, whether astrological or otherwise
- q. Ritual materia (e.g. incense, candles, powder, oils or waters to use on an object or as part of a ritual)
- r. Talismans / ensouled objects
- s. Other: _____

10. What areas have been the main focus for fate management actions in the last 6 months? [checkbox / randomize order]

Instruction: Please choose no more than 3 areas, focusing on the most frequent.

- a. Career or work
- b. Health, including physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual
- c. Justice, including court appearances or efforts to right interpersonal or social unfairness or transgressions with personal impacts
- d. Money, including wealth, financial gain, financial speculation, financial security, rent/bill payments
- e. Non-financial resourcing (housing, material goods, property)
- f. Outcomes related to a result (testing, certification, exams)
- g. Personal growth or development, including remediation of difficult themes or enhancement of fortunate themes
- h. Protection, safety, or security of home, reputation, or body
- i. Relationships with others (friends, family, spouse, romantic or sexual partner, colleagues, peers; includes increasing likeability or attractiveness, smoothing interactions)
- j. Status (fame, visibility, influence, power, eminence)
- k. Other: _____

11. What has most frequently been your intent in the last 6 months? [checkbox / randomize order]

Instruction: Please choose no more than 3 options, focusing on your most frequent intentions.

- a. To dispel or mitigate an existing misfortune for future improvement
- b. To protect against predicted misfortune in a possible future situation
- c. To bring greater balance or fairness to a situation in the future
- d. To maintain an existing fortunate situation in the future
- e. To secure predicted good fortune in a possible future situation
- f. To enable or enhance someone else's role in a future event or outcome affecting me
- g. To block or reduce someone else's role in a future event or outcome affecting me
- h. To identify the best action
- i. To identify the root of the future concern
- j. Other _____

12. What role does astrology play in your fate management efforts? [checkbox / randomize order]

Please choose all that apply.

- a. Identifying areas or topics likely to be more or less impactful to the overall life
- b. Identifying areas more likely to see either especially desirable or especially difficult events
- c. Identifying natal chart placements for mitigation or emphasis
- d. Informing personal or psychological inclinations, strengths, or weaknesses
- e. Part of a magical practice that involves celestial or astrological considerations
- f. Predicting the nature or details of likely outcomes
- g. Directly influencing likely outcomes by selecting an auspicious date or time for a specific action in advance
- h. Taking advantage of auspicious dates or times (without actively selecting an inception chart)
- i. Astrology plays no role in my efforts; it's a separate practice
- j. Other _____

13. How frequently have you undertaken an action to influence, improve, mitigate, or change the direction of your life in the last 6 months? [radio]

- a. Daily
- b. Weekly (once or a few times per week)
- c. Monthly (once or a few times per month, but not every week)
- d. Quarterly (once or a few times every 3 months, but not every month)
- e. Yearly (once or a few times each year)

14. To what extent have public political, social, or economic situations in the last 6 months impacted your fate management efforts? [Likert scale]

- a. I have been much less active
- b. I have been a little less active
- c. No impact or change at all
- d. I have been a little more active
- e. I have been much more active

15. Is there anything else you'd like to share generally? [text box]

16. If you are open to possibly being contacted for a follow-up interview about your responses, please provide the best email address to contact you. [text box]

17. I consent to being contacted further about this study [tick box – affirmative opt in]

Section 4: Demographics

Instruction: The questions below are optional and will only be used to explore demographic correlations with responses in aggregate, if there are enough responses to ensure anonymity.

18. What is your age range? [radio]

- a. 18-24
- b. 25-34
- c. 35-44
- d. 45-54
- e. 55-64
- f. 65+
- g. Decline to respond

19. What gender do you identify as? [radio]

- a. Agender
- b. Cis man
- c. Cis woman
- d. Genderfluid
- e. Genderqueer
- f. Non-binary
- g. Trans man
- h. Trans woman
- i. Two-Spirit
- j. Other _____
- k. Decline to respond

20. What country or territory are you from? [Dropdown box – includes decline]