

Chapter 7

Surveying the Astrological Community

This chapter presents the results of my survey. The aim of this survey was to query a broad base of astrological practitioners about their views on fate. The survey also sought to investigate Adorno's claims that an acceptance of fate implied issues around authoritarianism, and to replicate the findings of Nichols and Knobe that the acceptance of determinism's influence on free will varied depending on the moral content of a situation. Additionally the survey sought to collect the diversity of 'natural beliefs' held by astrologers concerning fate or determinism. Consequently, apart from the aims just stated, the questions which constituted the questionnaire were derived primarily from pilot studies and discussion groups rather than produced solely from the literature reviews of chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. For ease of understanding the chapter has been organised around a set of questions. These questions are focused on themes, summarised graphically, with the full results provided in Appendix 1. The discussion of the implications for each set of questions occurs immediately after the graphical displays to ensure ease of reference back to the graphical data. This chapter reports on the quantitative survey results, while the next chapter, chapter 8, reports on the qualitative data collected from the surveyed astrologers.

Introduction

The survey sought to collect attitudes from a wide section of the astrological community. Michael Sheppard comments, that the debate in the social sciences as to what constitutes 'best-evidence' is on-going.⁷³⁹ The literature reviews of chapters 2 and 3 revealed a diversity of classical and philosophical thought on issues of fate, necessity, determinism, and free will; the literature review of chapters 4, 5 and 6 showed that a similar diversity of opinions existed within the astrological literature of the twentieth century. Therefore complementing the literature reviews and interviews with a quantifiable survey provided a

⁷³⁹ M. Sheppard, *Appraising and using social research in the human services: an introduction for social work and health professionals* (Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2004), p.13.

broader base of evidence on which to draw any conclusions. With such a diversity it was essential therefore that the survey not only embrace this diversity but also collect a large enough sample of data from a broad base of practicing astrologers in order to have the potential of being representative of the community. Only then, as Bryman argues, would it be possible to draw general conclusions from the survey results.⁷⁴⁰

The survey's design process

In order to meet all of these criteria the survey needed to be designed in two tiers: the questionnaire itself; and a strategy for distributing, and encouraging astrologers to participate in the survey. Phipps, Butani and Chun suggest that focus groups can be effective in helping develop the questions while a survey is in its concept development phase.⁷⁴¹ Thus three focus groups were employed at the developmental stage of the questionnaire design. Each group first completed, unaided, a pilot study survey, as suggested by Judith Bell, after which they were asked for comments and suggestions.⁷⁴² These groups were composed of practicing astrologers (n17), (n20) and (n47) and were held between May and June of 2007. Additionally, after the three pilot studies/focus group events, four separate structured interviews were conducted with individual practicing astrologers, during which each question was read out to the interviewee to ensure their understanding and to facilitate discussion of the question. These four interviews lead to further modifications of the questions. These interviews were conducted in July and August 2007.

While the questionnaire was in its developmental stage, I developed a database using Microsoft Access, with the awareness that this database would also impose design

⁷⁴⁰ Alan Bryman, *Quantity and Quality in Social Research*, ed. Martin Bulmer, Contemporary Social Research:18 (London: Routledge, 2001), p.116; Also see D.A.D. Vaus, *Surveys in social research* (Routledge, 2002), p.70.

⁷⁴¹ Polly A. Phipps, Shail J. Butani, and Young I. Chun, "Research on Establishment-Survey Questionnaire Design," *Journal of Business & Economic Statistics* 13, no. 3 (1995): p.339.

⁷⁴² Judith Bell, *Doing your Research Project* (Berkshire, UK: Open University Press, 2005), p.213.

elements on the final form of the survey.⁷⁴³ The database was adjusted and modified at each stage of the pilot studies/focus groups and structured interviews. Trial reports and analysis were conducted, each of which imposed design pressure on the survey. The survey focused on the collection of largely inventory data, beliefs about determinism and/or fate. Following the work of Theodore Singelis et al I analysed the data both vertically and horizontally. In horizontal analysis all the respondents are considered to be part of a single collective; vertical analysis perceives each individual as part of the collective as well as a unique set of beliefs in their own right.⁷⁴⁴ In this way the data could be used to look at an individual's linked beliefs. This was desirable as any theory of fate, discussed in chapter 2, was in itself a set or collection of individual personal beliefs combined into a personal perspective.

The final questions and their wording were based on the following: the on-going literature reviews; the responses of the pilot studies from the 84 astrologers who took part in the three different studies; the focus groups which were extension of the pilot studies; the four structured interviews; and finally, the database's imposed requirements for the vertical analysis of the results. I placed the final form of the questionnaire in the field from September 2007 to November 2008. A copy of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1.

Strategy to encourage response to the survey

The second concern in designing the survey was to develop a strategy for distribution to the target community, and to encourage astrologers to take part. Thomas argues that one of the major limitations of any survey, particularly where people are responding to them in isolation, is the small percentage of completed surveys that get returned.⁷⁴⁵ With this in mind, within the design specifications, the survey was made as short as possible and was tightly focused on the issues, resisting the temptation to add questions which, while

⁷⁴³ "Approaches to the Analysis of Survey Data," no. (2001), <http://www.rdg.ac.uk/ssc/publications/guides/topasd.html>. Accessed 30 July, 2006.

⁷⁴⁴ Theodore M Singelis et al., "Horizontal and Vertical Dimensions of Individualism and Collectivism: A Theoretical and Measurement Refinement," *Cross-Cultural Research* 29, no. 3 (1995): p.240.

⁷⁴⁵ Thomas, *Blending Qualitative & Quantitative Research Methods in Theses and Dissertations*: p.69.

perhaps interesting, may only have been superficial to my research. As a result, the survey contained 32 questions clearly divided into separate sections.

As an added stimulus, each participant was offered a personalised report of their individual thinking on fate as summarised from the 'results' of their survey answers. This report was created by using the vertical design features (see *figure 1* in Appendix 1) that I had built into the database, as discussed earlier, and enhanced with a small amount of text. If a participant supplied their email address with their submitted survey then this personalised report was emailed back to them. A total of 1019 (96%) of the participants requested such a report. A sample of one such report is supplied in Appendix 1. Generating these reports partly by hand and then personally dispatching them to each participant achieved two unexpected benefits: the first was that I was able to consider the vertical summary of the responses for every participant individually, resulting in a closer connection between myself and the data; the second was that it provided me with an opportunity to personally thank each astrologer and to ask them to encourage their astrological friends to participate in the survey, which in turn increased the number of participants.

Thomas considers one of the major limitations of an inventory survey is that it does not allow for 'respondents to elaborate their answers.'⁷⁴⁶ Therefore I included space for each participant to share their additional thoughts or comments. This part of the survey returned a surprising result of 86% of participants taking the opportunity to expand their personal views on astrology and/or fate. This qualitative data is examined in chapter 8.

Survey distribution and target group

As Miles and Haberman argue, before any meaningful generalisations can be drawn from the results of quantitative research it requires both a large sample size and a well-defined target group.⁷⁴⁷ Thus the survey was distributed within the bounds of the community of practicing astrologers, discussed in chapter 1. This distribution was conducted in two ways.

⁷⁴⁶ Thomas, *Blending Qualitative & Quantitative Research Methods in Theses and Dissertations*: p.69.

⁷⁴⁷ Miles and Huberman, *An Expanded Sourcebook, Qualitative Data Analysis*: pp.27-30.

Paper copies were handed out at the Sophia Centre Conference Bath Spa University, 9 June 2007, (25 handed out, 15 responses received), an academic conference attended by astrologers, as well as the following astrological conferences:

Astrological Association of Great Britain, 1- 2 September 2007. (143/62 responses).

The Sarastro School of Astrology conference Vienna, Austria, 4 October, 2007. (30/25 responses).

The College of Psychological Astrology seminar day in London, UK, 19 April 2008. (32/14 responses).

The Faculty of Astrological Studies Summer School, Oxford, UK, 22-23rd August 2008. (101/31 responses).

The Astrological Lodge of Great Britain, History Day, London, UK, 28 October 2007. (43/15 responses).

The NCGR Conference, New York, USA, 21 June, 2008. (90/21 responses).

United Astrological Congress in Denver, USA, 16-19th May 2008. (1100/162 responses).

From 1564 paper surveys handed out at these conferences 345 were returned yielding a return rate of 22%.

The second method of collection was through my personal website.⁷⁴⁸ The survey was uploaded to the website and then invitations were emailed out to 5000 readers of a newsletter designed for practitioners of astrology.⁷⁴⁹ Further request were sent to members of astrological associations within the UK and USA. These associations were asked to pass the survey on to their members. Astrologers could go to the website and fill in the survey and submit the completed survey via the web. The final result was that 717 electronic responses were received over the months of October and November 2008.

The total number of responses, paper and electronic, to the survey was therefore 1062. The astrologers who completed the survey were from the following 40 countries:

⁷⁴⁸ www.bernadettebrady.com

⁷⁴⁹ The *Visual Astrology Newsletter* archive is stored at http://www.zyntara.com/starlight_newsletters.htm

USA 429 responses representing 40% of the total; UK 224 (21%); Australia 111 (10%); Canada 79 (7%); Austria 33 (3%); Netherlands 27 (3%) ; South Africa 20 (2%); While 1% or less of astrologers resided in: Italy 15; Turkey 14; Germany 9; Belgium, France, Norway, New Zealand 8; Brazil, Switzerland 7; Ireland 6; Finland, Mexico 5; Greece 4; Romania, Spain, Sweden 3; Columbia, Cyprus, Hungary, Portugal. Puerto Rico, Serbia, Thailand 2; Argentina, Bulgaria, China, Costa Rica, Denmark, India, Malta, Panama, Uruguay, Venezuela 1.

In order to maintain control over the nature of the target group, as recommended by Miles and Haberman cited earlier, I decided not to use online social networks to distribute the survey, as this would have reached consumers of astrology rather than practitioners or theorists, as defined in chapter 1, and therefore may have changed the nature of the survey and its results.

Sample size

Campion pointed out that in 2002 membership of the major astrological associations, one in the UK and three in the USA, only numbered around 1000 members in each.⁷⁵⁰ Not all of my research community belonged to these associations, as some were members of smaller local communities. However, based on Campion's comments one can surmise that the global number in the west of practicing astrologers — those who go to conferences and construct horoscopes either professionally or for family — is small. Thus the sample size of 1062 may be sufficient for generalising from the categorical data represented by the survey's questions.⁷⁵¹ This claim is also supported by the concept of saturation. In discussing qualitative data or working with a community of unknown size, Greg Guest, Arwen Bunce and Laura Johnson comment that the most effective method of determining the correct sample size to allow for generalisation was to watch for data saturation, where

⁷⁵⁰ Campion, *A History of Western Astrology Volume II*: p.278.

⁷⁵¹ James E Bartlett, Joe W Kotrlik, and Chadwick C Higgins, "Organizational Research: Determining Appropriate Sample Size in Survey Research," *Information Technology, Learning, and Performance Journal* 19, no. 1 (2001): p.48.

no new themes emerged with any new data collected.⁷⁵² Such data saturation occurred with the survey after 620 – 670 responses had been collected. With data saturation reached in this range and the total sample size of 1062 achieved by November 2008, I closed the survey confident that a sufficient sample had been collected and that the findings of the survey were representative of my research group.

Strength and weakness of the survey

A potential weakness in the survey was the use of the online collection of data as, apart from the measures just cited, there was less control over the boundaries of the target group. To attempt to offset this, apart from avoiding online social networks outlined previously, the questions themselves were intentionally designed so that practitioner's knowledge of astrology was required in order to answer them. Indeed of the 717 online replies there was only one reply which was critical and vitriolic concerning the nature of astrology, while the other 716 responses appeared, from their answers and final comments, to confirm in different ways that the respondents were practitioners of astrology. Hence the potential weakness of the online method of distribution was outweighed by the advantage of the ease of reaching a larger number of astrologers.

Another potential weakness concerned the use of a survey for the collection of notions of belief. Bryman argues that a survey needs to take a preconceived structured approach to any issue which will therefore impose restrictions on the responses.⁷⁵³ With this in mind the extensive pilot studies, focus groups and interviews were conducted to help guarantee that this preconceived structure was broad enough to contain the occurrence of expected opinions. Furthermore, asking for additional comments from each participant ensured that if the survey was limiting or non-representative of a participant's opinions, then they had the opportunity to voice those opinions at the end of the survey. Of the 902 astrologers who added additional comments, only three suggested that their views on fate were not

⁷⁵² Greg Guest, Arwen Bunce, and Laura Johnson, "How Many Interviews Are Enough?," *Field Methods* 18, no. 1 (2006): p.59.

⁷⁵³ Bryman, *Quantity and Quality in Social Research*: p.94.

represented in the survey. All three expressed a view of fate which appealed to scientific theories.

Ethical considerations: anonymity of participants

As participants were not required to place their name on the survey their anonymity was maintained. They could, however, add their email address to enable a personal report of their results to be sent back to them. All participants were coded with a unique number before being placed into the database (see Appendix 1, *figure 2* for an example of the database entry screen). Their email address, if supplied, was not stored. Thus, although every record in the database can be linked back to its original paper or electronically completed survey, the respondents' anonymity has been maintained. Additionally my research database is not available to the public.

The questions

The questionnaire produced a substantial amount of data which could be analysed in many different ways. Many of the questions asked the astrologers about their opinions on 'fate' and the questionnaire defined 'fate' as:

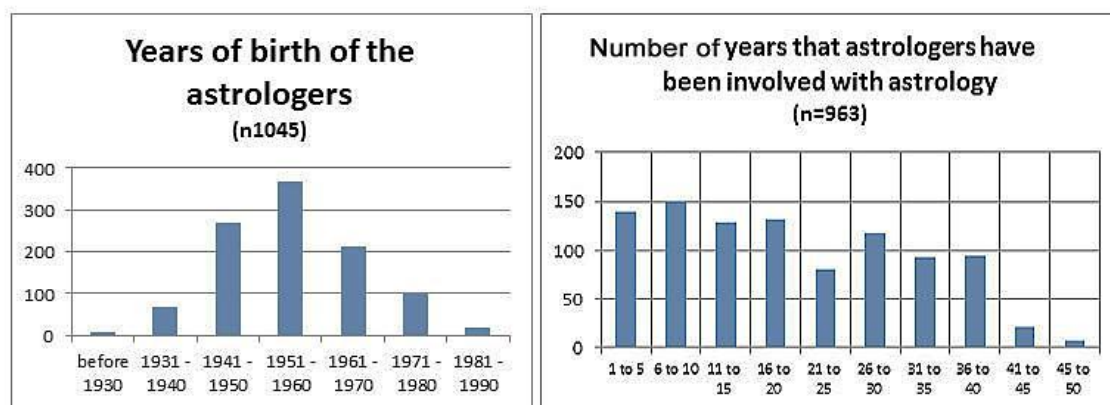
A central tenet of astrology is that something is written at the moment of a birth or a moment in time and place and some component of this moment has a bearing on the future. In this survey, this component, which astrology explores via horoscopes, is labelled the "fate" of a person's life or the "fate" contained in a moment in time.⁷⁵⁴

Attributes

The demographical questions were kept to a minimum, as the survey was sampling the range or diversity of opinions within the community rather than focusing on linking a particular belief or opinion to a precise attribute within the astrological community. Thus the attributes of gender (Male, n194, Female, n868) and country of residence, as cited

⁷⁵⁴ See Appendix 1 for the full questionnaire.

earlier in this chapter, were collected. Additionally in order to help inform the literature review the astrologers were asked to list the authors that had influenced their astrology. Participant were also asked for their year of birth (see *figure 1*) and how long they had been involved with astrology, either professionally or as a hobby (see *figure 2*).



(Left) *Figure 1* — Years of birth of the respondents 17 did not answer the question.

(Right) *Figure 2* — Years of involvement with astrology 99 did not answer the question.

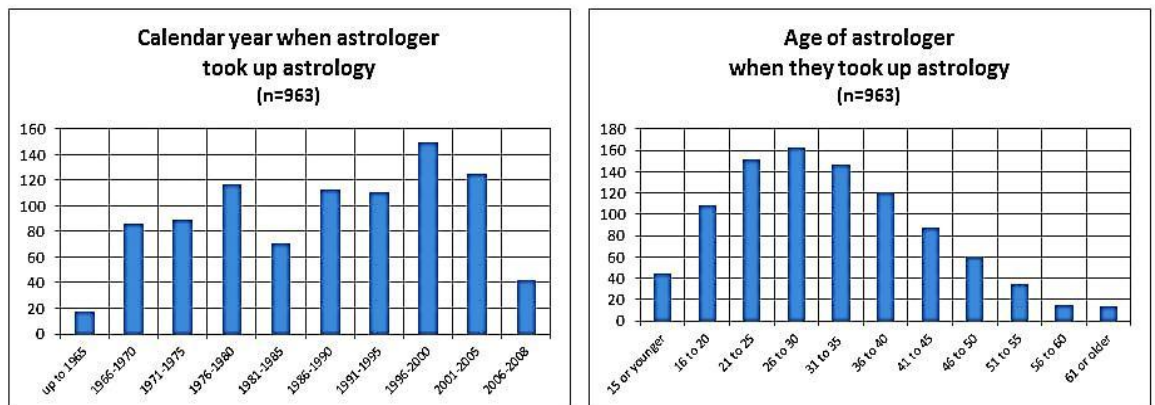
The average participant can be described as female and aged between her mid-40s and early-60s, who lived in either the USA or the UK. The oldest participant was 90 years old and the youngest was 20 years old. *Figure 2* shows the number of years a participant had been involved with astrology at the time of the survey (2007–2008).

The graph in *figure 2* implies that once a person engaged with astrology they remained interested in the subject. If there was a tendency for a person to become discontented or disillusioned with astrology, after a maximum period of 5 years, the graph would show a peak at the one-to-five year column; then, as people left the subject, the graph would show a steady decline in numbers. This is not the case, as the survey shows a fairly consistent number of astrologers through to 20 years of involvement, after which the numbers do drop. However, such a drop could be due to many reasons, one of which logically could be death.

Additionally the graph in *figure 2* can be read in another way. Since the survey was conducted in 2007/8, the results for 36-to-40 years of interest in astrology indicate that

these people became interested in astrology in the late 1960s early 1970s. In a similar way the results for 31-to-35 years of interest represent those people who became interested in astrology in the mid-1970s. Continuing in this manner, the graph in *figure 2* indicates that there is a reasonable consistency of people who become involved with astrology from the late 1960s through to the present day. Indeed *figure 2* indicates that the number of people drawn to study astrology and who become astrological practitioners has remained reasonably constant over the last 40 years.

The graphs in *figure 3* and *figure 4* show the age of the participant and the calendar year of when they commenced their study of astrology. This is metadata derived from the participants supplying their year of birth and the length of time they had been an astrologer.



(Left) *Figure 3* – The calendar years that participants took up astrology.

(Right) *Figure 4* – The age of the participants when they took up astrology.

These results showed that people (4.5 times more likely to be a woman than a man) tended to take up astrology in their early 20s to mid-30s (*figure 4*). They also showed that since the mid-1970s the numbers of people taking up astrology has generally maintained a similar level to the present day (*figure 3*).

Investigating the consistency of the belief of the influence of determinism and/or fate

In 2006, as discussed in chapter 1, the US philosopher Shaun Nichols conducted research into peoples' beliefs on the influence of determinism in their lives. He found that people

considered that the influence of determinism varied depending on the moral content of the situation.⁷⁵⁵ Nichols was working within the field of experimental philosophy and used the instrument of a survey which used a vignette technique to explore beliefs. A vignette technique, according to Mason, is one '...where respondents are given imaginary people in imaginary situations and asked to decide what those people should do.'⁷⁵⁶ Nichols' vignettes used the technique of psychological duplicates, which is a thought experiment wherein a person is asked to imagine that they have a twin who lives in another world and is identical to them with an identical history. The survey then asked people varying questions concerning the actions of the twin and whether they would also act the same way. Nichols found that people accepted that they would duplicate the action of the twin in minor situations but, where the twin took morally questionable actions or actions which attracted strong emotions, then the participant did not follow suit. Thus Nichols' survey showed that participants believed that their lives were governed by determinism for minor events but rejected such beliefs for more morally questionable situations. Nichols labelled this inconsistency as 'folk intuition' as it disagreed with the accepted nature of beliefs concerning determinism within philosophy which was that an individual was consistent in their belief regardless of the situation. However, in the seventeenth century David Hume, discussed in chapter 3, had theorised the existence of such varying beliefs within a single individual as he suggested that people's beliefs were subject to the varying conditions of their environment or situation.⁷⁵⁷ Norman Kemp Smith labelled this Humean notion of varying beliefs which arise naturally from one's life as 'natural beliefs'.⁷⁵⁸

This survey followed Nichols' methodology by using vignettes and varying the moral content of the questions to the astrological community to also look for evidence of 'natural beliefs' in relation to matters to do with fate.

⁷⁵⁵ Nichols, "Folk Intuitions on Free Will".

⁷⁵⁶ Mason, "Linking qualitative and quantitative data analysis," p.90.

⁷⁵⁷ Hume, *A treatise of human nature*: VI p.180.

⁷⁵⁸ Smith, "The Naturalism of Hume (I) " p.151; Also see: Mounce, *Hume's naturalism*: p.2.

Astrological vignettes

Most astrologers accept that the incidents in their life are in some sympathetic or symbolic way linked to the movement of the planets. The survey used this notion to create a series of vignette situations. The astrologers were told that every time a person experienced a particular astrological event in their horoscope it coincided with a certain incident occurring in their life. They were then asked, in differing ways, what they thought would happen the next time the astrological event reoccurred. In this way the survey mapped astrological events to Nichols' psychological duplicates. The astrological vignette questions were varied by changing the emotional content, shifting the situations between objective and subjective situations, and moving from theoretical to practical expressions. However, as with Nichols' research, these questions contained the element of abstraction as the questions asked about a situation rather than physically placing the astrologers into that situation. All of these questions were structured as multiple choices and were worded using astrological terminology and concepts that were familiar to practicing astrologers as revealed in the survey development process cited earlier. The concepts of each of the vignette questions are listed in the following table, while the questions themselves with their astrological terms are given in the questionnaire and discussed more fully in Appendix 1 under 'Investigating the consistency of the belief in fate'.

Question	Focus	Subject
Q.2.4	No Emotional Content (Practical/objective)	A repeating astrological event linked to a reoccurring minor incident for another person — will it repeat?
Q.3.2	Mild Emotional Content (Practical/subjective)	Does the astrologer believe that they are fated not to like types of people?
Q.3.1	High Emotional Content (Practical/subjective)	Does the astrologer believe that they are fated not to like family members or personal partner?
Additional questions asked concerning theoretical situations		
Q.2.3	Theoretical/subjective	How the astrologer used the knowledge gained from the forecasts from predictive astrology.

Q.2.5	Theoretical/objective	If a repeating astrological event is always linked to a reoccurring incident for a person — what did this suggest about that person?
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Table 1 — A guide as to the intent of the astrological vignette questions which measured the astrologer's belief in fate over varying situations.

Belief in natural hard incompatibilism reduces with increase of emotional content

Questions 2.4 asked the astrologer about an imaginary situation concerning another individual with no moral or emotional issues involved. While 3.2 and 3.1 asked a similar question but increase the emotional content of the imaginary situation. The results of these questions, divided by gender are shown in *figure 5*. The survey showed that more males than females held beliefs that the horoscope foretold an inevitable future, Cicero's assumption cited in chapter 1.

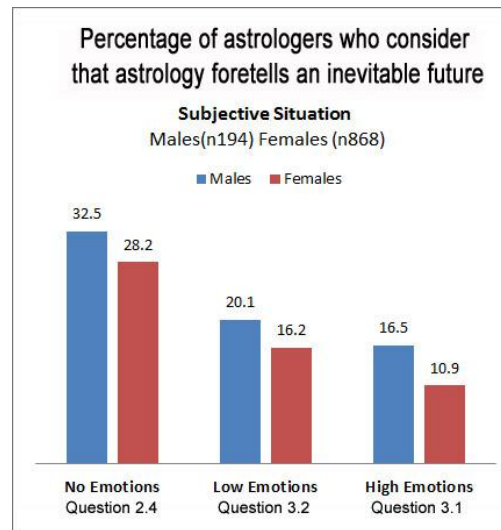


Figure 5 — Percentage of astrologers who, according to their responses, hold a belief that astrology foretells an inevitable future. Survey questions 2.4, 3.1 and 3.2.

For both sexes the highest percentage of apparent acceptance of such inevitability was for the non-emotional situation — 32% of all male astrologers and 28% of all female astrologers (*see figure 5*). However, when the question changed to a mild emotional content issue (Q 3.2) the results varied as now only 20% of males and 16% of females suggested that they held a belief that astrology foretold an inevitable future (*see figure 5*).

Finally when faced with answering a question which involved high emotional content (Q.3.1) the numbers dropped again to now 16% of male astrologers and only 11% of female astrologers. These results show a drop across the three questions of increasing emotional content from for male astrologers, 32% to 16% and for female astrologers from 28% to 11%.

This phenomena is the same as observed by Shaun Nichols, and later Nichols and Joshua Knobe, when they surveyed what they describe as lay-people, or the philosophically naïve.⁷⁵⁹ They found that lay-peoples' acceptance of the truth of determinism in their own lives was inversely proportional to the moral or emotional content of the situation. Thus in the case of the astrologers, as with Nichols' students, they accepted as a default position the influence of an inevitable form of fate to dictate the flow of events. However, many believed that they had the power to influence fate if the potential outcome was offensive to their own moral integrity or if the emotional consequences were too high. These results also show that the 'natural beliefs' amongst astrologers may be supporting the philosophical arguments of Harry Frankfurt and also Susan Wolf and David Cockburn, cited in chapter 3, who consider in varying arguments, that moral responsibility is the central issue to the free will dilemma, rather than the apparent polarity of free will and determinism. For even more than Nichols' and Knobe's students, the astrologers placed issues of emotional consequences, moral responsibility, separate to or independent of any beliefs concerning the dichotomy of fate and free will. As Wolf argues:

If inevitable features of myself — my gender, my race, my nationality, for example — and rationally arbitrary choices and twists of fate have shaped my values and decisions, this does not seem to me to place objectionable limits on my status as a free and responsible agent. ... These nonrational determinants are, after all, what give us our individuality and distinctiveness. they provide the basis for a substantive identity and an attachment to the world without which no interest in freedom and responsibility could arise.⁷⁶⁰

⁷⁵⁹ Nichols, "Folk Intuitions on Free Will"; Nichols and Knobe, "Moral Responsibility and Determinism: The Cognitive Science of Folk Intuitions."

⁷⁶⁰ Wolf, *Freedom within Reason*: p.146.

Hence using Wolf's argument, any belief in astrology and/or fate, which adds to one's 'individuality and distinctiveness', supports moral responsibility.

Also, when Nichols surveyed students taking an introductory course in philosophy (n30), he found that 46% of them accepted that life was governed by determinism (hard incompatibilism) while in his work with Knobe with undergraduates from the University of Utah, they found that the acceptance of determinism in life was 90% while only 28% of those same students still maintained their hard incompatibilism in the face of the crime of murder.⁷⁶¹ They do acknowledge that this percentage varied considerably depending on the wording of questions, and also noted their small sample sizes. However, they considered it normal to encounter a 90% acceptance of hard incompatibilism within 'folk intuition'.⁷⁶² Similarly Robert Kane, coming from a non-experimental philosophy position, concludes that most people accept the implications of hard incompatibilism.⁷⁶³

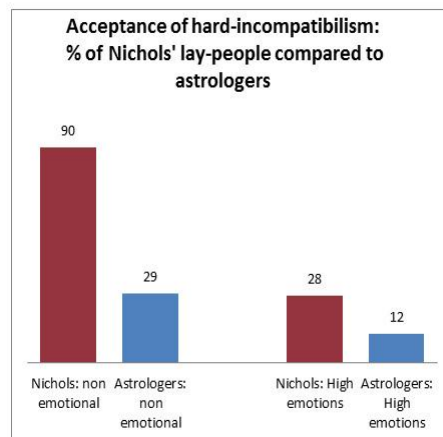


Figure 6 — Nichols and Knobe, their Utah University student results for % of acceptance of hard incompatibilism compared to the % of acceptance of an inevitable future amongst the survey astrologers.

⁷⁶¹ Nichols and Knobe, "Moral Responsibility and Determinism: The Cognitive Science of Folk Intuitions," p.12.

⁷⁶² Nichols and Knobe, "Moral Responsibility and Determinism: The Cognitive Science of Folk Intuitions," p.8.

⁷⁶³ Robert Kane, "Responsibility, Luck, and Chance: Reflections on Free Will and Indeterminism," *Journal of Philosophy* 96, no. 5 (1999): p.217.

However, in the case of the astrologers, this apparent acceptance of natural hard incompatibilism, in terms of their belief that the horoscope produces an inevitable future, was considerably less (see *figure 6*). The highest figure for the most abstract of situations showed that only 29% of astrologers (combined male and female) accepted a natural hard incompatibilist answer while in situations involving emotional issues this dropped to as low as 12% for the astrologers. These survey results indicate that incorporating astrology into one's lifestyle may override what Nichols considered to be 'folk intuition' displacing natural hard incompatibilism with a more focused, purpose-filled theory of fate. Such a theory of fate could provide the astrologer with a natural compatibilist solution to the free will dilemma. Alternatively it could imply that people who were drawn to astrology were those who were naturally less inclined to accept the implications of the laws of physics which underpin hard incompatibilism.

Astrologers and Adorno's authoritarianism

One of the consequences of the assumption that astrologers accept fate in their life is the belief, as promoted by Theodore Adorno, that astrologers have authoritarian personalities.⁷⁶⁴ A similar view was argued by Dean, Kelly and Mather, cited in chapter 1, who considered that people who use astrology have a psychological weakness and their involvement with the subject moves them into a position where they give up control of their lives.⁷⁶⁵ To test these views, the survey included options which looked for authoritarian character traits, indications that the astrologer gave up control of their life to the possible fate contained with astrology. Each question listed earlier in *Table 1* allowed the astrologer to answer by selecting from one of six options, three of these options were for attitudes to fate that would imply, by Adorno's criteria on lack of control, an authoritarian personality issue. For each vignette question the individual could select an option that indicated that they would be angry and blame the planets but take no other action, or develop fears around the forthcoming event, or just brace for the worst, all of which would suggest that the individual felt that they had no control over their lives (see Appendix 1 for the questionnaire and *Table 1* in this chapter for the list of questions).

⁷⁶⁴ Adorno, "The Stars Down to Earth: the Los Angeles Times Astrology Column," p.121.

⁷⁶⁵ Dean, Kelly, and Mather, " Astrology " pp. 47-99.

There was one other option which accepted the inevitability of the future that did not imply authoritarian issues, but indicated a Ptolemaic/Stoic like attitude, discussed in chapter 5, to simply accept the events and move on.

The full results of these options can be seen in *figure 3* in Appendix 1 where the percentage responses are given together with the raw numbers. However, this survey found only minor support for Adorno's claims. *Table 2* shows that Q.2.5, which asked about a minor event happening to another person, produced the largest percentage of astrologers (17.4%) who selected a possible authoritarian response: they allocated blame to the planets; they feared the forthcoming event; or they submitted to it and braced for it, expecting the worse. However, when a similar question was asked in a personal category (Q.2.3) with greater emotional content, then only 9.2% selected a potential Adorno authoritarian-type reply of blame, fear or submit.

Testing for Adorno's Control Hypothesis % of astrologers that may fit into his hypothesis				
17.4%	9.2%	15.7%	15.5%	11.7%
Q. 2.5 Theoretical/ objective	Q. 2.3 Theoretical/ subjective	Q. 2.4 Practical/Objective No emotions	Q. 3.2 Practical/subjective Low emotions	Q. 3.1 Practical/subjective High emotions

Table 2 — Percentage of astrologers who gave responses that could reflect authoritarian attitudes (blame, fear or submit) in the various situations ranging from theoretical situations to the practical situation, and ranging from no emotional to high emotional issues. (n1062). The figures in this table are the sum of rows 2, 3 and 4 in figure 3 in the appendix.

Additionally the survey found only minor support for the Ptolemaic/Stoic position of simply accepting, as their fate, the inevitability of a forthcoming event. In a non-emotional situation (Q 2.4) 13.4% of astrologers selected this option but for a high emotional situation (Q. 3.1) only 0.3% of astrologers maintained their Ptolemaic/Stoic position (See *figure 3*, Appendix 1 for the full results).

Belief in fate and/or determinism as true over time

Nichols posed two additional questions, one of which concerned the influence of culture on an individual's intuitive beliefs, and the other being a query on whether training as a philosopher could actually alter one's intuitions about determinism.⁷⁶⁶ He did not reach a conclusion. However, this question can be considered with regard to the astrological community. If astrology as a subject promotes the acceptance of an inevitable future, as assumed by many outsiders, then one would expect that the longer a person was involved in astrology, the higher their response would be towards accepting a natural hard incompatibilist options. *Figure 7* shows the percentage of astrologers who selected the natural hard incompatibilist options over the length of time they had been involved in astrology.

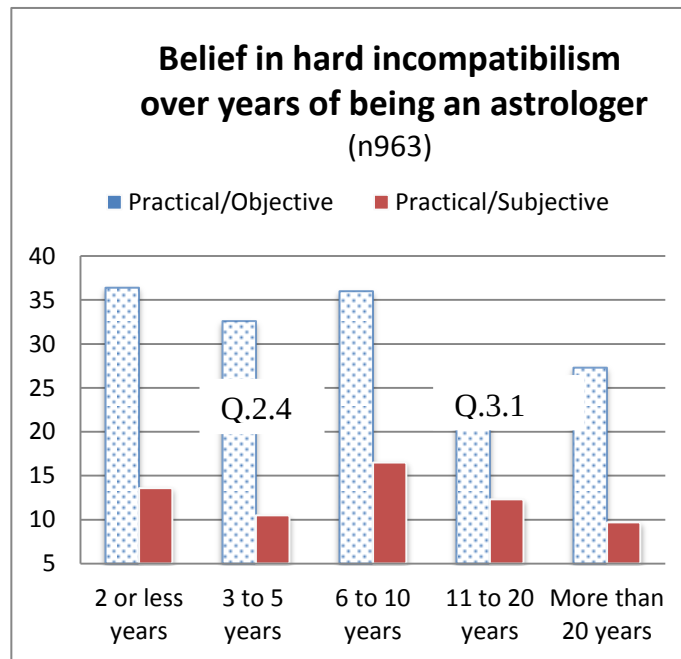


Figure 7 — Percentage of astrologers who showed an acceptance of a natural hard incompatibilist option (the inevitability of the future) in their responses to the non-emotional content (Q.2.4 dotted bar) and high emotional content (Q.3.1 solid red bar) questions in Table 1 displayed with the number of years the person had been an astrologer.

⁷⁶⁶ Nichols, "Folk Intuitions on Free Will".

Figure 7 shows that within the first two years of involvement 36.4% of beginner astrologers accepted the future as inevitable in a non-emotional situation (blue dotted bar) while in the same group this percentage dropped to only 13.6% when the situation was highly emotional (red solid bar). These two sets of percentages eventually dropped to 27% and 9.7% respectively for people who had been astrologers for longer than 20 years. This result indicates that involvement with astrology does not support a requirement that the individual accept that the horoscope produces an inevitable future resulting in an acceptance of natural hard incompatibilism. (See Appendix 1, *figure 4*, for a full table of these results). On the contrary it indicates that involvement with astrology moves a person towards either natural compatibilism or libertarianism as defined in chapter 1.

These results, and those given in *figure 6*, show that in 'lay person's' terms astrologers are less 'fatalist' than the average person, in contradiction to Kane cited above. In this regard, acceptance of a theory of fate, which seems to be a requirement of astrology, actually encourages a natural compatibilist position, moving the individual away from any notions of 'fatalism'. These results are in direct contradiction to the arguments of Dawkins, Dean, Kelly and Mather who all argue that astrology moves a person into accepting 'fatalism' and hence giving up control of their lives.⁷⁶⁷

Prediction and *kairos* time

In chapter 5 the issue of time and fate were discussed. Prediction consists of both a time and an event and thus the survey sought to explore astrologers' opinions on prediction by separating these two components of a prediction, time and event.

The result of this split showed that the majority of astrologers do accept astrology's ability to make a prediction but this prediction is not the amalgamation of 'Time and Event' but rather 'Time without Event'. This distinction has generally been overlooked in the past. For example, in the work of Feher she linked the use of astrology for predictive means with a secular (non-spiritual) astrology. She created this distinction based on whether the

⁷⁶⁷ See Dean, Kelly, and Mather, "Astrology" pp. 47-99.

astrologers made predictions from the chart. However, she failed to ask what they meant by prediction.⁷⁶⁸ To address Feher's assumption, I extracted two groups from my data those who 'strongly agreed' that fate was an expression of God's will or the 'will of the gods'. This group was labelled the 'spiritual' group. The second group were those who 'strongly disagreed'. This group was labelled the 'non-spiritual' group.

	Time and Event Fixed	Time Fixed Event NOT Fixed	Neither time nor event fixed.	Number of astrologers
Spiritual Astrologers	8.4%	76.2%	6.6%	227
Non-Spiritual Astrologers	8.4%	72.8%	12.4%	202

Table 3 – Prediction verses 'spirituality' within astrology.

The table, *Table 3*, shows that in both groups the percentage of astrologers who believed that one could make hard prediction from a horoscope — both Time and Event — were equal on 8.4%. These astrologers hold a natural hard incompatibilist position with regard to fate. However, with regard to the time being predictable but *not* the event, marginally the more spiritual astrologers accepted this premise, while the non-spiritual astrologers (using Feher's definitions) showed a higher percentage of believing that astrology could not be used in any manner to make a prediction — 12.4% to only 6.6% for the spiritual astrologers.

Thus the survey revealed that astrologers, as discussed in chapter 5, regardless of their spiritual inclination, consider that time is embedded with a quality. This quality is bestowed by the future geometrical alignments dictated by both their horoscope and future planetary cycles. Such a view of time which is embedded with quality is similar to the Greek notion of *kairos* time.⁷⁶⁹ Thus for the astrologer their natal horoscope creates fixed

⁷⁶⁸ Feher, "Who Holds the Cards? Women and New Age Astrology," p.180.

⁷⁶⁹ Jacques, *The Form of Time*: pp.14-15.

'places' in future time where they are fated to deal with a certain quality at a fixed point in time. Their horoscope produces a personal life-long calendar with some dates already 'filled in'. Questions 2.6 and 2.7 explored the astrologer's attitude to this version of fate in their lives. A summary of these results is presented in *figure 8*, while the full table of results can be found in Appendix 1 in *figure 5*.

The results shown in *figure 8* suggest that the majority of astrologers accept that astrology can provide them with the timing of future events but is unable to provide the exact nature of those events. This demonstrates that astrologers accept that the horoscope provides or fixes 'places' in their future, places where they are 'fated' to encounter a theme or quality. This is one of the expressions of the belief in the non-inevitable nature of the horoscope, as they accept the determined nature of timing but not the determined nature of the actual events.

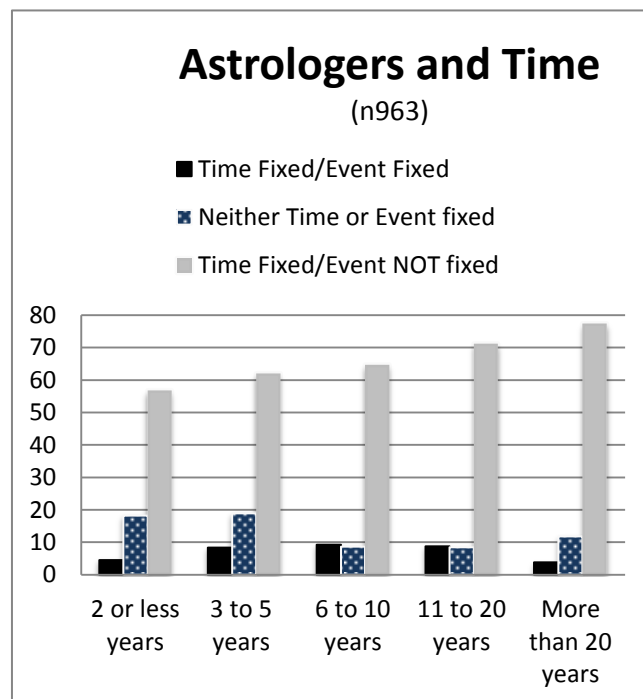


Figure 8— Percentage response of astrologers to Q. 2.6 and Q.2.7 grouped by years of involvement with astrology. The solid bar represents those astrologers who hold a natural hard incompatibilist belief that both time and event are inevitable while the grey bar those astrologers who accept a natural compatibilist belief in the kairos-like nature of time where time is fated but not the nature of events. The dotted bar is non-acceptance of either premise.

Furthermore these results shows that this belief in a *kairos*-like time actually increases the longer a person is involved with astrology. The graph in *figure 8* shows that only 56.8% of the new astrologers accepted this *kairos*-like view of fate and time (the first grey bar on the left in *figure 8*), while the number of astrologers supporting this belief steadily increases over the years involved with astrology. A total of 77.4% of astrologers who have been involved with the subject for more than twenty years (the last grey bar on the right in *figure 8*) support a *kairos*-like view of fate and time. This result is the reverse of the acceptance of a natural hard incompatibilist position by astrologers (as displayed in *figure 7*) which decreased over time the longer they were involved with astrology. These results indicate that the *kairos*-like nature of time is an inherent feature of astrology which the individual adopts over time. Furthermore *Karios* time can produce a natural compatibilist attitude as the time is fixed but the actual expression of the event is open, thereby allowing the individual to take some form of action to 'adjust' the expression of the forthcoming event. Hence *figure 8* shows that amongst astrologers natural compatibilism increases the longer they are involved in the subject. Linked with the results in *figure 7*, which show that the longer a person is involved with astrology the greater the rate of rejection of natural hard incompatibilism, an image emerges which is the opposite of that argued by Adorno, Dawkins, Dean, Kelly and Mather who consider that astrology imposes fatalism on its practitioners. These survey results show that astrology actually displaces fatalism and imposes natural compatibilism on its practitioners.

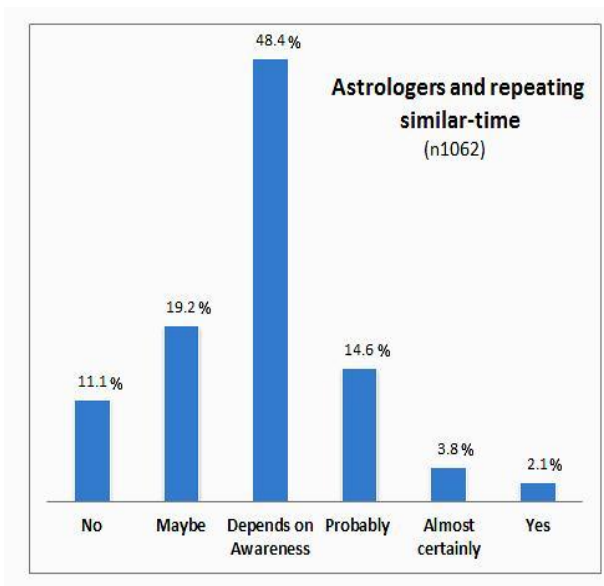


Figure 9 — Response of astrologers expressed as percentages to Q 2.4 on the repetition of a planetary cycle with the astrologers being asked whether the same event would reoccur.

Evidence of living in a sympathetic cosmos, the participatory life-style

The other feature of time within astrology, already discussed in chapter 4 in considering the astrology of Louise McWhirter and Dane Rudhyar, is that of 'similar time' or what Rudhyar described as 'spiral time'.⁷⁷⁰ This is based in what Rudhyar described as a planetary cycle being emergent and therefore indicating a similar but not an exactly repeat occurrence of an event.

Question 2.4 asked the astrologer to imagine a practical/objective situation where the history of a regular repeating planetary cycle in a person's life had always coincided with a particular minor incident (see *Table 1* in this chapter). They were asked whether, if this planetary cycle was going to occur again in the near future, would they expect that the same event would occur in the person's life. The astrologer could select from a range of responses. *Figure 9* shows these responses. While 11% answered 'no' (belief in no link between planetary cycles and events) and 2% answered 'yes' (a belief in an inevitable future), the majority selected options in-between with 48% aligning the occurrence of the

⁷⁷⁰ Ertan, *Dane Rudhyar: his music, thought, and art*: p.10, p.19.

future event directly with the individual's ability to control their fate by some form of awareness.

If these results as displayed in *figure 9*, that show strong support for the idea that future can be altered by 'awareness', are linked with the results shown in *figure 8*, which show the support for the notion of *kairos* time, then these two sets of results suggest a theory of fate. This theory of fate would be focused on a participatory relationship with a sympathetic cosmos. This relationship was one where the astrologer had knowledge of a future period of time and a belief that one could take action, in some manner, to influence the expression of the future event. Such a participation theory of fate is reflective of C.C.Zain's thinking in the early twentieth century, reviewed in chapter 5. He argued that personal awareness lead to a participatory relationship with the cosmos which in turn provided influences on the future, which he called the Law of Affinity.⁷⁷¹ This result also supports the writings of Hone and Greene, discussed in chapter 6, where reason or consciousness could be used to shape the events of the forthcoming 'fated' time. Furthermore these results also support the arguments of the dualist astrologers Leo and Rudhyar, discussed in chapter 4, who, holding a natural libertarian position, also considered that one could either be immune from the events or alter them in some way. However, Ptolemy, Ebertin and Johndro, cited in chapter 5, who leant towards a natural hard incompatibilist position, were only supported by 5.9% of the astrologers who selected the 'Almost certainly' and 'Yes' options.

These survey results indicates that the majority of astrologers believe, as originally argued by Plato in 4th century B.C.E., that reason and awareness enabled one to change the future of one's existence.⁷⁷² This is such a strong theme amongst astrologers that it may actually be a deep theory of fate onto which other personal beliefs concerning the source or purpose of fate are attached. This theme also emerged in the interviews discussed later in chapter 9.

⁷⁷¹ Zain, *Delineating the Horoscope*: p.6.

⁷⁷² Plato, *Timaeus*: 42d.

Fate as pattern and telos

The survey was also designed to explore whether astrologers derived any notions of fate from patterns or teleology, for the eventual revealing of a pattern through time requires that the future has limited options. Alfred Whitehead challenged the dominant idea of a universe governed by evolution and, discussed in chapter 3, he posits a return to a Stoic-like immanent teleological world, where each event or living object is linked to both the past and the future.⁷⁷³ Also within process philosophy, discussed in chapter 3, there are debates concerning whether the occurrences of events are indeed truly random and just happen to fall into a type of order, or whether the order is a pattern which naturally imposes a level of influence on the events.⁷⁷⁴

Teleology was also a theme within many of the classical theories of fate reviewed in chapter 2, such as the themes of Platonic external teleology, the soul's need to return to a divine source, which are seen in the work of the twentieth century dualist astrologer Alan Leo, reviewed in chapter 4. Apart from the Platonic theological teleology there is also naturalistic Aristotelian teleology, internal *telos*, which can be seen in the work of Dane Rudhyar in chapter 4, C.C.Zain in chapter 5, and Michael Meyer in chapter 6. In order to examine attitudes to this astrological tradition, the survey explored the presence, and/or nature of, any beliefs in teleological concepts within the astrological community.

There were three questions in the survey that were focused on astrologers' attitudes to Aristotelian teleology, rather than a Platonic theological teleology. These questions were:

- i. Q.3.3, which asked about the expected similarities in family members' horoscopes, thus suggesting that the family was holistic, an emergent pattern to which the unborn child either choose to engage, or was required to conform.
- ii. Q.4.1.7 which asked if astrologer thought the source of fate was the result of naturally emerging patterns in the web of life.
- iii. Q.4.2.5 which asked if the astrologer thought that the purpose of astrology was to live in harmony with the patterns of the world.

⁷⁷³Whitehead, *Adventures of ideas*: p.186.

⁷⁷⁴ Rescher, *Process Metaphysics, an introduction to process philosophy*: p.99.

For each question the astrologer was presented with a Likert scale which measured their degree of acceptance of teleology. A Likert scale is set of five scaled answers — in this survey they ranged from strong disagreement to strong agreement.⁷⁷⁵ By using a consistent scale for the answers to all three questions a vertical analysis could be used to produce an individual's overall score for a belief in fate as teleology and/or pattern. Each of the answers to the three questions was allocated a score from -2 to +2. Thus 'strong disagreement' on all three questions gave a score of -6 to that participant, while 'strong agreement' produced a score of +6. Total neutrality for all three questions would produce a score of zero. *Figure 10* is the graph of the results for the scores from each of the 1062 astrologers.

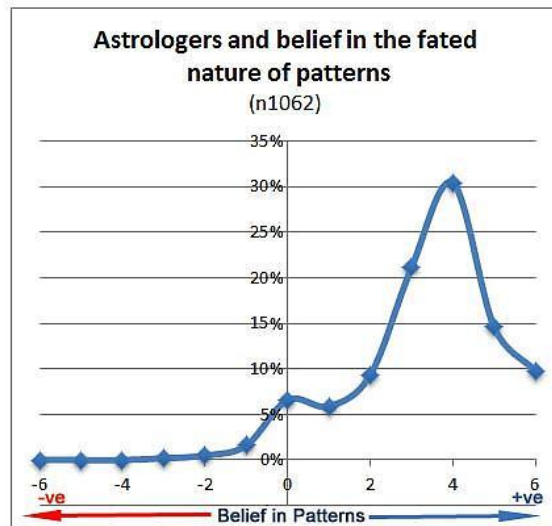


Figure 10 – The individual scores for the astrologers' belief in patterns. A value of -6 for an astrologer represented 'strong disagreement' while a value of +6 represented 'strong agreement' to all pattern questions.

The results displayed in *figure 10* reveals that astrologers avoided the disagreement side of the Likert scale. Instead 91% of astrologers scored between 1 and 6 for a belief in patterns as being a part of their beliefs in fate and astrology. Additionally over 30% of the

⁷⁷⁵ Statistical Service Centre, "Approaches to the Analysis of Survey Data," (The University of Reading, 2001).

astrologers scored a value of +4, indicating that these individual astrologers 'strongly agreed' with at least one of the three questions.

Thomas Berry, cited in chapter 3, argued for an emergent world where the need for new events to conform to an emerging pattern was a form of non-inevitable teleology.⁷⁷⁶ In this way he was presenting a view of a sympathetic cosmos filled with a compelling force that sought order creatively rather than rigidly. He wrote:

We no longer live simply in a spatial mode of consciousness where time is experienced as a seasonal renewing sequence of realities that keep their basic identity in accord with the Platonic archetypal world. We now live not in so much in a cosmos as in a comogenesis; that is a universe ever coming into being through an irreversible sequence of transformations...⁷⁷⁷

For Berry this form of sympathetic cosmos produced a 'basic tendency towards self-organisation' in all things.⁷⁷⁸ It is this desire for self-organisation which is a feature of emergentism as cited in chapter 3, that when applied to the patterns of life can be experienced as the concept of fate. However, it is a fate which allows for any one particular event to have a range of possible expressions which are governed by the parameters of the self-organising pattern. These survey results showed that astrologers accepted emergent patterns as a source of the fate in their lives, produced the potential for natural compatibility. This is compatibility coming from emergentism, fuelled by teleology. It produces a similar form of compatibilism as Hone's adoption of Plotinus' sympathetic cosmos bound together by ambiguous symbols, discussed in chapter 6. For Hone, compatibility was maintained in the ambiguous expression of the symbol while in the case of emergentism, compatibility is maintained by the ambiguousness supplied by the parameters of the pattern. Indeed the notion of pattern and symbol can, as John van Eenwyck argues, be identical.⁷⁷⁹ Thus emergentism can apply equally well to the view of fate of any monist astrologer who considers the horoscope is an image of the world at the moment of birth: one's fate is to live with the 'pattern' captured in the horoscope and thus

⁷⁷⁶ Berry, *The Great Work, our way into the future*: p.31.

⁷⁷⁷ Berry, *The Great Work, our way into the future*: p.26.

⁷⁷⁸ Berry, *The Great Work, our way into the future*: p.26.

⁷⁷⁹ Eenwyck, *Archetypes and Strange Attractors, The Chaotic World of Symbols*: p.67.

captured in the individual's life. The strong acceptance of this emergentism within astrology supports the work of Hone and Greene as cited in chapter 6.

Secular or non-secular astrology

As revealed in chapter 2, within the classical theories of fate there is a strong association between fate and the idea of a divine source. This view was also supported in the astrological literature review of the dualist astrologers in chapter 4. The survey investigated whether astrologers considered that the divine was a prerequisite for their version of fate, which led to the question of whether astrology, for the individual astrologer, was a secular or non-secular subject, defined in chapter 1.

Do astrologers consider astrology as a spiritual subject?

The survey asked each astrologer whether they considered that the purpose of astrology was to help them understand a divine plan (Q.4.2.4) and whether their use of astrology was dependant on the need for a divine cosmos (Q.5.1.3). The astrologers selected a response from a 5-point Likert scale (range -2 to +2) and the responses to the two questions were tallied, producing a score which varied from -4, 'strong disagreement' to both statements to +4, 'strong agreement' to both statements for each astrologer. 52% of all astrologers produced scores of 0 or less for these questions whilst 48% of astrologers produced a positive score (+1 to +4). The overview of these responses is given in *figure 11*; for the full table of these results see Appendix 1 *figure 6*.

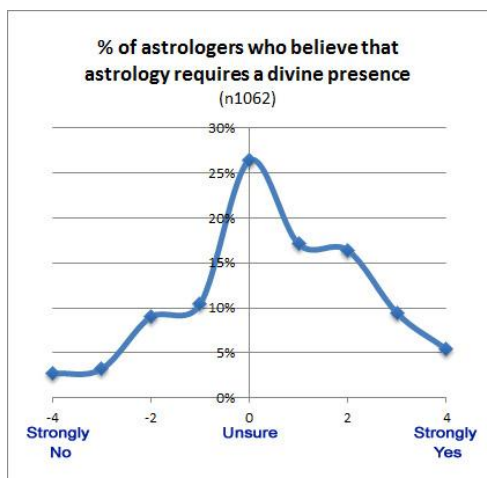


Figure 11 —Each astrologer's sum of their scores for Q. 4.2.4 and Q.5.1.3 — belief in astrology as a divine plan and belief that astrology required a divine cosmos. +4 is 'strong agreement' to both questions while -4 is 'strong disagreement' to both questions.

There were two other questions which queried the beliefs held by astrologers about divinity and a concept of fate. These questions were focused on the astrologer's belief as to the source of fate. Q. 4.1.1 asked if the source of fate was Augustine's God's will, and Q.4.1.2 asked if they believed that fate was the action of a divine cosmos/nature (as gods, goddesses, or spirits) expressing itself in their life. These two questions enabled a further analysis of the 48% of astrologers, as shown in *figure 11*, who did accept that astrology required a divine cosmos. These survey results are shown in *figure 12* — for the full set numbers see *figures 6, 7, and 8* in Appendix 1.

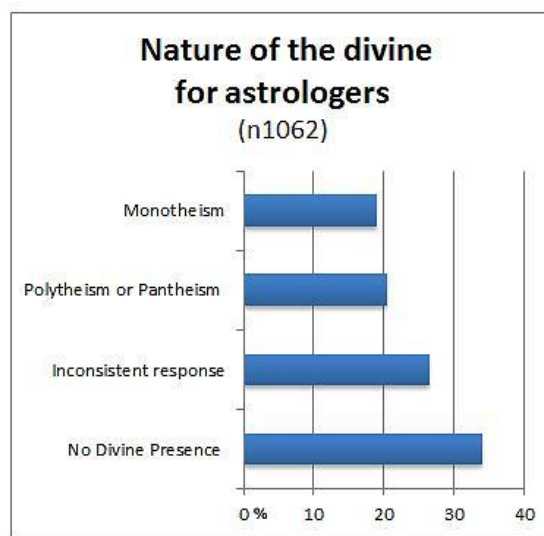


Figure 12 — The results of examining each astrologer's response to the set of four questions (Q.4.2.4, Q.5.1.3, Q.4.1.1 and Q.4.1.2) focused on their beliefs about the nature of the divine in astrology and the source of determinism.

Overview of belief in astrology's association with the divine

- **Astrology as a secular subject**

The survey found that 34% of astrologers fell into the 'No Divine Presence' group. These were those astrologers who answered either neutrally or negatively to *all* four questions — two questions regarding the possible spiritual purpose of astrology and two questions regarding the possible divine source of fate. This shows that the astrologers in this group considered their astrology secular.

- **Uncertain – Inconsistent Response**

The next group, 26%, were those astrologers who answered negatively to the set of questions on astrology as a spiritual subject but positively to fate coming from the divine or positively that astrology was a spiritual subject but negatively that fate came from a divine source. These astrologers may hold the belief that astrology is a spiritual subject but that fate is not an extension of the divine, or that fate is an extension of the divine but that fate is not contained in astrology.

- **Astrology as a non-secular subject**

There were two groups of astrologers that saw astrology as a spiritual subject:

- i. The first was pantheistic or polytheistic — 21% of astrologers answered negatively to the belief of monotheism (Q.4.1.1) but positively to the question which suggested a pantheistic or polytheistic belief (Q.4.1.2).
- ii. Monotheistic — 19% answered negatively to the pantheistic or polytheistic but positively to the monotheistic option.

The use of the term 'God' was considered an acceptance of monotheism, following William Wainwright's argument '...that reality's ultimate principle is God.... Monotheism is the view that there is only one such God.'⁷⁸⁰ If the astrologer believed that the divinity within astrology was defined by the gods or all inclusive spirits then this was seen as an acceptance of either for the former polytheism or for the latter, pantheism.⁷⁸¹

These survey results are similar to those found by Champion in 2004 when he noted the collapse of Christian affiliations amongst astrologers, finding that 74% of his surveyed astrologers in the UK cited belief in Christianity as children but that this figure had

⁷⁸⁰ William Wainwright, "Monotheism," Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/monotheism/>. 15 April.

⁷⁸¹ R. Harwood, "Polytheism, Pantheism, and the Ontological Argument," *Religious Studies* 35, no. 4 (1999): p.491; Eric Steinhart, "Pantheism and Current Ontology," *Religious Studies* 40, no. 1 (2004): p.63.

dropped to 26% in adulthood.⁷⁸² The survey figures for this project indicate that it may have dropped still further, as now only 19% of astrologers (the monotheism group) would have fallen into Campion's Christian group. Furthermore, when Campion asked for a belief in God or a divine entity to which one could pray, his survey showed that 48% of astrologers had such a belief. This survey returned an identical figure of 48% for belief in the divine amongst astrologers — the 513 astrologers as shown earlier in *figure 11*. These results are also in line with those of Feher, cited in chapter 1, who found that 42% of the astrologers' responses were secular and 57% were non-secular.⁷⁸³

These results are a snapshot of the opinions of astrologers in the early twenty-first century and they show a shift in belief from the views contained in the astrological literature of the early twentieth century, discussed in chapter 4. These results of around 40% to 51% of astrologers considering that their astrology is secular raises questions concerning the arguments of Steve Bruce in 1995, and also of Gordon Melton in 2001, that astrology is a form of new religious movement.⁷⁸⁴ Apart from the complexities entailed in the definition of religion, these survey results indicate that assumptions about astrology as a form of spiritual study, or a subject requiring a set of spiritual beliefs, are not supported by nearly 50% of astrologers. Nevertheless, in terms of this project's aim of investigating theories of fate and/or determinism within contemporary astrology, the salient point of this section is to recognise that a theory of fate which requires a divine force is only demonstrably valid for 48% of astrologers.

Source and purpose of fate

Theories of fate also contain beliefs concerning the source of fate, along with beliefs about the purpose or reason for fate within the individual's life. To approach this issue the survey asked two distinct sets of questions. One set, (Q.4.1.1 to Q.4.1.8) asked the astrologer to mark a 5-point Likert scale for eight different statements about the possible source of fate.

⁷⁸² Campion, "Prophecy, Cosmology and the New Age Movement. The Extent and Nature of Contemporary Belief in Astrology," Chapter 12.

⁷⁸³ Feher, "Who Holds the Cards? Women and New Age Astrology," p.188.

⁷⁸⁴ Steve Bruce, *Religion in Modern Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p.105; Gordon J Melton, "The Emergence of New Religions in Eastern Europe since 1989," in *New Religions and New Religiosity*, ed. Eileen Baker and Margot Warburg (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2001), p.53.

The second set of questions (Q.4.2.1 – Q.4.2.5 and Q.5.1.1) asked the astrologer to mark a 5-point Likert scale for six different statements concerning the purpose of astrology. Each question supplied a range from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. By building a matrix consisting of the source of fate and purpose of astrology for each astrologer, information could be gathered regarding their individual beliefs on fate — see Appendix 1, *figure 9* for an example of an individual matrix.

The questions asked allowed the astrologers forty-eight possible variations of the source and purpose of fate (see *figure 13*). By arranging their responses in this way the database could be queried to report on the frequency of scores across the entire sample for any cell within the matrix. It thus provided both vertical via the individual matrixes, and horizontal via tallying the individual cells across the entire database, analysis of the survey data.

Additionally, to ensure a clear result only certain sections of the Likert scale were used. In 2008, John Kulas, Alicia Stachowski and Brad Haynes conducted two studies into the effective use of the Likert scale and argued that the middle options on a Likert scale — that of 'disagree', 'neither agree or disagree', and 'agree' — could be used as a 'dumping ground for unsure or non-applicable (N/A) responses.'⁷⁸⁵ They recommended the inclusion of an N/A option for responses. However, in seeking to measure an astrologer's belief about fate I decided instead to only examine the responses that were collected at the extreme ends of the scale, the option of 'strongly disagree' or 'strongly agree'. This selection was again narrowed to include only those astrologers who had selected the 'strongly agree' option concerning the source of fate, as well as the 'strongly agree' option as to its purpose. Thus these astrologers had a 'strong agreed' opinion on both the source of fate and purpose of astrology, which suggests the presence of a personal theory of fate.

There were 450 astrologers (42.4% of all astrologers surveyed) that fulfilled these requirements. The astrologers could select 'strongly agree' to different options thus the

⁷⁸⁵ John T Kulas, Alicia A Stachowski, and Brad A Haynes, "Middle Response Functioning in Likert-Responses to Personality Items " *Journal of Business and Psychology* 22, no. 3 (2008): p.251.

numbers in *figure 13* represents opinions rather than individual astrologers. Their combined results are shown in *figure 13*.

Source of Fate

	The purpose of Astrology	Q.4.1.1	Q.4.1.2	Q.4.1.3	Q.4.1.4	Q.4.1.5	Q.4.1.6	Q.4.1.7	Q.4.1.8	Total Raw
		God's Will	A divine nature	Soul's need for evolution	One's karma	Science laws of physics	History or family's past	Living in patterns	A human construct	
Q.4.2.4	To work with God's or gods' plan	4.9% 52	8.6% 91	10.0% 106	5.9% 63	4.9% 52	5.0% 53	8.1% 86	2.6% 28	531
Q.4.2.2	For the soul to Transcend the chart	1.0% 11	1.7% 18	3.0% 32	1.6% 17	1.4% 15	1.2% 13	1.8% 19	0.6% 6	131
Q.4.2.3	To reach one's potential as contained in the chart	5.4% 57	12.1% 128	23.8% 253	10.9% 116	8.7% 92	11.5% 122	15.6% 166	3.8% 40	974
Q.4.2.1	To predict like a newspaper	1.2% 13	1.6% 17	1.6% 17	0.9% 10	1.0% 11	0.9% 10	1.4% 15	0.4% 4	97
Q.4.2.5	To help find harmony with life and world	4.2% 45	9.4% 100	12.3% 131	6.1% 65	6.6% 70	8.9% 94	13.0% 138	3.5% 37	680
Q.5.1.1	To read an inevitable future	0.9% 10	1.5% 16	1.4% 15	1.0% 11	1.1% 12	1.0% 11	1.6% 17	0.3% 3	95
Total - RAW counts		188	370	554	282	252	303	441	118	

Figure 13 — 'Strong Agreement'. This matrix shows the number of times a combination of the believed source of fate and the purpose of astrology received a maximum score of +4 from an individual astrologer. 450 astrologers selected 'strongly agree' options. Each cell of the matrix also contains both the percentage (of the total number of 1062 astrologers sampled) and the actual number of times the cell received a 'strongly agree' opinion from an astrologer.

There were forty-eight ways that an astrologer could combine their answers', each combination is a cell in the matrix shown in *figure 13* with each cell representing a partial theory of fate. The columns show the opinions on the source of fate while the rows show the perceived purpose of astrology. Additionally, each row and column has the raw count of the total number of times a cell in the matrix received both the maximum score from the column (source of fate) and row (purpose of astrology).

Thus each cell records how many times a single unique astrologer selected 'strongly agree' to both questions when they filled in their questionnaire.

Most supported source of fate and purpose of astrology

This table, (*figure 13*) reveals the diversity of opinion on fate within the astrological community. There were, however, major themes which attracted the most support from

those astrologers who had selected 'strongly agreed' options. These theories of fate are not exclusive of each other as an astrologer may subscribe to several theories, thus creating their own personal theory of fate. These theories are as follows:

Dualism as the central theme to the theory of fate

10% of all astrologers strongly agreed to the concept of a theory of fate where their soul chose to join the world of matter in order to aid its purification and enable its eventual return to the divine (Q. 4.1.3 combined with Q. 4.2.4) — Alan Leo's astrology. Also 24% of the astrologers strongly agreed with a theory of fate which considered the need for the soul's development on the physical plane. They varied from the first group by linking this development with the Aristotelian teleological desire to reach one's full potential in their physical life, as well as their spiritual life (Q.4.1.3 combined with Q. 4.2.3) — this is more supportive of Rudhyar. Both of these forms of dualism are Platonist rather than Cartesian as in both instances the soul requires the body for, as Broadie argues, the Platonic form of soul had 'a sort of limited omnipotence' and required the use of a body to aid its return to the divine.⁷⁸⁶ Another variation within this Platonist dualism with support of 12% of astrologers was a theory of fate where their soul needed to evolve and it could do so by embracing a harmony with the natural world (Q.4.1.3 combined with Q.4.2.5) — supporting C.C. Zain's form of astrology, as well as that of Rudhyar. Another form of dualist Platonist theory of fate was one based in a belief in reincarnation and the personal journey of the soul towards spiritual wholeness. 11% of the astrologers strongly agreed with this style of a theory of fate (Q.4.1.4 combined with Q. 4.2.3) — another expression of Alan Leo's astrology.

These dualist theories of fate attracted 46% of the 'strongly agreed' selected options.

Monist theories of fate

16% of the astrologers strongly agreed with a theory of fate which contained the Humean argument that one's beliefs can be derived from the experience of one's life, and fate was an Aristotelian teleological drive towards perfection (Q.4.1.7 combined with Q. 4.2.3) —

⁷⁸⁶ Broadie, "Soul and Body in Plato and Descartes," p.305.

which is a form of emergent astrology that supported Meyer's humanistic astrology. While 13% of astrologers strongly agreed with a theory of fate which supported a Spinozian attitude that embraced fate as a natural part of life and sought to attune to 'ease' the journey in the physical world (Q.4.1.7 combined with Q.4.2.5) — which suggests the astrology of Hone and Greene. Stoic elements were reflected by 12% of the astrologers who strongly agreed with a theory of fate where one sought to find harmony in the natural world for non-secular reasons (Q.4.1.2 combined with Q. 4.2.3) which can also support Hone and Greene's astrology. Also 12% of astrologers strongly agreed with a theory of fate which considered that fate was part of the pattern of their family and culture and that life was about seeking to understand this (Q.4.1.6 combined with Q. 4.2.3) — suggestive of psychological astrology and Greene's work.

These monist theories of fate attracted 52% of the 'strongly agreed' selected options.

The column in *figure 13*, labelled Q.4.1.8, represents any astrologer who considered that fate was a 'human construct' and that it was an illusion. This notion of fate may well be supporting a Cartesian view in that fate has no influence on the individual. In total 11.1% (118 responses) selected this option which may support the style of astrology suggested by McWhirter in chapter 4. The combination of Q.4.2.5 which was to 'find harmony in life' with Q.4.1.5 (acceptance of determinism) could be considered to reflect Spinoza, Schopenhauer or Hume, as they all accepted determinism and sought ways of living a life in harmony with the natural world, these had a 6.6% level of support.

Taking a view of the total within a row or column, the survey showed that the greatest support was for 'the soul's need to evolve' (554 responses) and the role of astrology was to enable one to reach their 'full potential as contained in the horoscope' (974 responses). This is Rudhyar's dualist spiritual philosophy.

Examining for evidence of a belief in the inevitability of the horoscope - natural hard incompatibilism

The results returned in *figure 5*, *figure 8* and *figure 9* are for the investigation into whether astrologers accepted that the horoscope produced an inevitable future. These results

revealed that such acceptance varied depending on the emotional content of the questions, as well as the length of time respondents were involved with astrology. The highest acceptance was for males in a minor non-emotional situation, 32%, while the lowest was 2.1% (combined males and females) for an exact repetition of an event linked with a planetary cycle. However, the survey also looked for a belief of inevitability in a fourth manner, that of it being part of a possible theory of fate.

Saint Augustine or Science

Question 5.1.1 asked the astrologer to select from a 5-point Likert scale whether they accepted or rejected the following statement: 'The future is fully formed and astrology provides a tool to help read that future.' In all, there were 95 times that these options were 'strongly agreed' to by an astrologer, which represented 8%. Of this 8%, only 10 astrologers, representing 0.9% selected an option that supported Augustine's fatalistic theology where fate was God's province as cited in chapter 3, while 1.1%, representing only 12 astrologers, considered that astrology followed the laws of physics, thus supporting the philosophical position of natural hard incompatibilism and representing the astrological premises as supported by Edward Johndro cited in chapter 5.

The survey results showed that over these four different questions, more male than female astrologers believed that the horoscope describing an inevitable future. The average figure, combining genders, was around 7% to 8% of astrologers and within that group only a small number of astrologers accepted either Augustine's concept of God's providence or the hard incompatibilism suggested by science.

Summary of the survey

This chapter has focused on the survey of beliefs about fate amongst practicing astrologers. After a lengthy design period the questionnaire was placed in the field and attracted a large response from the global community of practicing astrologers. The nature of this community is that it is predominantly women who, since the 1970s, have become involved with astrology in reasonably consistent numbers. Once they engaged with astrology, they tended to maintain their interest over many years.

The survey found little support for Adorno's authoritarian hypothesis, with only 7-8% of astrologers who accepted the notion of inevitability and the horoscope. However, the survey results did support the findings of Nichols and Knobe by showing that, among the astrologers, acceptance of an inevitable future based on the horoscope actually fell as the emotional contents of the imagined situation was increased. Thus acceptance of fate, as with determinism, was actually dependent on the emotional or moral contents of the situation.

The members of the astrological community were also equally divided on the question of whether astrology was a secular or non-secular subject. These results reflected individual beliefs in fate. One group saw fate as an expression of the divine cosmos in their life, a Platonic view, while the other group saw fate as part of the natural world — Aristotelian or Stoic. Those astrologers who considered that astrology required a divine presence were equally divided as to whether their versions of such a divine being were monotheistic or pantheistic/polytheistic. Additionally, this equal division between secular and non-secular astrologers did not support Feher's argument that it was 'non-spiritual' practitioners who used astrology for prediction.⁷⁸⁷ When the concept of prediction was divided into its two components of Time and Event, a very different acceptance and use of prediction emerged. This different version of prediction was supported equally by both strongly spiritual (76.2%) and strongly non-spiritual (72.8%) astrologers alike. This division of prediction into its dual components of Time and Event introduced the Greek notion of *kairos* time, where time has a quality. The survey revealed that 56% of beginning astrologers and 77% of experienced astrologers believed in the concept of *kairos* time, where fate allocated a quality to a future time which they could predict and which one was eventually destined to meet. However, they were unable to predict the outcome of the event. Thus *kairos* time supported a natural compatibilist position as the expression of the event allowed for the influence of the individual in some way. The percentage of astrologers who accepted this notion of *kairos* time increased the longer they studied the subject, indicating that it may be a central feature of astrology. Thus natural compatibilism was a feature of astrology that was acquired over time spent in practice. This finding was the reverse of the arguments of

⁷⁸⁷ Feher, "Who Holds the Cards? Women and New Age Astrology," p.180.

Adorno, Dawkins, Dean, Kelly and Mather who considered that astrology imposed fatalism on its practitioners.

The survey also revealed what was evident in the literature reviews of chapters 4, 5 and 6, that there was diversity in the different theories of fate accepted by the community. All forty-eight different possible combinations for which the questions allowed were accepted; some had only minor support of 0.9% while others attracted much higher support. However, no one combination held the majority of the support. Indeed the level of support for both dualist and monist theories of fate was reasonably well balanced. There was only minor support of 4% – 5% of astrologers who accepted Augustine's view of God's providence which worked by God's law or through the laws of science.

However, independent of this diversity of beliefs around fate was a deeper belief revealed in the survey. A feature of the astrologers surveyed was a strong acceptance of a natural teleology and/or a belief in patterns as a source of fate. This form of teleology was that of Whitehead and later Berry, both cited in chapter 3, and it is emergentism; for the astrologer it is expressed as a belief that fate emerges from continually forming patterns within their own family as well as naturally emerging patterns in the world. It does not contain the drive for perfection found in Aristotelian *telos*, and as promoted by Dane Rudhyar and Michael Meyer, nor the theological *telos* of Plato, as promoted by Alan Leo. 91% of the astrologers accepted some level of agreement to this form of emergent *telos* which is supported in the astrology of Hone and Greene.

In creating a matrix of beliefs between the source of fate and the purpose of astrology, the survey found support for a diverse set of dualist and monist views. However, in considering an overview of the most popular source of fate with the most popular purpose of astrology, the greatest support was for a Rudhyarian form of astrology where the individual soul evolved by seeking the image of perfection reflected in the horoscope. The least supported was the Cartesian view that fate, being a human illusion, was not influential on the human mind.

This belief can also be combined with the idea of *kairos* time, located in an emergent sympathetic cosmos to produce the other strongly supported finding in the survey, that of participation. 48% of astrologers linked the expression of a particular event, predicted by astrology, with their personal awareness, their ability to participate and contribute in some manner to the naturally emerging patterns, both personally and collectively. This was such a strong theme in the survey that it suggests that emergentism/*telos*, participation and *kairos* time combine together to produce a deeper or central theory of fate onto which all the other personal beliefs were added. This is considered further in the interviews discussed in chapter 9. Chapter 8 will report on the 902 astrologers who, having completed the survey, also added personal comments to their questionnaire.