

## CHAPTER NINE

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### **Chances Are? There are No Chances Are!**

If we were searching for a theme song for this chapter, the 1950's hit tune, "Chances Are", might make a good one. Lyrics from this well-known song express some of the popular thinking associated with the notion of **chance**. The song projects the idea that the force of **chance** is working actively in a romantic attraction between a fellow and his girl. However, the category of romance is only one of many that is thought to be influenced by the power of **chance**. The concept of **chance** is fully accepted and used without reserve. People believe **chance** is a reality, that it exists. Just who questions the idea of it? Its meaning is common knowledge. It generally means the absence of cause; a happening or **luck**. Most of us are also very familiar with the over-all context in which the concept is used. Here are a few phrases with which

## No Such Thing As Luck

almost everyone will be familiar: a good **chance**; fat **chance**; **chances** are; take my **chances**; second **chance**; by **chance**; and what are the **chances**? What we need to do in this chapter is search out both the depth of its meaning and use.

**Chance** provides the whimsical, fickle nature in its relationship with **fate** — **chance** may, or it may not, who can tell? Its concept, however, has outgrown the confinement of **fate**'s meaning. As we will soon see, **chance** stands upon its own feet and projects some new and enlarged meanings today. We are going to leave nothing to **chance** in this chapter! As a matter of fact, the prospect of dethroning this popular concept is excellent.

The action in the words **fate**, **destiny**, and **lot**, is that of an outside force acting upon the individual. The concept of **chance** changes the point of action away from the outside influence of a god working upon an individual. In the concept of **chance**, the action is with the individual himself, who is doing both the observing and the explaining. The action of this word questions what is going to occur. Watch for this point of emphasis change in the following definitions of **chance** from *Webster's New World Dictionary*:

**chance** (chans, chäns), *n.* [ME. *chance*, *chaunce*; OFr. *cheance*; LL. *cadentia*, that which falls out; L. *cadens*, ppr. of *cadere*, to fall], 1. the way things happen or turn out. 2. apparent absence of cause or design; fortuity; luck; often personified. 3. a happening; fortuitous event; accidental circumstance. 4. a risk or gamble. 5. a share in a lottery. 6. an opportunity: as, you'll have a *chance* to go. 7. a possibility or

## Chances Are?

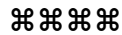
probability: as, there is a *chance* that he will live. –SNY. see happen, random. <sup>1</sup>

**Chance** (*cadere*) is traceable in its Latin form to before 1300 A.D., and its concept goes in a straight line back to Roman idolatry. In the idolatrous world of the Romans, the casting forth and the “falling out” of the **lot** was considered a spiritual activity. The **lot**, as we know, was used in an effort to obtain a message from a god. That which fell out did so, supposedly, by the direction of a deity. We saw in an earlier chapter, the casting forth of **lots** was serious business for the Romans. The essential aspect for them was the message obtained by the casting down of the **lot**, and not the **lot** itself. With this in mind, it is easy to see the “falling out” sense of *cadere* refers to the message being sought. Exactly what was the message from the god going to be; how was the decision of a god going to “fall out?” That is what they wanted to know.

The truer sense of *cadere* must be seen as a question about a future development — that which is going to happen. Its action rests altogether upon the question, “What?” *Cadere*, in its original sense, was dealing with a future occurrence and asking “what” is going to come to pass? What is going to “fall out” concerning some event? For example: “Will my grain crop prosper this year? It is up to the gods! So, which way will this event turn out? What will the gods do? Out of the possibilities, which one is going to ‘fall out’? What is going to happen?” Questions about the “will of the gods” produced the concept of “*cadere*” or **chance**. The Latin term, *cadere* or *cadentia* in its predicate form, referred to the possibilities of what was going to “fall out” upon a human

## No Such Thing As Luck

life. The emphasis of this word was simply dealing with possibilities; the possibilities of what would occur.



The Latin word *cadentia* forwarded the aspect of establishing theological possibilities – what might the gods do? The French word for **chance**, *cleance*, forwarded only a part of the meaning from the Latin *cadentia*. They dropped the religious aspect of the Latin word. The French concept of **chance** dealt with the possible outcome of events, but with little or no reference to the cause behind the events. In the French word, “unknown causes” replaced deities. This was a big change. It was also a tremendous departure from the Latin, *cadentia*’s, theological meaning.

The French were not involved with ancient Roman idolatry. It is easy to see why they left off the Roman theological context. The French were, however, involved in secular humanism. The pervasive, secular humanism of the French, during the Middle Ages, tended to exclude the working of God’s power. Ideas and beliefs about theological causes did not interest them. They began to foster concepts of unknown causes.

The absence of a theological significance in the French word *cleance* opened a trap door. This is how the unsound thinking of agnosticism walked straight into their meaning of **chance**. The agnostics propounded that it is impossible to know anything other than material phenomena. This very logic became the foundational reasoning that developed the

## Chances Are?

French meaning of **chance**. The French understanding for this word centers upon possibilities, but without regard to causes. The same agnostic reasoning, which is engrained in the French concept of **chance**, remains active in our use and understanding of this word today.

Secular humanism continues to leave God out of the cause and effect realities of life. Humanistic veins of thought have prompted teachings declaring that God has removed His presence and power from certain spheres of life altogether. Certain circumstances and categories of life are said to remain outside of God's control and influence. The supposed absence of God's influence in these spheres of life has left decision-making to some unknown, obscure force. This mysterious vacuum of activity, from which God has supposedly excluded Himself, is a category of life where anything could or might happen – it is really “iffy.” Since no one knows what this “godless force” will do, or refrain from doing, the outcome in this sphere of activity is questionable.

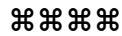
It is the outcome of events emanating from this supposed “godless sphere” that many declare to be matters of **chance**. This is the concept of **chance** that has been developed by the unsound logic of agnostic humanism. In its second and third definitions of **chance**, *Webster's New World Dictionary* reflects this humanistic logic and belief:

(2) apparent absence of cause or design; fortuity; luck: often personified and (3) a happening; fortuitous event; accidental circumstance.<sup>2</sup>

Sadly, approval and acceptance of this wayward logic is wholeheartedly embraced by our society today. They have

## No Such Thing As Luck

bought into its use and they continue to embrace its worthless meaning.



The French also developed the idea of “likelihood” in association with **chance** theories. Their definition of **chance** came to include the idea of likelihood in relationship to the possible outcome of events, or the likelihood of **chance** possibilities. Several of their leading mathematicians undertook the activity of analyzing various games of **chance**. Probability Theories developed by Blaise Pascal and Pierre de Fermat in the mid seventeenth century were used to determine the possible outcomes of dice cast in games of **chance**.

The problem Pascal was trying to solve concerned the division of the stakes and the value of each throw; i.e. Points assigned to each throw of the dice.”<sup>3</sup>

Such games as the tossing of dice or coins and the drawing of balls from urns continued for a long time to serve as the chief models for the construction of probability theory.<sup>4</sup>

The activities of these men centered on ascribing a numerical value (the likelihood) to the outcome (the various possibilities) in a toss of the dice.

## Chances Are?

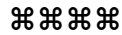
Probability theory, as developed by Pascal and Fermat, has been redefined through the centuries. Today, scientists consider statistical and mathematical probability methods, essential tools. The credibility of probability science is generally assumed. Its broad acceptance has led to extensive use. Its use is no longer confined to science. Probability theory is also used in business, politics, and the social spectrum. Decision-making in American government is determined, in large measure, by probability methods and formulas.

The probability vocabulary developed by mathematicians, scientists, and philosophers over the centuries has become familiar to us. We have grown accustomed to using probability terminology without thinking much about the specialized language it projects. The following is a partial list of the specialized probability vocabulary we have grown accustomed to hearing:

Likely	Circumstances	Event
Equally likely	Cause	Odds
Frequency	Relevance	Classes
Random	Reasonable	Finite set
Risk	Relative frequency	Inference
Occurrence	Favorable case	Sampling
Supposed	Numerical value	

Most of these terms are used in public opinion poll formulas. Random sampling polls reach into almost any category of life. Politicians rely upon polls. Political polling goes on constantly. Random sampling methods are used extensively in business sales to establish potential markets. Advertisers use polls to target their audience.

## No Such Thing As Luck



No category of life and living is off limits to modern day opinion polls. Pollsters might devise questions about anything from soup to sex. A good example of how far out of bounds survey polling has gotten can be seen in the news media's use of them, which is quick to air the results of its personal surveys. It has successfully latched onto the "image of accuracy" projected by the scientific community's use of probability theory.

We often hear those in the media talk about "dedication to the public interest." What we frequently observe, however, is its hypocrisy in utilizing sampling polls to "make the news." Its polling activity is employed as a powerful tool to persuade public opinion and to justify its political causes. Their polling activity may appear to be very legitimate; but accuracy is not their goal. Accuracy is only the image the news media hopes to project. Actually, deceitful manipulation of the polling process is not uncommon among news journalists. Many of their polling practices are designed to produce a result they desire. Survey questions are craftily worded to produce just the right response they hope to gain. Their lying surveys undermine their self-proclaimed "truthful image." And who is fooled by their hypocrisy?

Darrell Huff, in his book, *How to Lie with Statistics*, exposed some of the misuse in this field. In a review, which appeared on Amazon.com, Darrell Huff's book on statistics is characterized as follows:

Amazon.com:

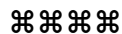
“There is terror in numbers,” writes Darrell Huff in *How to Lie with Statistics*. And nowhere does this terror translate to blind acceptance of authority more than in the slippery world of averages, correlations, graphs, and trends. Huff sought to break through “the daze that follows the collision of statistics with the human mind” with this slim volume, first published in 1954. The book remains relevant as a wake-up call for people unaccustomed to examining the endless flow of numbers pouring from Wall Street, Madison Avenue, and everywhere else someone has an axe to grind, a point to prove, or a product to sell. “The secret language of statistics, so appealing in a fact-minded culture, is employed to sensationalize, inflate, confuse, and oversimplify,” warns Huff.

From *Book News, Inc.*:

A 1954 classic that continues to dispel false beliefs and inform the statistically naïve. Huff’s direct and witty style exposes how advertisers, government, and the media misled their audiences through the misuse of statistics. Huff then explains how the reader can see through the smoke and mirrors to get to the real meaning – if any- of what is presented. <sup>5</sup>

## No Such Thing As Luck

Obviously, the impending need is to discredit the phony documentation presented by news journalists, and anyone else, choosing to employ the shady practice of survey deceit.



Space will not allow us to treat the entire specialized vocabulary used in **chance** theory. We do, however, need to take a short look at some of these important words. If we are going to understand the true meaning of **chance**, we must understand the vocabulary that surrounds it. Risk is one of those words, and we hear it used often.

RISK comes to us from the French word *risqué* and its basic meaning refers to the **chance** of injury, damage, or loss (danger).<sup>6</sup> The term is utilized extensively in both the fields of business and insurance. Within this context, the concept of risk seeks to assign a numerical value to a possible unwanted outcome. It seeks to numerically establish the amount of risk at stake. The overall concept of risk, though, is much broader than its usage by the insurance industry. In order to understand the meaning of risk we need to understand the cause behind the risk, or the cause for the risk. A word used to define risk can help us; it is danger.

The word danger originally referred to the absolute power of an overlord. Power, domination, and arrogance are associated with its meaning. Danger has finally come to mean the ability or power to cause injury, damage, loss, pain, or peril.<sup>7</sup> In a shortened sense, danger means —the ability

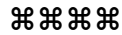
## Chances Are?

to work evil upon. This meaning of danger fits well with the meaning of risk. Risk refers to vulnerability, and the meaning of danger names the reason for that vulnerability – a dominating evil power. As we can now see, the fuller meaning of risk is vulnerability to a dominating evil force.

The meaning of risk acknowledges the existence of an evil force, powerful enough to work harm upon us. It also admits to being vulnerable to that power, and it seeks to understand what this powerful, negative force is going to do. It is plain to see that the concept of risk has not gotten away from the ancient idolatrous question the Romans asked about their gods, “What are they going to do?” Idolatrous Romans believed in the existence of powerful gods who could work evil upon them. They confessed their vulnerability to these supposed powers, and they sought to know exactly what their gods were going to do. A good question to ask might be, “How does the concept of risk differ from the idolatrous belief system of the Romans?” The only major difference is that the Romans bowed down upon their knees to worship their idols. Idolaters today, bow in their hearts. They embrace the negativity embodied in the idea of risk. They confess subjugation to an evil power, and they want to know what this power is going to do. When we look at the cause behind the meaning of risk, it is easy to see this word’s idolatrous nature.

The word “risk” admits to the existence of a dark power, and it calls the questionable behavior of this power, **chance**. The meaning of risk also seeks to name the possibilities of what may or may not come to pass. It longs to know what will come to pass, but it cannot know. Probability theory predicts “what will come to pass,” but the concept of risk is limited to only projections about what “may come to pass.” Risk attempts to name the possibilities. This is where talk of “the odds” comes into play.

## No Such Thing As Luck



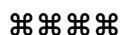
ODDS, is another specialized vocabulary word associated with probability and **chance**. We have all heard this question, “What are the odds?” Well, here we go again! Try as we may, we have still not gotten away from the “what” question. In its usage with the odds, the question “what” is seeking to establish a numerical value. It is asking, “What are the **chances** of a specific outcome?” “What are the odds?” is really the question; “What is the degree of favorability for one event as opposed to the other?” Odds making, is no different from the probability method used in science. In fact, the setting of odds is the utilization of a probability method.

We are all very familiar with the use of “the odds” in betting and gambling. Gambling (taking a **chance**) is a vast industry affecting our culture. Corrupted state legislators have made the operation of a lottery legal in numerous states across the nation. Sports’ betting continues to flourish. Gambling centers like Las Vegas, Atlantic City, Biloxi, Mississippi, and others around the nation, continue to rake in their enormous profits from so called “games of **chance**.” Showgirls, bright lights, enticing amenities, and the ever-present crafty delusions of “getting something for nothing,” lure millions to these Big Name Gambling Centers. How many of these operations do you know that have gone out of business?

The closed-set probability formulas utilized by the gaming industry enable them to secure enormous profits. By the

## Chances Are?

utilization of “large number scenario formulas,” they successfully calculate the great advantage they enjoy. They insure that the vast numbers of the individuals playing their so-called “games of **chance**” will lose. They need losers to make their profits, and they are the experts at making losers. Odds are said to equalize the **chances** favoring one as opposed to the other. The system is out of balance. The advantage enjoyed by the gaming industry far outweighs that of the participants. **Chance** has nothing to do with anything in the gaming industry. Strictly speaking, the setting of odds is nothing more than the difference between the assignment of numerical values. At its best, the practice remains questionable. Maybe it is time for serious minded men and women to reexamine the soundness of probability theory’s widespread use. Exactly when can probability’s science be sensibly applied?



Limited, or closed-set probability theories, operating under strictly controlled environments, can make projections with some degree of certainty. Outside of a “closed-set” environment, however, the assignment of numerical values is subjective. In the general realm of life, there are very few “closed sets.” This is especially true in the social categories. The possibilities are uncontrollable here – even uncountable. Futile efforts to define the ratio of outcomes to the possibilities, in this category, ought to be seriously questioned. You may call it whatever you choose – odds or

## No Such Thing As Luck

probability — but the information at hand is the critical requirement.

Sound conclusions about the possible outcome of events are contingent upon truthful information. Nothing is going to be accurate without truthfulness. The breakdown by the pollsters in the 2000 presidential election is a good example of polling failure. The national polling firm employed by the news networks failed to produce accurate projections. They failed to gather truthful information and they erred in their projected winner for the state of Florida.

Another example of a futile survey study is one conducted by the National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center at the Medical University of South Carolina in 1992. According to this study:

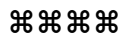
Nationally, 84 percent of sexual assault victims do not go to police, most out of fear people will learn about the assault or that they will be blamed for the attack.<sup>8</sup>

How arrogant can researchers become? No closed-set probability formula could produce accuracy in such a study. How vain and misleading surveys and polling have become.

The specialized language of probability theory confounds the general public. Odds setting and probability projections have grabbed up people's docile acceptance and have taken them on a deceptive journey. People tend to bank on this suspect information and mistakenly rely upon it in critical decision making. They remain enamoured by its scientificity

## Chances Are?

projected image of authority and credibility. In the end, it is far more important to look to the motivation and truthfulness of those who are employing the probability method than to be carried away by its present day aura of broad acceptance.



In addition to examining the probability vocabulary, we also need to look at another aspect of probability theory. We need to see how **chance** and probability science are interrelated. The continuity and uniformity of the universe's design does make it possible to use known information about a property to project possible outcomes for unknown properties. This is a legitimate use of probability theory. It is essential, however, to understand and to remember probability theory deals with the operation of **chance**. Probability theory is **chance** theory.

It may seem a little strange in our "scientific-minded society" to talk about **chance** theory, but probability science allows the validity of **chance**. To much of the scientific community, probability absolutely implies **chance**, and so it should. By looking carefully at the "equally likely" term used in probability theory, anyone can see its reference is to the concept of **chance**. "Likely" suggests probability. Probability in this context implies **chance**. "Equally likely," as used in probability theory, basically means "of the same **chance**," and can have no other rightful meaning. Equally implies in an equal manner, i.e., equal (of the same **chance**).

## No Such Thing As Luck

The science of statistics is permeated with the ideas of the theory of chance, from the first steps in collecting the data to the drafting of the final conclusions of investigation.... The finished product of statistics is usually a table of chances.<sup>9</sup>

According to the above quote, the true spirit of statistics is governed by **chance** theory.

Kenneth R. Atkins textbook, entitled *Physics*, has a chapter dealing with probability and uncertainty. His discussion concerning the directional factors influencing an electron has this to say:

The future behavior of an electron is not completely determined by its past history. Several possibilities are available for its future behavior and one of these is chosen purely by chance, for no reason that can ever be determined. This applies to all aspects of the behavior of an electron.<sup>10</sup>

It is interesting that nowhere outside of probability theory does the scientific community ever leave anything to **chance**. Investigation of cause and effect is, in fact, the renowned standard of modern science. Cause and effect form the postulate of the scientific method; but probability language has masked the concept of **chance** and given it a respectable face. So, the doctrine of **chance** continues to live. It is alive and doing well within the respectable mask of probability science.

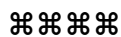
## Chances Are?

The method of probability science is complex because it has established a complicated vocabulary that lacks clarity and simplicity. Its mathematical and philosophical postulates and definitions are confusing and beyond common understanding. The conclusions drawn by probability science are easy to spot because the conclusions produced by this method utilizes key words that have been given extended meanings beyond their standard dictionary definitions.

Look for these pivotal words in the newspapers and television reports of polls and surveys. Here are a few of these specialized words to keep in mind:

incidents of	more likely	favorable
unlikely	random sample	odds
equally likely	greater frequency of	likelihood
occurrence of	greater opportunity of	likely

The conclusion of probability theory would be difficult to express without these “loaded” words and their extended meanings. The value of what probability theory concludes, outside of the natural sciences, should be examined carefully and with due caution. This is especially needful in the social categories.



Philosophical arguments claiming validity for the concept of **chance** are as old as the philosophers themselves. Aristotle,

## No Such Thing As Luck

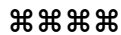
John Stuart Mill, and Ardigo all regarded **chance** events to be those occurring at the intersection of independent causal chains. For example: an unexpected meeting of a friend in the marketplace was a **chance** event. In the case of Epicurus, Lucretius, Cournot, and Peirce, **chance** meant an uncaused happening. For example: the swerving of an atom by its own inner power would be a matter of **chance**.<sup>11</sup>

Arguments and philosophical justifications, vindicating **chance** theory, continue in our day. Most of these modern arguments center on the posturing of terms and the construction of definitions. Many of these definitions are predicated upon probability theory. What these modern philosophers are justifying is a theoretical measurement of a **chance** occurrence. Their **chance** theory vocabulary includes words and phrases such as the following:

causation	relative frequency
circumstances	statistical inferences
regularities	chance distribution
contingent	quantitative data
reasonable credence	sequence of observations
favorable case	objective probability
objective chance	principles of randomness
potential tendency	dynamical chances

The sophisticated language of this list is designed to justify a philosophical stance. The persuasion of this philosophical stance is that **chance** is real, and the utilization of this vocabulary seeks to cast the supposed reality of **chance** in a favorable light, making its meaning credible.

## Chances Are?



We have surveyed a little of the probability and philosophical vocabulary that surrounds the concept of **chance**. There are, however, other commonly used words that either mean or refer to the idea of it. These words have a tremendous bearing upon our ability to understand what **chance** truly means. Again, if we are going to establish the real meaning of **chance** we need to take the time, and maintain the patience required to understand the vocabulary used to define it.

We are going to study five of these important words, and we will quickly learn they can easily be called into question; they are unjustifiably used to bolster and bring credibility to the meaning of **chance**. Understanding these words will help us to slide a hangman's noose over the idea of **chance** and choke it to death.

The meaning of **chance** is identified with both opportunity and possibility. *Webster's New World Dictionary* uses both of these words in its definition of **chance**:

6. an opportunity; as, you'll have a *chance* to go
7. a possibility or probability: as, there is a *chance* that he will live. <sup>12</sup>

It is almost unbelievable how many words, in current use, were established within idolatrous practices and beliefs. These words, and the concepts they stand for, have remained

## No Such Thing As Luck

a part of our thinking and believing throughout the ages. Perhaps not many of us are aware of the idolatrous foundation upon which these commonly used words were built. The word opportunity owes its origin to the practice of idolatry.

OPPORTUNITY, today, is used most often in the sense of timely or favorable circumstances. (That which is fitting in regard to a purpose).<sup>13</sup> This word, however, developed from the worship of a Roman god named Portunus. He was their god of harbors.<sup>14</sup> Romans attributed the safe and timely arrival of a ship and its cargo to the power of Portunus. If a cargo had arrived safely at harbor, they believed it was the work of this god; it was his doing. They would say it was opportune (blessed by Portunus). It was their acknowledgement of Portunus' supposed power that established the fundamental meaning of our word opportunity. Gradually, the point of emphasis for opportunity changed to the meaning of "favorable circumstances."

The use of opportunity as a defining quality of **chance**, however, opens up the ancient theological aspect of opportune – the blessing of a god! This idolatrous meaning of opportunity has been successfully brought into the definition of **chance**. The meaning of opportunity clarifies the force that is supposedly at work in the concept of **chance**. The operation of **chance** is thereby named to be the action or force of a god - in this case, the god Portunus. This is not new to us, because we have seen this identical, pagan, theological logic rear its ugly head before.

We also need to understand why the word POSSIBILITY has mistakenly been used to define the concept of **chance**.

## Chances Are?

**Chance** could only become a possibility if it had the ability to act. For example: “The **chances** are good that it will rain tomorrow”, implies that **chance** has the ability to make it rain. It does not! The concept of **chance** only claims power. It claims the “power of determination,” but it cannot supply. The most basic meaning we have of **chance** is the understanding of a suspicious “falling out” – that which has been determined by the supposed power of a god. With this in mind, we can begin to see why the word possibility has been mistakenly drawn into the definition of **chance**.

One can truthfully say, “There is a possibility for rain tomorrow,” when all the forces, which act to make rain are available. One cannot truthfully say, “There is a **chance** for rain tomorrow,” because the power of **chance** cannot make rain or anything else. **Chance** is totally without the power to act. This is why a supportive word, like possibility, has been drawn into its definition. Possibility adds strength to the questionable concept of **chance**. It is used to bolster and fortify the doubtful meaning surrounding it. The word possibility empowers the weak, powerless claim made in the concept of **chance** and attempts to make it credible.

The meaning of possibility deals with the influence that may come to bear upon an event or happening. It is associated with the words: can, able and power.<sup>15</sup> It refers to the capability of an existing power to act. Possibility also implies the fact of existence. When applied to the concept of **chance**, possibility refers to the possible actions of an existing power to bring something to pass. With this meaning of possibility standing by its side, the assumption has now become – **chance** has the power and the ability to act. By using the established meaning of possibility to define **chance**, the meaning of **chance** begins to look like a possibility. The word possibility makes **chance** look credible, but it is not.

## No Such Thing As Luck

**Chance** is not possibility. To claim that **chance** is possibility is more than error, it is a lie. Possibility cannot rightfully define **chance**. To say that **chance** is a possibility is to say that **chance** exists and it has the power to act. None of this meaning is true. Since **chance** is not a possibility, possibility cannot define the meaning of **chance**. **Chance** refers to the questionable action of a supposed “god power.” Possibility refers to the existence of a power, as a matter of fact, reality. **Chance** is idolatrous speculation. Possibility is that which God has made available in this life. To say of **chance**, “It is a possibility” refutes the abiding presence of God’s power and uplifting love. To call **chance** a possibility only supports the wayward, anemic logic of idolatrous belief.

Space will not allow a full word study for the concepts surrounding the meaning of the words, “ACCIDENT,” “CIRCUMSTANCES” and “RANDOM.” A brief examination of these three terms is all that is needed to reveal their relationship to **chance**. *Webster’s New World Dictionary* uses “accidental circumstance” to define **chance**. Accident is derived from two Latin words: *accidere* – to happen and *cadere* – to fall.<sup>16</sup> We saw earlier that *cadere* refers to the questionable action of Roman gods. Accident was originally associated with the identical idolatry projected in the concept of **chance**. Originally, the concept of accident attempted to name the nature of a god’s action. Its meaning sought to show both the cause and the nature of a behavior. Today, this word names unknown causes, careless causes, unintentional causes, and unexpected causes. The over-riding impact of accident’s meaning continues to imply that **chance** is an active force working in and among our lives. Accident names the nature of **chance** and seeks to tell us how it behaves.

Circumstance comes from the Latin, *circumstare*, to stand around, from *circum* + *stare*, to stand.<sup>17</sup> The word makes a

## Chances Are?

presumptive assessment about the reason for a happening or an event. To name the circumstances requires a conclusion about the causes surrounding a matter. Its meaning is both an assumption and a conclusion. The action in circumstance names the associative causes that may surround anything. It both asks and answers the question - “what”; as in, “What are the circumstances?” The question “what” grammatically asks for a specification of an identity. It seeks a truthful explanation to the nature of a thing. To name “what” requires a truthful conclusion.

Whenever the word circumstance is drawn into the definition of **chance**, we are confronting faulty conclusions. To say that “accidental circumstance” is **chance** is more than misleading; it is error. To say that circumstance is **chance**, is to sanction that **chance** exists and that it is a viable force with the ability to influence the activities surrounding our lives. This cannot be true. Whatever the circumstances may be, they will not be fostered nor governed by the supposed force called **chance**. The true forces governing circumstances have absolutely nothing to do with **chance**.

*Webster’s New World Dictionary* gives the word random as a synonym for **chance**. Originally, random meant at great speed – without control. In time, it came to mean a lack of order or disorder. By 1565 A.D., it meant without plan, “at random.”<sup>18</sup> This word’s association with **chance** is easy to understand. The word random is used to name the sphere of operation for the concept of **chance**. The idea of random describes what **chance** does - how it behaves. Random tells us that **chance** is “iffy,” rash, without order or control. However, it is possible to have rash, reckless, out-of-control behavior that is not caused by **chance**. The identical behavior can come from a stubborn mule or a drunken sailor or by many other causes. **Chance** does not cause anything.

## No Such Thing As Luck

Today's meaning of random is, "without careful choice."<sup>19</sup> The scientific community, however, has redefined this word to stand for **chance** itself. (Maybe to some scientist, "random" sounds more sophisticated than **chance**.) The following math book's definition of random sample makes it synonymous with, equal **chance**.

A sample that is representative of the population is often called a random sample. A RANDOM SAMPLE is a sample chosen in such a way that everyone in the population has an equal chance of being in the sample.<sup>20</sup>

It has required a little patience to survey some of the words the dictionary uses to describe the idea of **chance**. Those who care to pursue the study of additional words can review these: contingent, happens, precarious, haphazard, venture, and prospect. The extensive vocabulary, which surrounds the meaning of **chance**, is a witness against its clarity. Numerous dictionaries offer an extensive list of senses for its meaning. No one actually knows what **chance** is, so it has been redefined over and over again through the ages. Its original association with pagan idolatry overshadows any attempt to make it credible. The insanity of its original meaning needs to be brought to light and kept in mind. By doing so, its "new fangled," sophisticated attire will not lead us astray.

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<sup>1</sup> *Webster's New World Dictionary*, World Pub., Cleveland, OH., 1968, s.v. "chance"

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*