

Eng Comp II Star-Crossed Ignorants No matter what anyone tries, no matter what anyone does, no matter what anyone believes they have accomplished, they have not controlled fate. Fate is uncontrollable. Much like betting on a sure thing; and knowing in the back of your mind that there are infinite factors in the outcome--anything could happen. It's unfortunate that the people of Ancient Greece sanctioned the concept of fate. In the Era of Enlightenment the idea of God-controlled fate was finally challenged with the notion of self-fulfilled destiny; until then, men turned to prophets and oracles. In the play Oedipus, by Sophocles, there was an ongoing synergy between fate and knowledge that was constantly rejected. Oedipus, the main character, struggled to dominate his own destiny, but ironically fell back into his bizarre misfortune that was in the end, inevitable. Misfortune, false realities, deception: all a result of Oedipus knowing too much and at the same time too little of his true lot in life. Knowledge was what nurtured him into false pretenses.

Knowledge was a false pretense. By knowing that his parents were out of harms way, namely his, he knew that his prophecy would not come true. He knew that as long as his father was still alive and he was married to a woman not even related to his mother, he would not bear the offspring that his men would shudder to look upon. It was the epitome of irony for Oedipus to know his fate, and try to avoid it with the knowledge that he had obtained: "My father was Polybus of Corinth, my mother the Dorian Merope, and I was held the foremost man in all that town until a thing happened--a thing to startle a man, though not to make him angry as it made me. We were sitting at the table, and a man who had drunk too much cried out that I was not my father's son--and I, though angry, restrained my anger for that day; but the next day went to my father and my mother and questioned them. They were indignant at the taunt and that comforted me--and yet the man's words rankled...I sought where I might escape those infamous things--the doom that was laid upon me. When Oedipus fled from his parents, he started the chain reaction of ironic happenstance that would eventually direct him in a complete circle back into the same position he was when he left Corinth. The destiny of doom that Oedipus was attempting to avoid, was the destiny that he was inadvertently fulfilling. Fate is defined as a destined outcome; nothing can alter that no matter what is tried. Anyway, this time it was too late for Oedipus to do anything about it, for the infinite factors that contributed to his demise were irreversible and dormant until the very ironically tragic end. Oedipus tried to master fate and it ultimately mastered him.

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