As *Fate* Would Have It

A corpus-based study of *Fate* from an American perspective

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Abstract

This essay is based on an investigation carried out with the help of the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). Taking the system of transitivity as its theoretical base and using spoken and written discourse as its primary source, this study aspired to find out what kinds of actions Americans perceive Fate to perform, for example physical, mental or verbal, in order to control what happens to people. It also aimed to reveal what actions people are said to perform in their attempts to control Fate. Do Americans deem Fate capable of, for instance, “deciding”, “talking” or “conspiring” and do they say that people, for example, “challenge”, “defy” or “defeat” Fate? Furthermore, a comparison was made in terms of the actions performed by Fate and people between the different domains of discourse represented in the corpus: spoken, fiction, magazine, newspaper and academic.

Among other things, this investigation shows that in American discourse both Fate and people are perceived to resort to physical strategies rather than mental or verbal ones in their endeavor to control one another.

Keywords: fate, discourse analysis, transitivity, processes, Systemic Functional Linguistics, corpus linguistics, Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)
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1. Introduction

For it is true that some things happen by fate, just as the truth has also been shown of the fact that other things are in our power.

(Den Boeft, 1970, p. 125)

In contemporary American and English dictionaries, fate is defined as a power that controls people’s lives and that cannot be manipulated. According to the Greek philosopher Plato, Fate\(^1\) is the universal law by which all world affairs are being governed (Den Boeft, 1970). It is a concept that most Americans, as well as people in general, probably have contemplated at one time or another in the course of their lives. Some are convinced that a higher power they call Fate is in control of their destiny and others are equally convinced that no such power exists.

This essay is based on an investigation carried out with the help of the Corpus of Contemporary American English where fate was used as a search word. I will try to answer two main questions by means of this corpus investigation and subsequent analysis: According to Americans, what actions, or more specifically, what kinds of processes is Fate perceived to perform in order to control people’s lives, and what processes are people perceived to perform in their attempts to control Fate? Given the limited nature of this essay, it would be too big a task to examine everything that Fate is described to do or be, or everything that people are described to do or feel towards Fate, and therefore, this investigation focuses on material, mental, behavioural, and verbal processes (see section 2.2 below).

This investigation is expected to show whether people deem Fate capable of, for instance, deciding or destroying something and whether people, for example, are considered to defy or defeat Fate sometimes. Furthermore, it will enable a comparison between different domains of discourse represented (for details, see the Materials and methods section).

2. Background

2.1 Transitivity

Biber et.al (2002, p. 121) discuss the valency patterns of verbs. The valency pattern reveals what other elements are required in a clause, for example direct object and indirect object. Despite the fact that grammarians tend to categorize verbs in terms of transitive or

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\(^1\) The choice was made to write Fate with a capital F since it is the personalized concept of Nature, a higher power or God that is being discussed here. In cases where fate is being referred to as a word or concept, lower-case letters have been used.
intransitive, implying that verbs would be restricted to only one pattern, Biber et al. point out that the most common verbs allow multiple valency patterns.

Three transitivity verb classes that are typically found in English and a number of other languages are accounted for by Dixon & Aikhenvald (2000, p. 4): transitive, intransitive and ambitransitive. There are verbs that are strictly intransitive, for example *arrive*, and verbs that are strictly transitive, such as *recognize*, and verbs that are ambitransitive, appearing either in intransitive or transitive clauses, for example *follow*. Some examples representing these verb classes have been given below.

**Intransitive** (cannot be followed by a direct object or a subject predicative)

Ex. 1 *I arrived.*
Ex. 2 *She arrived in Paris.*

**Transitive** (must be followed by a direct object)

Ex. 3 *He immediately recognized her.*
Ex. 4 *It may be difficult to recognize people once they have had extensive plastic surgery.*

**Ambitransitive** (can be followed by a direct object but does not require one)

Ex. 5 *I followed him.*
Ex. 6 *They got married whereupon happy days followed.*

Note that, although seemingly a grammatical concept, transitivity is strongly linked to semantic aspects of language use.

"Semantics is the study of meaning communicated through language" (Saeed, 1997, p. 3). Saeed acknowledges a range of semantic identification systems such as participant roles discussed by Allan, Fillmore’s “deep semantic cases”, as well as semantic and thematic roles and relations described by scholars such as Givón, Gruber, Jackendoff and Dowty.

However, Saeed chooses to use so-called thematic roles when describing the entities represented in a clause. In his approach, the thematic roles include the agent (i.e. the entity that initiates the action), the patient (the entity that undergoes the effect of the action) and the theme (the entity that is moved by the action). Other roles are experiencer (the entity being aware of the action or state but not in control of the same), beneficiary (the entity that benefits from the action performed) and instrument (the tool used to perform an action), as well as location (where something is placed or takes place), goal (the unit towards which something moves) and source (the unit from which something moves).
Saeed further asserts that verbs describe different situation types such as states, processes and events. Stative verbs (e.g. be, have, know and love) signify a steady state, unchangeable in nature, whereas dynamic verbs signify events (blow up) and processes (walk) (Saeed, 1997, pp. 109-110). For a very brief introduction to this kind of approach, see also Yule (2006).

Furthermore, Halliday & Matthiessen (2004, p. 170) state that human beings have two ways of dealing with reality: the internal, which relates to perception, emotion and imagination, and the external, which relates to actions and events, that is, people do things or make them happen. In semantic terms, material processes (e.g. I’m having a shower) represent the outer experience whereas mental processes (e.g. I don’t want a shower) represent the inner experience. Another category of process is the behavioural type (e.g. people are laughing), which is defined as representing “the outer manifestations of inner workings, the acting out of processes of consciousness and physiological states” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 171). Finally, a verbal process (e.g. we say that every fourth African is a Nigerian) is expressed through verbal action.

Based on Halliday, Eggins (2004) presents the system of transitivity exhaustively. The process type is always realized by the verb in a clause and there are two major kinds of processes: intransitive processes, where only one participant is involved, and transitive ones, where two or more participants are involved. When a speaker or writer chooses a certain verb, and by extension a particular process type, they choose a certain way of representing experience. As Ravelli (2000, p. 35) points out, the system of transitivity is based on the action represented in the clause and it is always realized by a main verb, any auxiliaries and any markers of polarity (for example not or neither).

In the system of transitivity, the participant roles are labeled somewhat differently than in the approach focusing on thematic roles (cf. above, section 2.2), for example: Actor (i.e. the constituent that performs the action) and Goal (the participant to whom or which the action is extended and the one treated in traditional grammar as the direct object).

In addition, Eggins explains that in a transitivity analysis, the following three features need to be studied in the clause: a) the process based on the verb (Diana gave blood), b) the participants, (for example Actor and Goal, cf. above: Last year Diana gave blood), and c) circumstance, in the form of adverbial groups or prepositional phrases (Last year Diana gave blood). (Eggins, 2004, pp. 213-214). However, in this study, the only feature examined is the process (cf. section 2.2).

It should be made clear that the choice of verb is directly related to the participant roles (cf. below, section 2.2) and that there is a decisive difference between the participant roles.
For example, because of the fact that the Actor is the entity performing the action, it is also the active participant in the clause, while the Goal, being the entity affected by the action, is passive, as demonstrated in the following examples:

Ex. 7  *Jenny* [Actor] punched *the burglar* [Goal].

Ex. 8  *The burglar* [Actor] punched *Jenny* [Goal].

A related matter addressed by Biber et al. is that a considerable number of multi-word units operate like a single verb and often carry idiomatic meanings. Four classes of multi-word units are presented: phrasal verbs (*stand up*), prepositional verbs (*look at*), phrasal-prepositional verbs (*get out of*), and other multi-word verb constructions (*make do with*) (Biber et al., 2002, pp. 127-134). Biber et al. stress that in reality, it is quite difficult to distinguish between the different classes of multi-word verbs and they also note that such verbs may be replaced by a single-word verb. This strategy has also been adopted in this study (cf. section 3.2).

2.2 Process types

For this study, the choice was made to use the general term *process* due to the fact that the term *action* does not cover mental and emotional processes, only physical ones. The process is realized by the verb and may be material, mental, behavioural, verbal, existential or relational. However, existential and relational processes describe processes of being which in this case would reflect what *Fate* and people are perceived to be, not what they are perceived to do. Accordingly, these categories will not be used in the analysis of my own material. Two examples of each type adapted from Eggins (2004, pp. 237-239) are given below:

**Existential processes (where things are simply stated to exist)**

Ex. 9  *There was* snow on the ground.
Ex. 10 *There were* these two wonderful Swiss men.

**Relational processes (where things are stated to exist in relation to other things)**

Ex. 11 *The operation was* in Geneva.
Ex. 12 *Women are* the brave ones.
Eggins (2004) describes material processes as a process type referring to an entity, animate or inanimate, undertaking some usually concrete actions, that is, to what an entity does (go, cook). The two most frequent participant roles in a clause involving a material process are Actor (the constituent of the clause who does the deed or performs the action) and Goal (that participant at whom the process is directed) (p. 216).

A mental process represents what an entity is thinking, feeling or perceiving and such a process must thus be controlled by a human or an anthropomorphized non-human, i.e. a conscious being. The participant roles in a clause involving a mental process are Senser (the constituent of the clause who feels, thinks or perceives) and Phenomenon (that which is thought, felt or perceived by the conscious Senser) (Eggins, 2004, p. 227).

A behavioural process is in part about action, but has to be controlled or experienced by a conscious being (smile, cough). The participant roles in a clause involving a behavioural process are Behaver (the constituent of the clause who is involved in a process of physiological or psychological behavior) and Behavior (a participant that is essentially a restatement of the process (He smiled a broad smile) or Phenomenon (a participant which is not a restatement of the process) (George sniffed the soup) (Eggins, 2004, p. 233).

The last of Eggins’ categories that is dealt with in this essay is the verbal process (say, tell), which represents verbal action. The participant roles in a clause involving a verbal process are Sayer (the participant responsible for the verbal process, who does not have to be a conscious participant), Receiver (the one to whom the verbal process is directed) and Verbiage (a noun phrase expressing some kind of verbal behavior (statement, answer) (Eggins, 2004, p. 235).

It should be noted that in a complete transitivity analysis, all constituents in terms of process and participant roles would be labeled. However, in the analysis carried out in this essay, the sole constituent investigated is the process. Below, I have given three examples of each of the processes investigated in this essay: material, mental, behavioural and verbal, adapted from Eggins (2004, pp. 216-237).

**Material processes (processes of doing)**

Ex. 13  *Diana went to Geneva.*

Ex. 14  *So you walk around weak-kneed for 3 days.*

Ex. 15  *These two wonderful Swiss men left their dinner.*
Mental processes (processes of thinking, feeling or perceiving)
Ex. 16  She **believed** his excuses.
Ex. 17  **I hate** injections.
Ex. 18  Do you **want** more soup?

Behavioural processes (a combination of material and mental processes)
Ex. 19  She **sighed** with despair.
Ex. 20  He **coughed** loudly.
Ex. 21  She **was crying** with frustration.

Verbal process (process of verbal action)
Ex. 22  So I **asked** him a question.
Ex. 23  They’re talking about the news.
Ex. 24  You **said** that they pay you.

2.3 Fate
To help establish the definition of *fate* as applied in this essay, four printed dictionaries were consulted. *The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* (2005) describes *fate* as “the power that is believed to control everything that happens and cannot be stopped or changed.” *The Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner’s English Dictionary* (CCALED, 2003) describes *fate* as “a power that some people believe controls and decides everything that happens, in a way that cannot be prevented or changed.” *The Longman, Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2003) describes *fate* as “a power that is believed to control what happens in people’s lives.” *The Oxford American Dictionary* (1980) describes *fate* as “a power thought to control all events and impossible to resist.” In other words, in the dictionaries the power of *fate* is described to be perceived by people as absolute and unchangeable, and this definition is the one adopted for my present purposes, that is, aiming to find out what *Fate* is considered to do when controlling people as well as what people are considered to do in their attempts to control *Fate*. Although not something that will be pursued further in the present study, it should be mentioned that a second definition of *fate* is given in some dictionaries: “A person’s or thing’s fate is what happens to them” (CCALED, 2003).
Cahn (1967, p. 1) states that the question whether or not human beings have free will has been debated by philosophers from Plato to Austin² and has formed one of the most complex and intriguing questions ever examined in the history of not only philosophy but also, for example, in the fields of law, religion and psychology. Cahn, being a firm advocate of free will, questions why anyone should be held morally responsible for their actions if it is indeed the case that human beings do not possess free will. Consequently, he argues against fatalism³.

Within the field of psychology, the concept referred to as determinism⁴ seems reminiscent of that of Fate. Psychology divides determinism into two types: psychological determinism is the view that human behaviour or action is determined by psychological events within the human mind, whereas physical determinism is determined by objective natural laws (The Blackwell Dictionary of Western Philosophy, 2004).

Psychological determinism, also referred to as inevitabilism, was strongly advocated by the Austrian psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud and according to his disciples, Freud was of the opinion that “freedom is an illusion” (Frank, 1945, p. 64). Freud was convinced that mental as well as physical phenomena are subordinate to inflexible laws ruling body and soul. Furthermore, Frank says the controversy about free will is really about determining the character of the universe and that the on-going debate was most likely born as early as humankind (p. 146). Frank contends that determinism contests Americans’ right to free will, both individually and collectively (p. 343).

Plato’s work Timaeus was translated from Greek into Latin by the Christian philosopher Calcidius in the fourth century and is exhaustively analyzed and discussed by Den Boeft (1970). He states that, according to Plato, Providence⁵ precedes Fate and that after having created the world, God created the souls in accordance with the number of the stars, assigning to each soul a separate star. Then God revealed to the souls the nature of the universe and its absolute evolutionary destiny (Den Boeft, 1970, p.1). Plato asserted that Fate has two aspects: the inevitable decree or universal law by which all world affairs are being governed, and as essence, the World-Soul (p. 9).

² “British philosopher best known for his individualistic analysis of human thought derived from detailed study of everyday language” (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2009).
³ “A feeling that you cannot control events or prevent unpleasant things from happening, especially when this feeling stops you from making decisions or making an effort” (CCALED, 2003).
⁴ “The belief that all actions and events result from other actions, events, or situations, so people cannot in fact choose what to do” (CCALED, 2003).
⁵ “Providence: God, or a force which is believed by some people to arrange the things that happen to us” (CCALED, 2003).
The notion that the word *fate* has a function in contemporary discourse is put forward by Hannay (1986). Although, he says, it may not measure up to its former status in metaphysical doctrine, the phrase *as Fate would have it* is frequently found in different contexts. Hannay posits that people would not resort to such phrases if they merely were meant to describe insignificant or colloquial situations. He suggests that people use expressions with *Fate* to come to grips with unexpected circumstances that in retrospect seem to go beyond mere chance (Hannay, 1986, p. 1).

Hannay (1986) addresses The Providential Model which he defines as a model that “embodies a religious sense that God has ordered the world according to a plan that will someday be revealed” (p. 77). In the Providential Model, *Fate* works ambiguously in two directions: chance and design. However, at a closer look, what first appears to be chance turns out to be a preordained design. From a religious perspective this design is concurrent with God’s Providence. Hannay (1986) states that the difference between Providence and *Fate* is that the former is “the unfolding of temporal events as viewed by the divine mind” (p. 77) whereas the latter is “the resolution of these same events as viewed from the human perspective of time” (p. 77). In the world of humans, Hannay says, *Fate* is often perceived as chance although it nevertheless answers to the purpose of an unchanging divine will. Given the fact that the dictionaries consulted describe *fate* to be perceived by people as absolute and unchangeable (cf. above), the view that *Fate* answers to the purpose of an unchanging divine will, as portrayed by Hannay, would reflect the one discussed in the present study.

3. Materials and methods

3.1 Procedure

All data in this investigation was retrieved from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) in the period March 30 – May 8, 2009. The corpus contains 385 million words, written or uttered in the period 1990-2008. The COCA is divided into five sections or domains of discourse, namely spoken, fiction, magazine, newspaper and academic.

Using *fate* as a search word, I aspired to find out what kinds of processes *Fate* is perceived to perform in order to control people’s lives and what processes people are perceived to perform in their attempts to control *Fate*. For the purpose of this study, the extended context for each hit, not simply the concordance lines containing *Fate*, had to be retrieved from the corpus.
The investigation was carried out in several steps. First, in order to find out the frequency of occurrence of *fate* in the corpus, a search of the entire corpus was conducted, resulting in 9,578 hits. Second, separate searches were conducted for all instances of *fate* in the five subsections of the corpus. Since the corpus software does not support techniques that would allow one to distinguish between different definitions of *fate*, that is, *fate* as a power and *fate* as what happens to somebody or something (cf. section 2.3), a close examination of all 9,578 occurrences of *fate* proved to be necessary for a differentiation of the items. Such an undertaking called for a criterion that could be used to distinguish hits representing a view of *fate* as an active power, which were those I was interested in, from hits where *fate* seemed to be viewed as something else (e.g. ‘that which happens to people’, cf. above). Consequently, the decision was made that the criterion would be whether, in a given hit, *fate* could be replaced by a conscious being: a human or an anthropomorphized non-human, God or God’s will.6

In regard to what people are said to do in their attempts to defy * Fate*, verbs that signify just that, such as *tempt, challenge and fight* are the ones being considered in this investigation. By contrast, verbs that merely correspond to an emotional reaction to events already inflicted by *Fate*, a reaction that could not actually change those events, for instance *rail, rage and curse*, have not been included.

Third, all of the examples where *Fate* is described to control a material, mental, behavioural or verbal process were collected from the corpus, section by section. As mentioned above (cf. section 2.2), processes of an existential or relational nature have not been included in this investigation.

The fourth step was to analyze the collected material in terms of process: material, mental, behavioural and verbal. In the study, I have used the definitions of process types presented in Eggins (2004, cf. section 2.2), and the processes in my material will be categorized in accordance with them.

The total number of examples analyzed where *fate* was mentioned in the capacity of power or force, and that fulfilled the criteria outlined above, amounted to 862 – spoken: 87, fiction: 386, magazine: 181, Newspaper: 121, Academic: 87. Due to the fact that it would be impractical to include all of them in this report, fourteen examples from each of the five sections have been included in Appendices 1-5.

6 Note that there exist in the corpus a few examples where *fate* could actually be substituted in this way, but where the context suggests that the definition “a person’s or thing’s fate is what happens to them” most probably was the one intended, and such examples have been omitted accordingly. In addition, examples that included names of radio and television programs, where *fate* was part of the name, have been omitted.
The fifth step was to compare the results for the different sections.

### 3.2 Clarifications

Since the examples do not always represent clear-cut cases, some clarification is required.

**Ex. 25** You know, one moment you're crying when you're reading it, then you're laughing when you're reading it. And recount for everybody the first, the chance meeting you had with Steve. Wow, it was, it was definitely *fate* (spoken, 2007).

In spite of the fact that, in this context, *Fate* is the implied agent and thus also implied possibly to have decided, caused or arranged what happened, there is no way of knowing exactly what *Fate* is considered to have done here; it is simply suggested that *Fate* was involved. Hence, it would not be feasible to determine the kind of underlying process on the basis of the verb. As a consequence, this investigation cannot concern itself with implicit actions, or processes, but with explicit ones only, and examples such as the one above have thus been exempted from further analysis.

According to Biber et al. (2002, cf. section 2.1), multi-word verb constructions can occasionally be replaced by a single-word verb. In cases where phrasal verbs, prepositional verbs, phrasal-prepositional verbs and other multi-word verb constructions correspond to a process, I have chosen, wherever possible, to replace them with a verb that represents the actual meaning of the same. This includes metaphorical constructions. For example, *Fate stepped in* has been analyzed as *Fate intervened*. This enabled me to categorize all verbs in terms of process and allowed me to include metaphorical expressions as part of this investigation. By necessity, some choices may of course be arbitrary to some degree.

People refer to *Fate* in quite a number of ways. Expressions such as *the hand of fate*, *the fickle finger of fate* and *a twist of fate* appear fairly frequently in the material and these have been treated as variations of *Fate* ‘as such’, that is, they have been categorized as *Fate* in the capacity of power.

Another dilemma I was faced was that some verbs can realize more than one process. Two examples of this are *tempt* and *challenge*. It would be possible to *tempt or challenge Fate* in a physical, mental and behavioural as well as verbal mode. However, *tempt* and *challenge* are more likely to be material (physical) processes than mental, behavioural or verbal ones. The reason is that generally, when people are *tempting or challenging Fate*, this will manifest itself through some kind of physical action. Therefore, unless it is explicitly expressed that
such verbs represent mental, behavioural or verbal processes, they have been categorized as material ones. The same approach has been applied in regard to the verbs *allow, grant, deny, control* and *rule*. In some cases, in order to establish the range of meanings of a verb, dictionaries were consulted.

A final remark in regard to the strategies applied in this investigation is that some processes performed by *Fate* have been nominalised, so to speak:

Ex. 26  *It's the guiding hand of kismet or fate* (spoken, 2004).

This context reveals that *Fate guides* people. Although the verb is not expressed, the meaning conveyed is clear. Consequently, in constructions like these, I have replaced the nominalised process with the corresponding verb.

4. Results

Table 1. Fate in the COCA – overview of results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>All hits of <em>fate</em></th>
<th>Of which <em>fate</em> perceived as a power(^7)</th>
<th>Of which analyzed in detail</th>
<th>Hits of processes controlled by <em>Fate</em>(^8)</th>
<th>Hits of processes controlled by people(^9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spoken</td>
<td>1,429</td>
<td>201 (12%)</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>78 (86%)</td>
<td>13 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>2,423</td>
<td>802 (25%)</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>330 (81%)</td>
<td>78 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine</td>
<td>1,963</td>
<td>350 (15%)</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>170 (90%)</td>
<td>19 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>1,792</td>
<td>267 (13%)</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>111 (90%)</td>
<td>13 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>1,971</td>
<td>254 (11%)</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>72 (79%)</td>
<td>19 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9,578</td>
<td>1,874 (16%)</td>
<td>862</td>
<td>761 (84%)</td>
<td>142 (16%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 1 shows, the corpus contained 9,578 hits of *fate*. These hits represent different meanings of *fate* as viewed by Americans, such as *fate* as an active power or that which

\(^7\) For all columns, the numbers given without parentheses indicate the raw frequency. In the third column, the numbers in parentheses indicate relative frequency in percent of all hits of *fate* analyzed in detail, per section, except for the total where the relative frequency in percent includes all sections. (The latter applies to all columns).

\(^8\) The numbers in parentheses indicate relative frequency in percent of the total number of hits of processes controlled by *Fate* and people, per section. For all sections, a total of 862 examples were analyzed. Due to the fact that, in some examples, more than one process occurred, the result reveals a discrepancy between the number of examples analyzed in detail and the number of processes controlled by *Fate* and people.

\(^9\) See footnote 8.
happens to people (cf. section 3.1). 1,874 hits of *fate* where *fate* was treated as a power were found in the corpus. The highest relative frequency of this category was found in the fiction section, with 25%.

Also, as shown in this table, a discrepancy occurs between *Fate* as a power and the hits of processes controlled by *Fate* and people. For example, the spoken section contained 201 hits of *Fate* as a power (e.g. where *fate* could be replaced by a conscious being: a human or an anthropomorphized non-human, God or God’s will, cf. section 3.1), while the hits of processes controlled by *Fate* and people for the same section amounted to only 78+13 = 91. One reason for this discrepancy is that the remaining hits represented existential and relational processes that describe what *Fate* and people are perceived to be and not what they are perceived to do (cf. section 2.2). Another reason was that some of the examples contained utterances where people’s beliefs about, and feelings towards, *Fate* were referred to.

Likewise, the same factors cause the discrepancy found between *Fate* as a power and the number of examples analyzed. However, there exist some additional reasons for this discrepancy which have been discussed above (cf. sections 3.1 and 3.2).

Moreover, it seems that *Fate* is perceived to be most energetic within the discourse domains of magazines, newspapers (90% respectively) and spoken language (86%) whereas the academic section shows the highest percentage for processes performed by people in their attempts to control *Fate* (21%).

According to Americans, seemingly, *Fate* is perceived to be considerably more active in its undertaking to control people’s lives than people are perceived to be in their attempts to control *Fate*. In the entire corpus, the processes controlled by people only stand for 16% whereas those controlled by *Fate* amount to 84%.

For Tables 2-11, the abbreviations *p* for ‘people’ and ‘people’s’ and *th* for ‘things’ have been used, for example: *throw* (*th, p together*) = ‘throw (things, people together)’. Note that the processes have been listed in the same order that has been applied in Eggin (2004). Note also that some of the verbs shown in Tables 2-11 are substitutions, for example, *steer my course* has been analyzed as *lead* (cf. section 3.2). In passing it could also be mentioned that in all of the examples examined, *Fate* and people¹⁰ will represent one of the participant roles of Actor, Senser, Behaver and Sayer (cf. above, section 2.2).

¹⁰ Here, the concept *people* refers to the participant roles people represent in the examples analyzed in this essay.
4.1 *Fate* controlling people

4.1.1 Spoken interaction

Table 2. Processes controlled by *Fate*, spoken section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of process</th>
<th>Verbs\textsuperscript{11}</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td><em>intervene</em> [8 (10.2)], <em>strike</em> (p) [5 (6.4)], <em>change</em> (p), <em>put</em> (p together) [both 3 (3.9)], <em>assign</em> (p roles), <em>bring</em> (p together), <em>hand</em> (th to p) [all 2 (2.6)], <em>allow</em> (p to do th), <em>allude</em> to (th), <em>assist</em> (p), <em>beckon</em>, <em>connect</em> (p), <em>conspire</em>, <em>crush</em> (p), <em>deal</em> (circumstances), <em>demand</em> (th of p), <em>disguise</em>, <em>disturb</em> (p), <em>disturb</em> (p), <em>entwine</em> (p), <em>follow</em> (its own course), <em>give</em> (p th), <em>guide</em> (p), <em>interrupt</em> (p lives), <em>joke</em>, <em>land</em> (p in places), <em>offer</em> (th to p), <em>point</em> (at p), <em>remove</em> (th), <em>save</em> (p), <em>send</em> (p to places) <em>spare</em> (p), <em>take</em> (p), <em>test</em> (p), <em>throw</em> (p together), <em>touch</em> (p), <em>treat p</em> (in certain ways) [all 1 (1.3)]</td>
<td>56 (71.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
<td><em>decide</em> [8 (10.2)], <em>choose</em> [6 (7.7)], <em>decree</em>, <em>determine</em>, <em>mean</em>, <em>plan</em> [all 1 (1.3)]</td>
<td>18 (23.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td><em>say</em> [3 (3.8)], <em>tell</em> [1 (1.3)]</td>
<td>4 (5.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 reveals that the number of material processes controlled by *Fate* vastly exceeds those for the mental, behavioural and verbal processes. In spoken discourse, Americans thus consider *Fate* to be primarily occupied with physical, concrete actions of which *intervene* tops the chart, representing 14.3\% of the material processes and 10.2\% of all the four types of processes combined.

The mental processes controlled by *Fate* account for 23.1\% of the total number of processes and *decide*, being the most frequent verb, stands for 10.2\%. These processes by themselves do not reveal whether *Fate*’s decisions and choices generated positive or negative consequences for people but to some degree, they do imply that people are willing to let *Fate* decide for them. According to Eggins (2004, p. 227), a mental process presupposes the participation of a conscious human or an anthropomorphized human and the fact that Americans assign mental qualities to *Fate* indicates that they perceive this power as if it were a conscious being.

Behavioural processes were non-existent in the spoken section. As to the verbal processes, Americans say that *Fate* occasionally speaks: it *says* and *tells* things.

An example of the verb representing the most common verbal process displayed in Table 2, *say*, is presented below:

Ex. 27 It puts all the mechanical, all the procedural power in the hands of the Senate. But you can trace it back to this election. I mean, there are so many things that *fate has to say* about politics (spoken, 2001).

\textsuperscript{11} In Tables 2-11, verbs are listed according to a) frequency of occurrence, b) alphabetical order. The numbers in brackets indicate raw frequency followed by relative frequency in percent.
The result from this section implies that Americans are more prone to associate Fate with physical action and brains, rather than with vocal cords.

### 4.1.2 Fiction

**Table 3. Processes controlled by Fate, fiction section.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of process</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>intervene [24 (7.3)], bring (p to places, p together) [16 (4.8)], give (th, opportunities to p) [8 (2.4)], transform (p) [6 (1.8)], lead (p), send (p th, p places), throw (th, p together), tie (p together) [all 5 (1.5)], conspire, hand (p things, circumstances) [all 4 (1.2)], allow (p to do th), arrange (events), cripple (p), deal (th to p), deny (p things), drive, offer (th to p), place (th, p in places), snatch (p) [all 3 (0.9)], assign (p roles), approach (p), cast (p in places), catch (p), cause (th to happen, challenge (p), circle (p), deliver (p to p), direct (events), grant (p th), handle (th), impose, play (roles, into p hands), put (p, th in places and roles), retaliate, rule (p lives), spare (p), strike (p), take sides, test (p), touch (p), treat (p certain ways), write [all 2 (0.6)], abandon (p), act, advance, appear (in places), assist (p), back (cars), balance (th), beckon, beset (p), bind (p), bless (p), blind (p), break (p necks), catapult (p to places), change (p), cheat (p), chew (p), collect (debts), conceal (th), consign (p to places), contribute (to work), control (p), cooperate, crouch (in places), curse (p), demand (th), deposit (p in places), deprive (p of th), design (events), destroy (p), disfavor (p), drop (p), entangle (p), fall, flight, form (th), grab (p), grind (p), guard, herd (p together), impel (p), inflame (th), kill (p), knit (p together), land (p in places), liberate (p), line (p palms), link (p together), lurk (in places), make (p fall in love), manifest, marry (p), plant (th), plot (against p), pluck (p), prepare (th), preside, provide (th), punish (p), push (p), reach (th), reach out to (p), reduce (p), release (p), reserve (th), reveal (th), reverse (th), rise, rob (p), run, save (p), set (p in places), speak (to p through physical action), spur (p), stack (the odds), starve (p), steal, steer (p), stick (knives in p), stop (p), supervise (p), supply (th), take over, target (p), tempt (p), torment (p), touch (p), treat (p certain ways), wade (p), wound (p), wreck (p), wrong (p) [all 1 (0.3)]</td>
<td>249 (75.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
<td>decide [27 (7.3)], decree [9 (2.7)], plan [8 (2.4), mean, command, determine, intend, want [all 3 (0.9)], choose, destine, dictate, doom [all 2, (0.6)], agree, await, know, lose heart, select [all 1 (0.3)]</td>
<td>72 (21.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td>smile [3, (0.9)], laugh [1 (0.3)]</td>
<td>4 (1.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>declare, say, speak, tell, whisper [all 1 (0.3)]</td>
<td>5 (1.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be deduced from Table 3, the material process is the obviously dominating category in the fiction section, representing 75.5% of all processes. From an American viewpoint, Fate is said to mostly intervene (7.3% of total and 9.6% of the material processes).

The creativity of Americans seems to be reflected in the ways they refer to Fate in the discourse domain of fiction. On the negative side, among other things, Fate is said to cripple, chew and grind people. On the positive side, it is perceived to for example, bless, marry and liberate people. Accordingly, Fate seems to be regarded as a source of both good and evil.

The figure for the mental processes is slightly lower than for the spoken section: 21.8%. Furthermore, the most frequent verb is decide, accounting for 37.5% of the mental processes.
in that category. *Fate*, most likely perceived as a conscious being, is thus considered to be scheming fairly frequently in fiction.

An example of the verb representing the most common mental process displayed in Table 3, *decide*, is presented below:

Ex. 28 What for Israel was a historical constant was for this simple farmer an immediate and deadly fact of life. *Fate had decided* that he should live between two armies, both of which regarded his physical existence as an annoying inconvenience (fiction, 1991).

Behavioural processes account for no more than 1.2% of total. This means that *Fate* is not often said to give away emotions by *smiling* and *laughing*, but, it does seem to happen on rare occasions. Nor is *Fate* considered to speak particularly often in fiction since the verbal processes correspond to only 1.5% of total. Sporadically, though, *Fate* is said to *tell* and *whisper* things.

The result from this section shows that Americans perceive *Fate* as being predominantly physical in nature, rather than mental, emotional or verbal.

4.1.3 Magazine

Table 4. Processes controlled by *Fate*, magazine section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of process</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Material</strong></td>
<td><em>intervene</em> [28 (16.5)], <em>bring</em> <em>(th, p to places, p together)</em> [9 (5.3)], <em>deliver</em> <em>(th, p)</em>, <em>disguise</em>, <em>place</em> <em>(events, th in p lives)</em>, <em>strike</em> <em>(p)</em> [all 3 (1.8)], <em>buffet</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>come</em> <em>(to p)</em>, <em>conspire</em>, <em>favor</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>frame</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>lead</em> <em>(p to places)</em>, <em>play</em> <em>(roles)</em>, <em>reserve</em> <em>(th)</em>, <em>send</em> <em>(p to places)</em>, <em>throw</em> <em>(th at p)</em> [all 2 (1.2)], <em>abandon</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>aid</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>allow</em> <em>(p to do th)</em>, <em>appear</em>, <em>arrange</em> <em>(th)</em>, <em>appoint</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>assist</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>awaken</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>beckon</em>, <em>cause</em> <em>(th to happen)</em>, <em>change</em> <em>(th)</em>, <em>choreograph</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>compel</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>cooperate</em>, <em>dash</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>deal</em> <em>(th to p)</em>, <em>deny</em> <em>(p th)</em>, <em>direct</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>drape</em> <em>(in fabric)</em>, <em>drive</em> <em>(p insane)</em>, <em>embody</em> <em>(th)</em>, <em>engross</em> <em>(th)</em>, <em>exact</em> <em>(th)</em>, <em>follow</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>give</em> <em>(th to p)</em>, <em>guide</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>hand</em> <em>(p circumstances)</em>, <em>help</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>impose</em> <em>(th on p)</em>, <em>kill</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>link</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>mind</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>occur</em>, <em>offer</em> <em>(p th)</em>, <em>outsmart</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>preserve</em> <em>(th)</em>, <em>prevent</em> <em>(th from happening)</em>, <em>promote</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>prompt</em> <em>(p to th)</em>, <em>protect</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>provide</em> <em>(th)</em>, <em>put</em> <em>(p together)</em>, <em>request</em> <em>(th)</em>, <em>rescue</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>reverse</em> <em>(th)</em>, <em>screw</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>seat</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>show</em> <em>(p th)</em>, <em>slap</em> <em>(th on p furniture)</em>, <em>take</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>take sides</em>, <em>tear</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>threaten</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>transform</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>treat</em> <em>(p in certain ways)</em>, <em>unite</em> <em>(p)</em>, <em>whisk</em> <em>(th away)</em> [all 1 (0.6)]</td>
<td>126 (74.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mental</strong></td>
<td><em>decide</em> [24 (14.1)], <em>plan</em> [5 (2.9)], <em>choose</em> [3 (1.8)], <em>decree</em>, <em>devise</em>, <em>dictate</em>, <em>love</em>, <em>want</em> [all 1 (0.6)]</td>
<td>37 (21.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioural</strong></td>
<td><em>smile</em> [4 (2.4)]</td>
<td>4 (2.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verbal</strong></td>
<td><em>commend</em>, <em>designate</em>, <em>intervene</em> [all 1 (0.6)]</td>
<td>3 (1.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen in Table 4, the material process continues to represent the most frequent category also in the magazine section, representing 74.1% of all the processes controlled by *Fate*. Again, *intervene* takes the lead, constituting 16.5% of the total and 22.2% of the material processes.
Similar to the fiction section, in magazines, writers prove to be quite inventive when referring to *Fate*: it is considered to *frame, outsmart* and *screw* people as well as to *drape* in fabric, *choreograph* people and *slap* things on people’s furniture. However, it is also claimed that *Fate favors, minds* and *unites* people suggesting that, from an American perspective, *Fate* is not perceived to simply act with bad, but also with good intentions.

An example of the most common verb displayed in Table 4, *intervene* (material), is presented below:

Ex. 29 An elite show collie was engaged to play the title role, but *fate intervened* when northern California’s Sacramento River flooded, providing a once-in-a-lifetime chance to get some spectacular footage of "Lassie" fording the water (magazine, 2008).

The figure for the mental processes is practically the same as for the fiction section: 21.8% of all the processes combined. Again, *decide* tops the list (14.1% of the total and 64.9% of the mental processes). Consequently, in the discourse of magazines, *Fate* is recognized by Americans to run the show in the capacity of a conscious being to a rather great extent. It should be noted here that magazines represent the single domain of discourse where *Fate* is said to *love*.

Once again, behavioural processes turn out to be low in number: 2.4% of the total. Also, the production of speech is perceived to be scarce in the magazine section (1.8% of total).

Judging from the results illustrated in Table 4, Americans are more likely to expect *Fate* to bring them places and to strike them than they expect *Fate* to decide for, smile at, or commend them.

### 4.1.4 Newspaper

In Table 5, as in Tables 2-4, the material process occurs in the greatest number: 81.8% of the total, which is somewhat higher than in the previous sections. Once more, *intervene* is the most frequent material process corresponding to 12.6% of the total and 15.6% of the material processes.
Table 5. Processes controlled by *Fate*, newspaper section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of process</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>intervene [14 (12.6)], bring (p together, p to places) [7 (6.3)], alter (p lives, th), strike (p), touch (p), [all 3 (2.7)], handle (th), lead (p), link (p together), make (p Mexican, professions), take sides, throw (p together) [all 2, (1.8)], address (th), allow (p to do th), appoint (p to places), batter (p), caress (p), catapult (p), change (events), collect (th), compensate (p), conspire, control (p), deposit (p in places), destroy (p), draw (p to places), drive (p to do th), fail (p), force (p to do th), give (p opportunities), grab (p), help (p), hit (p), intrude (on p plans), join (p together), knock (p), pit (p together), play (roles), pluck (p), postpone (th), probe (th), put (p in places), resupply (th), retaliate, revenge (on p), save (p), score, seize (p), shock (p), sign (to p), smite (p), steamroll (past p), take (p), threaten (p), thrust (p to do th), transform (p), turn (on p), win (over p), wrest (p away), yank (p) [all 1 (0.9)]</td>
<td>90 (81.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
<td>decide [12 (10.8)], plan [2 (1.8)], decree, destine, direct, want [all 1 (0.9)]</td>
<td>18 (16.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td>smile [1 (0.9)]</td>
<td>1 (0.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>ordain, murmur [both 1 (0.9)]</td>
<td>2 (1.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As in the previous sections, *Fate* is considered to play two roles in the newspaper section: the evil one that knocks, plucks and shocks people as well as the good one that caresses, compensates and helps people.

A lower figure than in Tables 2-4 is shown for the mental processes: 16.2%. The most frequent mental process controlled by *Fate* so far is decide and the newspaper section is no exception. Accordingly, in newspaper discourse, to some degree, *Fate* is being considered to have a brain, rather than a hand, in what goes on in the world.

An example of the verb representing the most common mental process displayed in Table 5, *decide*, is presented below:

Ex. 30  "I definitely think *fate decides* when you get your chance and then you have to take advantage of it because you only get so many in your career," Dafoe says (newspaper, 1999).

Behavioural and verbal processes hardly occur at all in the newspaper section: *Fate* is said to have smiled, ordained and murmured one time respectively.

In agreement with Tables 2-4, the result for this section shows that *Fate* is perceived to deal with people more through hands-on action and less through psychological, emotional and verbal strategies.
4.1.5 Academic

Table 6. Processes controlled by *Fate*, academic section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of process</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>control (th), intervene [both 4 (5.5)], deny (p th) [3 (4.2)], assign (p th, p to places), grant (p circumstances), punish (p), strike (p), take (p to places) [all 2 (2.8)], act, affect (p lives), bring (p together), buffet (p), coil (in places), come (upon p), defeat (p), destroy (countries), favor (p), force (p), give (p away), influence (p), intertwine (p), kill (p), make (p Christians), manifest, mark (th), mediate (th), meet (p), offer (p th), overtake (p), pre-select (th), preserve (th), propel (p to do th), rule (p), screw (p), shoot (p), snatch (p), surprise (p), throw (p together), toss (p), unite (p), victimize (p) [all 1 (1.4)]</td>
<td>56 (77.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
<td>determine [5 (6.9)], decide [3 (4.2)], decree [2 (2.8)], choose, destine, dictate, doom, plan, project [all 1 (1.4)]</td>
<td>16 (22.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In academic discourse, *Fate* is also seen as a relentless force: it is claimed to strike, screw and kill people. In contrast to the previous sections, undeniably good deeds controlled by *Fate* are strikingly scarce in academic discourse. Americans do say, however, that *Fate favors* people.

The figure for the mental processes approximates the one for the spoken section: 22.2%. In comparison to the previous sections where *decide* occurred most frequently, the academic section features *determine* as the most common mental process (6.9% of total). Thus, *Fate* is perceived to perform in the capacity of a conscious being to quite a large extent.

An example of the most common verb displayed in Table 6, *determine* (mental), is presented below:

Ex. 31 The cultural theme that is supposed to guide action among Indians is the notion of Nishkamakarma (Eswara 1972). It postulates that outcomes of actions are determined by karma or *fate*; our duty as humans is to simply work effortfully with detachment toward the goal (academic, 2000).

Both behavioural and verbal processes are conspicuous by their absence. Hence, *Fate* is not perceived to smile at all in the discourse of academics and it is also considered to remain silent.

Table 6 conforms with the previous ones, in that the material processes prevail in the academic section, suggesting that Americans perceive *Fate* to be significantly more physically oriented than mentally, emotionally or verbally.
4.2 People trying to control *Fate*

4.2.1 Spoken interaction

**Table 7. Processes controlled by people, spoken section.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of process</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td><em>tempt</em> [10 (76.9)], <em>defy</em> [2 (15.4)], <em>race</em> [1 (7.7)]</td>
<td>13 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Undoubtedly, in spoken discourse, Americans consider people mostly to *tempt* (76.9% of total) *Fate* in a physical, concrete way. In this section, the material processes represent 100% of the total and thus, mental, behavioural and verbal processes are absent from the spoken section. Although it would be possible to tempt *Fate* in a mental, behavioural and verbal mode as well, people apparently are not said to direct challenging thoughts, sneezes or cries against *Fate*.

An example representing the most common verb displayed in Table 7, *tempt* (material), is presented below:

Ex. 32 M. O'BRIEN: Coming up on the program, the "Crocodile Hunter," Steve Irwin, certainly *tempted fate*. Was it more than an adrenaline rush? Was it in his genes (spoken, 2006)?

In sum, the result from Table 7 suggests that, in spoken discourse, Americans seem to find that physical, head-on confrontation is the most effective way to deal with *Fate*.

4.2.2 Fiction

**Table 8. Processes controlled by people, fiction section.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of process</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td><em>fight</em> [14 (17.9)], <em>tempt</em> [10 (12.8)], <em>defy</em>, <em>trip</em> [both 4 (5.1)], <em>sidestep</em>, <em>tamper</em>, <em>test</em>, <em>thwart</em> [all 2 (2.6)], <em>avoid</em>, <em>beat</em>, <em>bend</em>, <em>challenge</em>, <em>change</em>, <em>cheat</em>, <em>confront</em>, <em>crack</em>, <em>dare</em>, <em>defeat</em>, <em>derail</em>, <em>disrupt</em>, <em>evade</em>, <em>fell</em>, <em>govern</em>, <em>hit</em>, <em>mess</em>, <em>outwit</em>, <em>pay</em>, <em>promise</em> (<em>Fate th</em>), <em>provoke</em>, <em>rebel</em>, <em>swindle</em>, <em>toy</em>, <em>trick</em>, <em>wrestle</em> [all 1 (1.3)]</td>
<td>68 (87.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
<td><em>command</em>, <em>tempt</em> [both 1 (1.3)]</td>
<td>2 (2.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td><em>tempt</em> [1 (1.3)]</td>
<td>1 (1.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td><em>tempt</em> [3 (3.8)], <em>bargain</em> [2 (2.6)], <em>ask</em> (<em>th of Fate</em>), <em>quarrel</em> [both 1 (1.3)]</td>
<td>7 (9.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As revealed in Table 8, it appears that not only *Fate*, but people as well, are described to get creative about their actions in fictional discourse. The material processes make up 87.2% of the total. Taking the lead among them is *fight* (17.9% of the total and 20.1% of the material processes). Some of the more resourceful actions are *crack*, *derail* and *pay* as well as *outwit*, *swindle* and *wrestle*. 19
An example representing the most common verb displayed in Table 8, *fight* (material), is presented below:

Ex. 33  In a state of severe mental distress bordering on outright imbalance, he decides to make himself over into Rambo and do something *to fight* back at *fate*, which is a weird response at best, absolutely nuts at worst (fiction, 1991).

Attempting to control *Fate* with mental strategies is considered to be rare: *command* and *tempt* occur one time each. The same is true for behavioural strategies: somebody is said to have *tempted Fate* once.

Verbally, people are said to primarily *tempt Fate*. The verbal process stands for 9% of all processes controlled by people in the fiction section.

The result from Table 8 reveals that, in line with the spoken section, the material processes dominate while mental and verbal processes are non-existant in the spoken section.

4.2.3 Magazine

Table 9. Processes controlled by people, magazine section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of process</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td><em>tempt</em> [9 (47.3%)] , <em>defy</em> [3 (15, 8%)] , <em>battle</em>, <em>beat</em>, <em>dare</em>, <em>defeat</em>, <em>test</em>, <em>win</em> [all 1 (5.3%)]</td>
<td>18 (94.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td><em>tempt</em> [1 (5.3%)]</td>
<td>1 (5.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In accordance with Tables 7 and 8, the material processes are the most frequent in the magazine section, corresponding to 94.7% of the total. The most common strategy applied is perceived to be *tempting Fate* (47.3% of the total and 50% of the material processes).

An example representing the most common verb listed in Table 9, *tempt* (material), is presented below:

Ex. 34  It is dangerous for men and women to work alone together after hours; they *tempt fate*, and ask for an affair (magazine, 1992).

People are not said to use mental or behavioural approaches at all in the magazine section and one single process, *tempt*, was found in the verbal category.

As in the previous sections, in the discourse of magazines, Americans seem to regard tangible action to be the most successful tactic when targeting *Fate*. 
4.2.4 Newspaper

Table 10. Processes controlled by people, newspaper section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of process</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>tempt [8 (61.5)], defy [2 (15.4)], challenge, test [both 1 (7.7)]</td>
<td>12 (92.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>tempt [1 (7.7)]</td>
<td>1 (7.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the newspaper section, the material processes account for 92.3% of the total. Again, people are said to tempt (61.5% of the total and 66.7% of the material processes) Fate more often than they, for instance, defy, challenge or test Fate.

An example representing the most common verb displayed in Table 10, tempt (material), is presented below:

Ex. 35  The governor appears to be playing "God" delaying these vitally needed reforms and tempts fate in so doing... recalling that "What Goes Around, Comes Around " (newspaper, 1997).

For the mental, behavioural and verbal categories, the outcome is the same as that in Table 9: the two former do not occur at all and the latter is represented by one single occurrence of tempt.

Consequently, the result from Table 10 shows once again that, evidently, Americans are considered to favor physical efforts when entering combat with Fate.

4.2.5 Academic

Table 11. Processes controlled by people, academic section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of process</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>tempt, resist [both 2 (10.5)], annul, challenge, control, counteract, influence, jinx, joust, mock, protest, seize, thwart, unhinge [all 1 (5.3)]</td>
<td>16 (84.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
<td>divine, question [both 1 (5.3)]</td>
<td>2 (10.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>conjure [1 (5.3)]</td>
<td>1 (5.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11 shows that tempt and resist are the most frequent verbs representing the material process type (10.5% of the total and 12.5% of the material processes, respectively). Once again, this category proved to be the most common one. Surprisingly, like the fiction section, academic discourse demonstrates some inventiveness in its reference to processes controlled
by people. Among the material processes emerge, for example, *annul, jinx* and *joust* as well as *mock, thwart* and *unhinge*.

An example of the verb representing one of the two most common material processes displayed in Table 11, *resist*, is presented below:

Ex. 36  It is a notion suggested also in " Guilty of Dust, " that what the Greeks called fate we instead call desire; and that the same lavish punishments that awaited the Greeks who attempted to counteract or *resist fate* await us if we resist desire.

The mental processes, where the verbs *divine* and *question* surface, correspond to 10.5% of all the processes combined. Moreover, *conjure* occurs once and is the only verbal process represented.

The result from Table 11 confirms the trends reflected in the previous tables: despite the fact that, from an American viewpoint, people are said to sometimes divine and conjure *Fate*, *Fate* is regarded to be best defeated by concrete action.

### 4.3 Overview of processes controlled by *Fate*

**Table 12. Processes controlled by *Fate*.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>% of all processes controlled by <em>Fate</em></th>
<th>% of all processes controlled by <em>Fate</em></th>
<th>% of all processes controlled by <em>Fate</em></th>
<th>% of all processes controlled by <em>Fate</em></th>
<th>% of all processes controlled by <em>Fate</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spoken</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All in all, the result suggests that *Fate* is generally viewed by Americans as controlling primarily material processes, representing 75.8% of the total. Mental processes do, however, occur to a noticeable extent (21.1% of the total), while behavioural and verbal processes only constitute a very small part: only 1.2% and 1.8% respectively. The highest figure for the material processes controlled by *Fate* was found in the fiction section: 32.7% of the total.
4.4 Overview of processes controlled by people

Table 13. Processes controlled by people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Material % of all processes controlled by Fate</th>
<th>Mental</th>
<th>Mental % of all processes controlled by Fate</th>
<th>Behavioural</th>
<th>Behavioural % of all processes controlled by Fate</th>
<th>Verbal</th>
<th>Verbal % of all processes controlled by Fate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spoken</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, too, the frequency for the material process (89.4% of the total) greatly exceeds those for the other categories. The figure for the verbal process (7.0% of the total) is somewhat higher than those for the mental and behavioural ones, which stand for no more than 2.8% and 0.7% respectively. The highest figure for the material processes controlled by people can be found in the fiction section: 47.9% of the total.

5. Summary and discussion

It is difficult to generalize on the basis of a relatively modest corpus investigation. However, this study does give some indications as to how Americans perceive Fate, and where they communicate about it. It shows that the highest frequency of Fate identified as a power was found in the fiction section: 25% of all hits of fate in this section (cf. Table 1). This might have been expected because of the fact that the fiction section is represented by for example novels and movie scripts, text types that are likely to address issues of an existential nature.

The figures for the spoken, magazine, newspaper and academic sections were similar to each other: 12, 15, 13 and 11% respectively of the overall number of hits in each section. It is perhaps surprising that the number of hits for the academic section proved to be so high, since this discipline does not generally concern itself with concepts such as Fate. However, a partial explanation may be provided by the fact that the academic section contains journals from various fields of research such as psychology and literature whose investigations draw on the theories and works of others, for example existentialism and novels where the issue of internal versus external power, that is, free will versus Fate, is apt to surface.
Likewise, it may be surprising that the academic section shows the highest percentage for processes performed by people in their attempts to control *Fate* (21%, cf. Table 1). Even though it may be fair to say that academics generally would be prone to challenge *Fate*, they would probably be even more likely to disregard it completely.

Seemingly, Americans perceive *Fate* to be most active in the categories magazine, newspaper (90% of all processes controlled by *Fate*, respectively) and spoken (86% - the spoken section consists almost exclusively of news broadcasting aired by, for instance, ABC, NBC and CNN) (cf. Table 1). A plausible reason for this might be that magazines, newspapers and news broadcasting provide a window on human reality and more often than not, these kinds of media report about events of suffering and death that people may feel the need to make some sort of sense of. In such cases, the concept of *Fate* sometimes seems to be the answer to the questions, or at least it could offer some comfort to the human heart.

In all fairness, however, in the newspaper, magazine and spoken sections, Americans credit *Fate* for positive events as well. In fact, in all of the sections, *Fate* is considered to do both positive and negative deeds. It should perhaps also be mentioned that in the newspaper and magazines sections, *Fate*‘s intervention in sports, particularly in golf and American football, appears to be frequent. Regardless of the performance of the player, good or bad, the reporters quite often claim *Fate* had its finger in the game.

Furthermore, in an American perspective, *Fate* tends to be perceived as considerably more active in terms of controlling people’s lives than people are in their attempts to control *Fate*, suggesting that people’s stance towards the force of *Fate* would be more passive than active.

In addition, Table 12 confirms that the most common type of process controlled by *Fate* is the material one, constituting 75.8% of the total, where *intervene* is the most frequent verb represented with 78 hits in all sections. It should be noted, however, that 43 of those were substituted by me. For example, *Fate stepped in* was replaced by *Fate intervened* (cf. section 3.2). The highest relative figure for the material processes was found in the fiction section (32.7% of all processes controlled by *Fate* in the study). The mental processes account for 21.1% of the total, where the most recurrent verb is *decide*. Less frequent are the behavioural and verbal processes, corresponding to only 1.2% and 1.8% respectively.

The situation for the category processes controlled by people (cf. Table 13) appears slightly different. Even though the material processes dominate with 89.4% of the total, with *tempt* constituting the most frequent verb, the percentage for the mental processes is considerably lower than in connection with the processes controlled by *Fate* and account for
no more than 2.8%. Noticeably, the verbal processes account for as much as 7.0% while the behavioural processes are again scarce in number, representing only 0.7%.

As it appears, Americans consider Fate to perform mostly physical, concrete actions in order to control people’s lives. It is also sometimes said to engage in mental activity – for the same purpose. In contrast, Fate is quite rarely perceived to devote itself to activities of a behavioural or verbal nature. A similar picture emerges with respect to what people are considered to do in their attempts to control Fate, except that mental activity is less frequent in these cases.

On the one hand, the fact that Fate is said to, for instance, strike, conspire and end people’s lives implies that Americans find some comfort in the prospect that Fate could have been responsible for their own negative experiences or those of other people and that there is someone or something to blame. On the other hand, Americans ascribe to Fate actions such as assisting, saving and sparing people, suggesting there exists within their minds a desire for a supreme power or being that cares for and watches over them. This reasoning appears to align with that of Hannay (1986, cf. section 2.3) as he posits that expressions with Fate are used by people to explain unexpected events that in retrospect seem to go beyond mere chance.

Moreover, according to the definitions given in the dictionaries consulted, the power of Fate is often considered absolute and unchangeable. This means that although it would be perfectly feasible to challenge, defy or tempt Fate, it would certainly be impossible to beat, defeat or sidestep Fate. Yet people are occasionally said to do just that. The reason may be that, either, Americans are not aware of the ‘official’ definition of Fate, or they consciously choose to disregard it. However, tempt being the most frequent verb used indicates that Americans are, to some degree, attentive to the fact that the force of Fate is ‘officially’ defined as absolute and unchangeable. That Americans are said to beat, defeat or sidestep Fate would imply that they deem themselves powerful enough to create their own realities and, consequently, they would be expected to assume responsibility for the same. By contrast, people who commonly assign power to Fate are probably less willing to admit responsibility for their actions. This view is also discussed by Cahn (1967, cf. section 2.3) as he questions why anyone should be held morally responsible for their actions if free will does not exist.

Although this comment belongs to the philosophical spectrum of the topic under discussion, it may, nevertheless, deserve some attention. According to Frank (1945, cf. section 2.3), the issue of free will versus Fate is probably as old as humankind. Yet one may question whether these concepts have to be incompatible. There may, or may not, be some truth to Plato’s theory stating that humans possess a soul (Den Boeft, 1970, cf. section 2.3).
and that all evolution, including that of the human soul, is infinite and that its movement is circular (p. 20). However, in case it does hold a degree of veracity, it would not be entirely unreasonable to consider the possibility of the human soul experiencing countless lifetimes progressing in a circle. The fact that Plato defines *Fate* as the universal law by which all world affairs are being governed (Den Boeft, 1970, cf. section 2.3) does not necessarily mean that *Fate* acts as the cause setting the wheels in motion. More likely, the free will of human beings does. Hence, *Fate* could rather be seen as the energy regulating the process, extending over eons of lifetimes.

In light of this view, free will and *Fate* would merely represent two sides of the same coin, serving as cause and effect in fractions of an endless chain of evolution. Accordingly, and dare I say, as *Fate* would have it, the controversy of free will versus *Fate* need not be written in stone since there seems to exist, after all, an alternative perspective.

Regardless of any one individual’s opinion on *Fate*, the fact remains that in American discourse, it is sometimes described to control people’s lives and people are sometimes described to try to control *Fate*. This would suggest that Americans are not utterly indifferent to *Fate* and that, to some degree, they choose to recognize its existence.
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Appendix 1

Analysis of the processes controlled by *Fate*, categorized as a power, or by people – spoken section (data retrieved 2009-03-30) from the Corpus of Contemporary American English

It should be noted that in the corpus the examples are listed in reversed chronological order and, consequently, the same order has been used in these appendices. Examples 1-7 represent processes controlled by *Fate* where every fifth example of that category has been included. Examples 8-14 represent processes controlled by people where every other example of that category has been included. In order to facilitate the understanding of the analysis, the word or phrases in focus have been rendered in italics. It should also be noted that the comments given in square brackets have been added by this writer. The abbreviation *Pr* has been used for ‘Process’, for example [*Pr: material*].

1 Kathy and Charles Augustine eventually decided on a divorce, but he was certainly not pushing for it and neither was Kathy's family. *(Photo of Charles, Kathy and two men) Mr. COHEN Chuck was a great guy, and our family, we all got along very well with him. DON PAFF Did you try to convince her not to break it off. Mr. COHEN I did, yeah, DON PAFF (voice-over) And then, later in 2003, *fate intervened* [*Pr: material*], Charles Augustine suffered a stroke. Kathy spent long hours by his bedside. And for a time he seemed to improve. But after weeks in the hospital, Charles Augustine took a sudden turn for the worse. He suffered massive organ failure and died. [2007, NBC Dateline]

2 Sheriff Davenport, thank you very much for taking the All right, if you can explain to us how you ended up catching him. 911 OPERATOR Well, of course we were working with South Carolina. They had called us and the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and we staked out the two residences, the houses that he had been staying, one being his mother and stepfather, the other was his sister. And *as fate would have it* [*decide*]12 [*Pr: mental*], he showed back up and then drove by his mother's house about 11:45 last night. # Our deputy there recognized the vehicle, ran it down, stopped him, did a felony stop, put him in custody. [2006, MSNBC Abrams]

3 As a specialist in corrective surgery for children with neuromuscular disorders, Dr. Roy Nuzzo had seen images like this before, of children who find it difficult to walk, to stand, even to sit up comfortably. He's often asked to view tapes and make recommendations on difficult cases. But receiving this tape, he says, was a miracle. Mr. MORRISSEY The Latin phrase would be manus e nubibus, hand from the clouds. It's *the guiding hand* [*guide*] [*Pr: material*] of kismet or *fate*. [2004, NBC Dateline]

4 Love is blind. But is it really love? That's the question. Consolidated Edison But it seems that Robert Epstein, unlucky in love, wasn't listening to the Dr. Epstein, Ph.D., because last Christmas Day... MTV It's like one of the movies. It's romantic. It has a number of romantic elements to it. Consolidated Edison... at Newark Airport, of all places... MTV I got on board. There was a man sitting in my seat. So, in front of that seat was a vacant seat. Consolidated Edison... *fate stepped in* [*intervene*] [*Pr: material*]. MTV And hovering over it was Gabriella Castillo. Consolidated Edison Forty-year-old Gabriella Castillo, of Caracas, Venezuela, walked into Robert's life. [2003, CBS 48Hours]

5 And so he's -- he knows his way around the stick and rudder. There he is right there. He's also one of the largest astronauts. Big guy. And of course, that is one of the smallest astronauts, as *fate would have it* [*decide*] [*Pr: mental*], Nancy Currie, who is the robotic arm operator. They are going through checklists as they approached the Hubble space telescope. [2002, CNN Sun Morn]

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12 In Appendices 1-5, in some examples, expressions have been substituted by corresponding verbs. The substitute verb has been rendered in italics, given in square brackets, following immediately after the expression, also rendered in italics.
I must say, the last couple of weeks, I felt like that little cartoon figure who walked around with the black cloud over his head. Moriarty Li'l Abner. But, for this year, the operative issue is Yeah. Li'l Abner. Moriarty (unintelligible) around his head. Or as Al Pacino said in "Godfather III," "Every time I (unintelligible), they throw me back in." (Laughter) Do you ever feel that fate treated [Pr: material] you badly? But, for this year, the operative issue is No. No. When you -- when you balance it all out, I've had a pretty fabulous life. [2001, CNN King]

Tonight, a powerful story of mistaken identity and amazing grace. It begins in the aftermath of a terrible crime. The victim felt sure that she knew who did it. But when it came time to identify him, she fingered the wrong person. Circumstances and fate had conspired [Pr: material] to send [Pr: material] an innocent man to prison for many, many years. [1998, ABC 2020]

Today the Friday Finals, our list of winners and losers of the week as chosen by me and Heather and the rest of the staff. First, the losers. The obvious biggest this week is suspect Drew Peterson. If you get away with murdering one wife, does it make sense to tempt [Pr: material] fate by murdering another? [2007, Fox Gibson]

Just sit right back and you'll hear a tale of two teenagers who should have known better. Mr. Raphael I was OK for the first night. Sen. D'Amato One week ago, off the South Carolina coast, 17-year-old Josh Long and 15-year-old Troy Driscoll decided to go fishing for sharks. And as if that alone wasn't tempting [Pr: material] fate... Holly Eason, 911 Dispatcher As soon as we got the rip tide, we knew that we were in trouble. [2005, CBS Rather]

But I realized was then all these events or these questions that you ask yourself, like why did this happen? And everybody asks that when something terrible has happened. I asked that when I discovered I had neurological Lyme disease. You know, why, of all the millions of people that passed by this piece of grass, did the tick jump on me? But in part, it was also to say, you know, I'm not going to let fate take hold [Pr: material] of me [defy] [Pr: material]. I'm going to find some alternatives, find the right treatment, things like that. [2003, NBC Today]

And most importantly, as he discussed with voters in New Hampshire, if you don't let the people in Washington get your money in the first place, they don't -- they can't waste it. And that's a big difference between Senator McCain's plan and Governor Bush's plan. # Senator McCain's plan tempts [Pr: material] fate and lets Washington keep spending. [2000, CNN Crossfire]

Patrick charmed yet another set of friends traveling with USC by ship for a semester. Life seemed good as he strummed his guitar around the world. But days before Tony's graduation and a semester before Patrick's, the two boys crossed paths at a party. That night they would tempt [Pr: material] fate one more time. [1997, NBC Dateline]

When I was a teenager, I remember watching Malcolm X give a speech. I remember his military bearing at the podium, his elegant severity. There was something so self-conceived about him, there, in the spotlight, his stiff white shirt, his dark suit. He reminded me of a convert. Though Malcolm X remains one of the most revolutionary of black intellectuals, something about him was characteristically American. Aren't we Americans, after all, famous for our desire to take control of our individual lives, to stand against [defy] [Pr: material] fate, against history? [1997, PBS Newshour]

This is a scene where Lucille is on her way to a big Hollywood party and she's going to, uh, try and impress the people there, and these the thoughts that she's thinking in the limousine on the way to the party. Mary Galley, Waitress reading' They followed a narrow, winding road into the hills. The smell of eucalyptus washed through the car. City lights sparkled in the distance, twinkling like the string of Christmas lights inside Lucille. These days in Hollywood had been the very best of her life. Every day she tempted [Pr: material] fate, and every day fate handed her another plump bundle of good fortune wrapped up in shiny paper. [1993, NPR Weekend]
Appendix 2

Analysis of the processes controlled by *Fate*, categorized as a power, or by people – fiction section (data retrieved 2009-03-30) from the Corpus of Contemporary American English

For comments, see Appendix 1.

1 As a ghost, Nomi could manipulate matter telekinetically, and her power was nearly absolute at Elancourt - she could rattle all the windows or tear off the roof if she wanted to, and the weather often changed with her emotions -- but not outside the property. // Her beloved home had become her prison, her eternal cell of fifteen acres and a slowly dying manor. Among *fate*’s other curses [curse] [Pr: material], each seemingly designed to torture her in personal and specific ways, Nomi could never leave this place. [2008, Bk: Darkatnight sedge]

2 Lastly, Mother came to wrap the girdle of white chrysanthemums around Natharie’s waist. Then she stretched up on tiptoe and kissed her forehead. *Fate* had declared [Pr: verbal] that Natharie should have all her father’s height. Where Mother was tiny, slender, and straight-hipped, Natharie was as tall as most men, with a broad, curving body, and arms and legs hardened by the playing and fighting she did with the female guards who looked after Mother and the concubines. [2008, Bk: Sworddeciever]

3 My view is skewed, of course, by the scars of my own childhood. But an inbuilt bias toward fidelity is, I think, a good thing. // I realize, of course, how lucky I am to have a happy marriage. Mal firmly believes that *Fate* meant [Pr: mental] us to be together-her bashert, she calls me. Yiddish for " destined other, " apparently (she spent summer on a kibbutz with a Jewish boyfriend when she was seventeen). [2008, Bk, Adultery Club]

4 I meandered back to the Metro between the pits and cranes of the construction site, over Pont Mirabeau and the gray rippling rustle of the Seine, gripping her papers, Ilana’s–Lana’s–the object of my pounding heart all these years, under the casual disguise of our relationship. The two adolescent girlfriends from Haifa, *brought* [Pr: material] together again, by *fate*, in Paris. [2007, Lilith]

5 A groan caused me to turn toward the back wall of the church. There was Father O’Rourke, tied and laying on the ground. Blood leaked from his forehead, and there were red splatters on his white vestments. His eyes slowly drifted in my direction. “ Run, Virginia. Get to the fort. ” His voice was weak and raspy. Keseberg quit his whistling and turned to look at me. ” Ah, Virginia. *Fate* decreed [Pr: mental] you would come, although I’m often a Doubting Thomas. [2007, Fantasy SciFi]

6 And if she had tempted fate, it had been when she’d swerved to look into the Pillbox’s flagged courtyard in the first place. # And what choice did I have, once I saw her hair? Maybe it was *fate* that tempted [Pr: material] me. [2007, Esquire]

7 Once upon a time, I had been killed. Rather messily murdered, in fact. Fortunately, I had a recent personality backup in the network. Had things progressed normally, I would have had a new body grown, been read into that body, and rejoined the living, thereby exchanging my chance to play a harp for the dubious privilege of worrying about rent and other sundry mundane topics. But, as *fate* would have it [decide] [Pr: mental], there had been a slight detour on the way back to my current body-I had been woken within the computer network. It’s not an unknown thing, just rare due to the expense involved. [2006, Analog]

spell on it. He wanted to warn people not to mess with fate. He put a spell on it. Three different people can each make three wishes on it. [2007, Know Your World]

9 Then she would put herself into the overdrive gear she now had but rarely used; that gear always seemed like tempting fate, somehow-like donning wax wings on a sunny day. But now she had no choice. And if she had tempted fate, it had been when she'd swerved to look into the Pillbox's flagged courtyard in the first place. # And what choice did I have, once I saw her hair? [2007, Esquire]

10 The wealth of historical and tactical experience the reawakened gholas could offer might be the greatest weapon the no-ship possessed. Sheeana had decided to take the risk. Perhaps we will be saved by Alia one day, Jessica thought. Or by one of the other gholas... Tempting fate, Sheeana had performed an experiment on this unborn ghola in an effort to make it more like the Alia. [2007, BkGen: Sandworms Dune]

11 " Green on green " is what I had learned to say the last time this happened, when I didn't know what in the world to do. And a voice came over the radio (thick accented metallic), " Green on green, copy. " So I changed course to overcompensate for the oddness of the convergence (it takes a Herculean effort to beat the flow of fate, you know), and miraculously I passed on by; the other boat disappeared behind me, disappearing into the receding darkness closing in behind. [2006, Massach Rev]

12 That name sufficed for a long time, but as Smart grew smarter, it also began to realize how much it didn't know, and the name seemed more of a mockery than a comfort. It tried " Grower, " which it loved for its double meaning as well as its simplicity, but when Grower's world entered an ice age and sheer size became a liability, that name was no longer appropriate on the physical level. It tried " Survivor " for a time, but that seemed to be tempting fate. [2005, Analog]

13 You double-crossin' me, boy? " Calmly, Quark called up the contract on his padd, highlighted the terms of payment, and held the display up to Gash's face. " Oh, " Gash said after he squinted at the glowing letters. " Guess I misremembered. " Quark nodded. " Guess you did. " He stood up. Breathing through his mouth for so long was going to have him hyperventilating soon, and breathing through one's nose around Gash was tempting fate. [2005, BkJuv: Worlds Star Trek]

14 Anyhow, I knew that I for one wasn't taken in by his outward appearance, and I regarded what he had done as an act of extreme cowardice; and as far as I was concerned, a man who lacked the courage to fight against Fate was not even worth a second glance. [2004, Literary Rev]
Appendix 3

Analysis of the processes controlled by Fate, categorized as a power, or by people – magazine section (data retrieved 2009-03-30) from the Corpus of Contemporary American English

For comments, see Appendix 1.

And when Saturn and Jupiter form splendid trines in mid-March, early May and early 2008, you'll have absolutely no doubt that you've steered your course right and true. What's more, at year's end, Jupiter enters Capricorn (which rules your domestic angle), ushering in a particularly satisfying period. security means different things to different people, but whatever it means to you, you'll have the sense that you're no longer being buffeted [Pr: material] by fickle fate but have at last found your way home. [2007, Town Country]

The regular season was by no means a failure, however. Despite falling behind a streaking Dallas squad, San Antonio's veteran roster conducted business as usual, drawing on the experience gained through three title runs in the previous nine seasons. For a perennial 50-win team with the best winning percentage in pro sports over the last decade, making the playoffs was a foregone conclusion, so health for the postseason (and playoff seeding) became the most crucial factor for the Spurs' success. Thankfully for Duncan &; Co., fate cooperated [Pr: material]. No major contributor missed more than 12 games, and the Big Three -- Duncan, Tony Parker and Manu Ginobili -- combined to sit out only 14 games. [2007, Sports Ill]

" Happy people like who they are, " says Baker. " They're not slaves to popularity or financial status. " Security also stems from the knowledge that who you are today is the culmination of all the little moments in your history that can never be taken away from you. Your family history, your education, shared experiences with loyal friends-none of these things can be whisked [Pr: material] away by the Whims Of fate, a fact that instills a sense of grounding and inner peace. [2006, Readbook]

We're soul mates, " I told one friend. But eventually, I began to think it was really weird that this was all so intense but I never saw him. I knew he was busy, but then sometimes I'd see him pictured in the paper, out at some club right near my house, hanging out with this model or that actress. He would always claim it was some work thing. Then fate stepped in [intervene] to give me the final kick in the head [awaken] [Pr: material] that I needed. I was at a party and overheard a girl talking about this wonderful new guy she was dating. She said, " He's really busy, so he bought me a Blackberry so we can stay in touch! " I just knew it was him. [2005, Cosmopolitan]

After years of contentious litigation, NCSA came away with just $3 million from Netscape. Andreessen, of course, became a multimillionaire and appeared on the cover of Time. # The episode proved pivotal for Ping. Andreessen wasn't the computer scientist or software programmer that she was, but he possessed ruthless drive and laser-beam focus, and he had created a company -- and an idea -- of transformative value. Ping hardly wanted to become another Mark Andreessen, but she felt it was her destiny to create something of Netscape-like value. Why else would fate have commended [Pr: verbal] her to such an unlikely pilgrimage? [2005, Inc.]

She was small and sleek and white. The sun came through her disproportionately large ears and showed them to be pink and translucent as a good Limoges cup held up to the light. We petted. She licked. We left the park with a dog. I didn't think it would be this way. I thought when the time was right I would make a decision, consider breeds, look around. The truth is, I too was a woman who lived in an apartment that didn't accept dogs. But when fate knocks on the door [intervene] [Pr: material], you'd better answer. " Let's call her Rose, " my boyfriend said. I was breathless, besotted. My puppy tucked her nose under my arm and the hundred clever dog names I had dreamed up over a lifetime vanished. [2004, Ms]
33

7 Letter to a pacifist, 1941. " Woe is me. " Upon hearing of the Hiroshima bombing, 1945. " To punish me for my contempt for authority, fate has made [appoint] [Pr: material] me an authority myself. " " Dear Posterity, If you have not become more just, more peaceful, and generally more rational than we are (or were) -- why then, the Devil take you. Having, with all respect, given utterance to this pious wish, I am (or was) Yours, Albert Einstein. " From a time capsule placed in 1936. [2003, Pop Science]

8 WE SEEM TO LOVE WALLS, BUT ARE EMBARRASSED BY THEM. THEY SAY SOMETHING UNPLEASANT ABOUT THE NEIGHBORS--AND ABOUT US. ANDRADE, CALIFORNIA AND SAN LUIS, ARIZONA The border wall winds through moonscape (left), following the demands of terrain rather than the political boundary that lies several hundred yards south. On the Arizona side of a vehicle barrier (above), Border Patrol agents have smoothed the sand with old tires so they can " cut sign " -track the footprints of migrants tempting [Pr: material] fate on this remote desert route. [2007, National Geograph]

9 After a year of rehabilitation at the Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, Braddock is driving his Jeep Wrangler home this week to Vancouver,, to see his mom, play tabletop war games with his buddies and try to get out of the Guard -- not to leave the military but to join the Army. He wants to go back to Iraq, never mind the missing leg. After all, with its high-tech Renegade foot, his new one has made him faster and funnier. Why test [Pr: material] fate a second time? Because he loves the military, loves guns and loved his job as a scout. [2006, TIME]

10 But in private, Administration and Iraqi officials say the U.S. may ultimately be forced to bow to Sistani's wishes. " Sistani is the only one in this country who can mobilize millions, " says a prominent Iraqi leader. " The Americans shouldn't tempt [Pr: material] fate by disregarding that. " Still, U.S. officials are worried that an election as early as this summer would give Iraq's Shi'ites, who make up 60% of the population but were repressed by Saddam's Sunni-dominated regime, a tremendous edge. [2004, TIME]

11 In the morning Bartram did not find the returned wanderer. But in the hottest part of the kiln he discovered a snowwhite lump of lime in the shape of a heart. LIVING ALONE in a Paris garret, an idle young bohemian meditated on the sudden, perverse spurts of energy that can interrupt a life of laziness and boredom. Such urges lead one to unthinkable acts-such as starting a forest fire or lighting a cigar next to a powder keg-just to see what will happen, to tempt [Pr: material] fate. [1999, Atlantic]

12 The next spring when he started foraging again having spent the winter under my shop, I gave him or her one more chance. I went around to all the escape routes I could find-under the porch, the road culvert, a hole in the hedgerow and the den under my shop-and plugged them up. I shot at him once but missed and he ran off to the barn. But still he returned. By this time I had determined that it was a lone male planning to establish an attractive place for a mate. He tempted [Pr: material] fate one too many times. [1997, Mother Earth]

13 She was thrilled when, in 1986, her then 19-year-old daughter Kiki won the 12th annual Girl from Ipanema beauty contest. But in some ways, that role will always be Helo's. " I'll be walking down the street and somebody will come up behind me and start whistling the song, " she says. " Even after all these years, I still get a kick out of it. " SONG FOR DAVID She was tempting [Pr: material] fate, writing a song for her imprisoned husband that promised the love in my heart will keep. In 1971, a year after Joan Baez recorded " Song for David, " David Harris's 20-month incarceration for draft-resisting came to an end. The couple split three months later. [1995, People]

14 As she writes in the artist's preface to The Gods of Greece (Atlantic Monthly Press), a recently reissued edition of author Arianna Huffington's celebration of classical mythology, " During my adolescence I started to envision these myths as a kind of metaphor for life, and I took particular solace in the inventiveness these tales elicit, reinforcing human skill... in defeating [Pr: material] negative occurrences, sometimes even those of fate itself. " [1993, American Artist]
Appendix 4

Analysis of the processes controlled by *Fate*, categorized as a power, or by people – newspaper section (data retrieved 2009-03-30) from the Corpus of Contemporary American English

For comments, see Appendix 1.

1 An extended monsoon season over the Himalayas saw the rivers swell to dangerous levels, forcing the crew to rebuild washed-out bridges on an already harrowing drive to the put-in and wait out the weather for several days in a Buddhist monastery. # With only satellite imaging and declassified Russian army maps, the group hesitantly launched with an estimated additional waterflow of 10,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) joining the anticipated 25,000 cfs in the river basin. As *fate would have it* [decide] [Pr: mental], they encountered the largest rapids on the first day - a lengthy Class 5 landslide Moore dubbed “ Waimea ” after the big Hawaiian surf spot. [2007, Denver]

2 He went through the initial round of evaluations last week. He expects to be given either the AIDS drug, a protease inhibitor called ritonavir; or the cancer drug, hydroxyurea; or a placebo, starting in about two weeks. # Olney, 56, is regarded to be among the country's top clinical investigators of ALS, having spent most of his career conducting trials and working with patients. In June, he was diagnosed with the same disease he has spent a lifetime studying. # It's a twist of *fate* that has shocked [Pr: material] the close-knit ALS world. [2005, San Francisco]

3 *FATE DECIDED* [Pr: mental] 61 16TH ST.: This former apartment building on 16th Street near the Woodruff Arts Center was retooled into condos by Coro Realty Advisors. The renovation was economically viable because the structure was sound, Coro says. [2004, Atlanta]

4 Wright, 49, has compiled packets of information about the family and the mutation that she eagerly passes on to newfound relatives. And she urges them to get tested. # Sometimes it's a hard sell. # Her own daughter has resisted.' She's scared. She's going to be 29, and she's frightened. She says,' Mom, I don't want to end up having to take off body parts. " # 'Just let *fate handle* [Pr: material] it!' # Tammy LeDoux doesn't know Beatrice Wright, but she knows the conflict her daughter feels. # "My mom has the mutation. She's had breast cancer. My dad died of kidney cancer.’ All of her mother's sisters have had breast cancer, LeDoux said. [2003, Denver]

5 The Kims specialized in turning small, post-World War II kitchens into the sunny open family areas that were coming into vogue. In the early 1990s, their business won a national award from a franchiser. Their daughter flourished as well, graduating from the College of William and Mary and winning a scholarship to the Medical College of Virginia. # Then *fate took a hard swipe* [strike] [Pr: material] at them. Seon was diagnosed with hepatitis B and learned that her liver was failing. [2001, Washington Post]

6 Love them, love them all, through sorrow, woe # love them all who lived among us late # for one brief hour, one swift blessed day # and, *wrested* [Pr: material] from us by cruel, envious *fate* # rose all at once and from us soared away. [2001, San Francisco]

7 Heroin is written in my fate, ” said Mohammad Aslam, 40, who had a needle in his arm and a prayer cap on his head. ” No one can change the decree [decree] [Pr: mental] of *fate*. ” # Their days fill with the customary gamut of degradation: the craving, the begging, the scheming. Mr. Aslam has been shunned by his wife -- or perhaps it is the other way around. He sleeps near the city's main drainage ditch, just a few feet from raw sewage. # With the veins in their extremities withered, addicts often tug down their pants, injecting near the groin. [2000, New York Times]
8 Even as a teenager, he knew the Russian roads were dangerous. The family Audi had four-wheel drive, yet no car was a match for the roads into Moscow. Especially when the snow got bad. # By the time 16-year-old Ilya Kovalchuk was playing for Spartak, a Russian hockey team, those 100-mile trips to Moscow became a twice-weekly temptation [tempt] [Pr: material] of fate. # But he always felt safe, simply because his father was behind the wheel. [2007, Atlanta]

9 A second floor corner of Rohrbach Library - a refuge from the constant hum of activity in the dormitory - became a favorite campus haunt. # When the school year began, Danny and Victor thought an hour of studying each day was sufficient. By October, they were up to three hours. In December, a moment spent without reviewing a textbook seemed to tempt [Pr: material] fate. # "I don't even want to think about how many hours I'm putting in every day," Victor said. [2004, Associated Press]

10 He met George Armstrong Custer in Yankton, Dakota Territory, in 1873. Adam, his great-great grandson, was born in Yankton, S.D., about four months shy of 100 years later. # Vinatieri grew up in Rapid City, S.D., and kicked for South Dakota State. He went undrafted in 1995 and sat out a year before hooking on with the Amsterdam Admirals in the World League, which led to a tryout with the Patriots. # Tempting [Pr: material] fate and winning # Now, six seasons later, Vinatieri has joined Denver's Jason Elam as the only kickers in NFL history to score at least 100 points in each of their first six seasons. [2002, USA Today]

11 Executive recruiter Lyndon Taylor says a Wall Street investment banker recently was offered a six-figure job with a $180,000 bonus for the remainder of 2001, a guaranteed bonus for 2002 and a promise to pay all of next year's salary if, for any reason, the executive got laid off in 2002. # "She turned it down," says Taylor, a Houston-based principal with Heidrick &; Struggles. "She had survived the announced wave of layoffs at her firm, and she didn't want to tempt [Pr: material] fate again. [2001, Houston]

12 It's cold - not even heavy layers of clothing can block the chill. As the Showcat, a rainbow-hued biplane with lightning bolts painted on its sides, arcs through the azure Texas sky, wing-walker Teresa Stokes knows all too well that each step could be her last. But this is no time to think of dying. # With thousands on the ground gawking skyward, Stokes thumbs her nose [defy] [Pr: material] at fate. # Then she stands on her head. [1998, Houston]

13 I'm shocked by the governor's almost total lack of human feeling toward those folk most genuinely in need. # I seem to recall the governor's own hospital stays for ailments over the years far less severe than a mastectomy, for medications less vital than for diabetes, and for procedures less important than prostate cancer screenings. # We do not need politically motivated bureaucrats and non-medical personnel determining what are most needed for the health and safety of California's citizens. The governor appears to be playing "God" delaying these vitally needed reforms and tempts [Pr: material] fate in so doing... recalling that "What Goes Around, Comes Around." [1997, San Francisco]

14 The offer makes Johnson the man of the moment -- and the man in the middle. Depending on your point of view, he is either the savior or the spoiler in the District's effort to lure the Bullets and Capitals downtown from the suburban USAir Arena in Landover. # On one hand, Johnson would take the District off the hook, substituting his money for the $150 million or so in public funds (taxes and bonds) the cash-strapped District would need to finance an arena. On the other, Johnson is tempting [Pr: material] fate with Pollin, who probably would keep his teams in Landover rather than move on Johnson's terms. # "I'd be very happy to do business with Abe Pollin," Johnson said. [1994, Washington Post]
Appendix 5

Analysis of the processes controlled by *Fate*, categorized as a power, or by people – academic section (data retrieved 2009-03-30) from the Corpus of Contemporary American English

For comments, see Appendix 1.

1 But Reid never did. Instead, it was stored in Caballero’s garage, along with many boxes of materials he’d moved out of his campus office (evidently he was something of a packrat) and was forgotten until Caballero and his wife moved to a new house, and came across the package as they sorted through what would move with them and what would be tossed. Without opening the package, Caballero said, he gave it to his daughter-in-law, Terry Lee Caballero; in the kind of small-world *twists of fate* that sometimes *coil* [Pr: material] so tightly in small towns, she happened to be the granddaughter of Ted Reid, who had died four years earlier, in 1983. [2007, Southwest Rev]

2 In 1950, at the outset of "Glorious Restoration" (Guangfu) when times were tough and state coffers dry, the KMT launched its celebrated "Patriotic Lottery" (Aiguo jiangquan), which ran successfully for 37 years. The Patriotic Lottery worked like a raffle, which means you did not choose your numbers but rather that they were *pre-selected* [Pr: material] for you -- either by *fate* or the state, and the confusion is significant because it allowed for conflation between the two. The lottery tickets were elaborately designed, featuring originally commissioned drawings of cultural relics in China and sites of scenic beauty in Taiwan. [2007, AnthropolQ]

3 Many will become successful based on their own merits. However, our collective conscious should ask, "Can we do a better job?" # This work encourages consideration of implied value stemming from the nexus of student and teacher that can save lives, encourage dreams, help both students and teachers discover their full potential, and impart an attitude of: I can. Therefore, I will. To avoid this relationship is to accept second place. To resist enhancing the nexus is akin to letting *fate* have control [Pr: material] of the future. To pervert the nexus from scholar and student to one of possible moral inappropriateness, is to challenge the integrity of the teaching profession, universally. [2007, Adolescence]

4 The archetypal view is what we use to apprehend our students in the most reverent and loving way. # C. G. Jung, first to bring the collective unconscious or objective psyche and its archetypes to depth psychology, gave many descriptions of them over the years. Jung (1970, Vol. 9) in The Archetypes and The Collective Unconscious details the sources, the ways that we may apprehend the archetypes, which are "complexes of experience that *come* [Pr: material] upon us like *fate*" and whose "effects are felt in our most personal life" (p. 30). These are dreams, active imagination, the delusions of paranoids, fantasies received in trance states, and the dreams of early childhood, ages 3 to 5. [2005, Roeper Review]

5 In Janelle’s version of the story, the wife embraced martyrdom. The maiming of her husband allowed her to seize control of her life from the handsome and vital roughneck to whom she had rapturously submitted as a girl. At first she was trapped in her martyrdom by her marriage vows and her decency, but as time went on she began to enjoy being noble. Maybe she was afraid of sex. Because *fate had given* [Pr: material] her *away* to be a wife without the burden of children and the demands of a husband, sexual and otherwise, she could bear with good cheer the complications she did have to live with. She had assessed her situation clearly and made the most of it. [2000, American Scholar]

6 But its terrifying implications, that peoples who were or are victims of history can appreciate the most, should be interpreted with caution, lest fatalism overwhelm our power of initiative on the practical level as well as on the level of language -- and fate. # A central point to be made here is that events on the action level are in constant flux, subject to continuous action and change. When they are filtered on the level of language, they become signs of the past already *marked* [Pr: material] by *fate*. [2000, Symposium]
This may be seen in the case of those who do not share this wrath; they either bow humbly before the fate that overtakes them, live a respectable life as well as they can, do not concern themselves as to the cause of public affairs, help the bourgeoisie to forge the chains of the workers yet more securely, and stand upon the plane of intellectual nullity that prevailed before the industrial period began; or they are tossed about by fate, lose their moral hold upon themselves... live from day to day, drink and fall into licentiousness; and in both cases they are brutes. [1998, Raritan]

In this article I examine high-stakes mahjong in Taiwan as a ritual mode of male agency fraught with political significance. I show how men divine fate by conjuring estranged game forces, while disavowing the " abeyance of agency " by deploying strategy and style to control luck. Through " combat " with luck, men reanimate an officially orchestrated male totality, or martial imaginary, that reproduces idealized masculine values and patterns of citizenship. [2007, AntropoiQ]

All the women I interviewed, both young and old, told me that during pregnancy a woman should stay busy. This would keep the baby from growing too large and would also keep the woman from anticipating the birth too much. It was considered unwise to dwell too much on the future. Baby showers were considered to be tempting fate. Every woman talked about proscriptions during pregnancy. There was a large variety of prohibitions, some of which they did not feel were important any longer. [2004, American Indian Q]

Morreall bases his analysis on the tropes of ancient Greek drama, which broadly consist of tragedy and comedy. The four features of tragedy include the hero, conflict, suffering, and response. The hero is a larger than life personality faced with some type of conflict. Rather than backing away from the conflict, the hero meets the challenge directly. Usually, however, the hero eventually suffers a tragic fate. This suffering evokes a response on the part of the hero to question fate, thereby making it possible to " resist it, and through it assert and define " himself (Morreall 1999, 7-10). [2002, American Indian Q]

" It is a notion suggested also in " Guilty of Dust, " that what the Greeks called fate we instead call desire; and that the same lavish punishments that awaited the Greeks who attempted to counteract or resist fate await us if we resist desire. [2001, Raritan]

Perhaps more important, such activities create a new space in which many young and older women challenge the meanings that their activities acquire through specific familial, economic, and local networks of authority relations (cf. Abu-Lughod's 1990 work on women's subversive discourses). While this political process hinges on a reflexive encounter of the hoca's and the client's point of view, it rests on the need to conceive the world differently and to unhinge those forces (fate, authoritative will) from their social habitat by reordering and transforming them. [1999, Ethnology]

While the Christian is in need of redemption and forgiveness, the blues artist boasts of personal power and rebels against authority and convention. In Looking Up at Down, music historian William Barlow divides the texts of blues songs into basic categories, one of which he terms " prideful songs of self assertion. " And in The Music of Black Americans, music historian Eileen Southern, noting a similar bravado, states: " Almost always there is a note of irony... in the blues, as if the blues singer is audaciously challenging fate to mete out further blows. [1997, Humanist]

In " Fate, " Bellow's philosophical forebearer, Emerson writes, " Intellect i.e. people annuls fate. So far a man thinks, he is free. " 3 This truism from a writer from whom many of Bellow's ideas originate explains the dilemma of the Arnewi: they are prone to superstitions because they refuse to think. [1995, American Studies]