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## The Notebook

**Terms (archaic):**

**notebook**

*n.* a small book for making or taking notes, made from paper

**note**

*n.* **1** a brief record of facts, topics, thoughts etc., as an aid to memory **2** an observation, usu. unwritten, of experiences

**paper**

*n.* **1** a material manufactured in thin sheets from the pulp of wood or other fibrous substances, used for writing or drawing or printing on **2** an essay or dissertation, esp. one read to a learned society or published in a learned journal

*The Notebook* offers us a rare insight into culture and literature at the turn of the second millennium in the Age of Deference (AD). However, the discovery of this artefact will not be made public until full content analysis and adjustment is complete, and a final version is approved by the Censorship Secretariat.<sup>1</sup>

Preliminary analysis of *The Notebook* has been made possible by the recent deciphering of a metaphysical cloud located in Earth's lower troposphere, in a hitherto undetected atmospheric region known as cyberspace. The cloud contains an extensive collection of historical data and documentary evidence of AD life. It is important to note that the original size and content of the cloud cannot be established, nor can we tell how much of the information was corrupted before its datalink connection was severed and abandoned.

It would appear that multiple virulent diseases, known as 'satanic verses', infected cyberspace towards the end of AD. As a result, there was widespread corruption (also known as 'berlusconi'), with much documentary evidence being re-routed into inaccurate directories. The most prominent of these was the 'wicked encyclopaedia', also known as 'wikipedia'<sup>2</sup>. This report attempts to analyse *The Notebook* and discuss its cultural and literary significance, while acknowledging the difficulty in relying on evidence that is saturated with ambiguity.

In the years preceding the end of the AD era, literature had reached its natural end and the novel faced extinction. Many still thought literature was a by-product of genuine free thought and speech, despite evidence to the contrary. There were no new or original methods for individual artistic self-expression. Art had become increasingly fragmented, and involved a random dis-association of object and subject.

Proponents of this outmoded literary form enrolled on salvation missions; educational symposia on the craft of writing, through which they attempted to re-assert the value of the written word, and resurrect the no-longer novel novel.<sup>3</sup> *The Notebook* was created by a student attending one such ‘creative writing course’.

It is not necessary to dwell on the creator of *The Notebook*; the author is insignificant because she is long-dead. In addition, it should be noted that the ideas within this document are unoriginal and inauthentic. What *The Notebook* represents is a random collection of opinions from other writers, which the author has compiled and interpreted. It is a distillation of the general discourse on literature at the time of writing.

We still do not fully understand how creative writing was taught or studied as an academic pursuit. Nevertheless, such courses flourished at that time. Statistics from the cloud reveal that in 2014AD, the year in which *The Notebook* was created, there were “more graduates of creative writing programmes than there were people alive in Shakespeare’s London.”

Shakespeare was a copywriter for televisual commercials from Stratford in Eastern London, whose most famous advertising slogan was “Happiness is a cigar called Hamlet”<sup>4</sup>. The number of people alive in Shakespeare’s London is unknown, but we do know that the world population exceeded seven billion in 2012AD. It is not known how many of these seven billion were writers.

On the first page of *The Notebook*, the title ‘Creative Writing’ is followed by the sub-title: ‘Low Res’. This is an acknowledgment that the course was delivered in Low-Res or ‘low-resolution’ as opposed to Hi-Res or ‘high-resolution’. Before the introduction of retinal image capture, images were created and observed externally (that is, outside of the body), and internalised by electrical impulses in the optical

organ which were then translated by the brain. Hi-Res information was clear, defined and lucid; but since most people at that time suffered impaired vision, they were not able to process this degree of image resolution. Most human eyes processed only Low-Res images, indicating there was a lack of clarity and an inability to focus. This is certainly true of *The Notebook* and our examination of its contents, much of which is obscure and indistinct.

By some measure of good fortune, *The Notebook* contains a concise history of the rise of literature during the AD years. It was written by a historian called Lars W. Iyer, who also went by the name of Lars Tryer and Lars von Trier.<sup>5</sup> We have cross-referenced this version of events with the cloud to ascertain whether it is utterly spurious, but our research confirms its accuracy. We include the full text here:

#### NUDE IN YOUR HOT TUB, FACING THE ABYSS<sup>6</sup>

Once upon a time, writers were like gods, and lived in the mountains. They were either destitute hermits or aristocratic lunatics, and they wrote only to communicate with the already dead or the unborn, or for no one at all. They had never heard of the marketplace, they were arcane and antisocial. Though they might have lamented their lives—which were marked by solitude and sadness—they lived and breathed in the sacred realm of Literature. They wrote Drama and Poetry and Philosophy and Tragedy, and each form was more devastating than the last. Their books, when they wrote them, reached their audience posthumously and by the most tortuous of routes. Their thoughts and stories were terrible to look upon, like the bones of animals that had ceased to exist.

Later, there came another wave of writers, who lived in the forests below the mountains, and while they still dreamt of the heights, they needed to live closer to the towns at the edge of the forest, into which they ventured every now and again to do a turn in the public square. They gathered crowds and excited minds and caused scandals and partook in politics and engaged in duels and instigated revolutions. At times, they left for prolonged trips back to

the mountains, and when they returned, the people trembled at their new pronouncements. The writers had become heroes. And some of the loiterers around the public square started to think: I quite like that! I have half a notion to try that myself.”

From this, and other documentary evidence attributed to Lars von Tryer, we deduce that many cultural debates and creative writing symposia were conducted in large baths of warm water designed for communal bathing known as ‘thermae’ or ‘hot tubs’. Historical records indicate that public baths became popular during the First Roman Empire, and remained important places for discussion. Politics, philosophy, art and literature were all debated in warm baths, so it can be safely assumed that the creative writing course during which *The Notebook* was written was conducted (at least in part) in a hot tub.

James Miller is a name which recurs throughout *The Notebook*. At first, it was determined that Miller was not a significant character and we concluded that he was little more than a catering manager, providing sustenance for the students and their masters. This theory was drawn together by our etymologists who determined that the name ‘Miller’ described, ‘a person who works a mill for the purpose of making flour’.

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However, evidence gleaned from the cloud has revealed that Miller was the only child of Arthur Miller and Marilyn Monroe. Arthur Miller was an influential playwright who died while working undercover as a salesman. His wife, the talented actress Marilyn Monroe, was bludgeoned to death with a telephone in 1962AD by her lover, the American President JFK.

James Miller offered both intellectual and artistic interpretations of creative writing to the group. He appears to have been the primary contributor to these hot tub discussions, and he is mentioned mostly within areas of dense analytical debate. Moreover, he expected those present in the hot tub to produce work that challenged conventions of form and content. We cannot yet tell whether his methods were successful.

The secondary course leader, according to *The Notebook*, was Rachel Cusk; an authoritative figure and founder of Cuskian theory. Cuskianism is the bringing to consciousness of family dispersal; a notion which we have come to know as the ‘AfterMath’.

‘Math’ (also known as ‘maths’ and ‘mathematics’) is an early decimal system of calculation which was used alongside binary codification.<sup>8</sup> We are trying to establish a link between the Cuskian theory of ‘AfterMath’ and the binary system, since there are clear linguistic and structural indications of binary in Cuskian citations, for example:

light ≠ dark  
 good ≠ evil  
 joy ≠ terror  
 inclusion ≠ abandonment  
 chocolate ≠ soap

More importantly, there is a direct quotation from Cusk in *The Notebook* relating to the binary nature of sentence structure:

“Remember what I call the 'bittersweet' quality of good prose. The relationship between self and other is always ambivalent, and this ambivalence is the key to artistic truth. Show it in your sentences, dark and light, love and hate, beauty and ugliness, acceptance and resistance.”

However, although there are multiple binary representations within *The Notebook*, the ultimate expression of binarism - that of gender (female ≠ male) - is only mentioned once, under the heading ‘Feminism’. Feminism, we understand, was the name given to the period in which females were thought of as mentally and physically superior to males. That there was any difference between female and male seems incredible to modern sensibilities, but more importantly, it shows limited knowledge of genetics and chromosomal engineering. AD reproduction was prolific and often spontaneous, but this changed with increased understanding of the human genome.

Euneek Biñarió and Unique Biñarió were twin doctors who specialised in Deoxyribonucleic Acidity Regulation (DNA-R) and who led pioneering research into embryology. In the latter years of AD, embryology was in its infancy, as most conceptions took place within the human body shortly after physical intercourse between a male and female. Unregulated conceptions like this were inefficient and frequently produced only a single offspring. Occasionally, when *in vitro* fertilisation was used, three or sometimes four offspring were created, but mistakes like this were unsustainable. Once the DNA-R principles of binary reproduction were accepted by Human Reproduction Managers worldwide, twin births became the norm. Dr Biñarió and Dr Biñarió introduced the ‘X Factor’ system of chromosomal reproduction; whereby a parent could chose to produce two females (XX Factor ♀), two males (XY Factor ♂) or one of each sex (X? Factor ♀♂). In time, global fairness directives made the XX Factor and the XY Factor illegal procedures, and following the declaration of universal human rights, only true binary births (♀♂ female and male twins) were allowed. This system is still in place today.

One of the hot tub sessions appears to have been led by an obscure academic named Lee Rourke, who went on to found the Rourkian principles of abstract nonsense. According to *The Notebook*, Rourke delivered a convoluted lecture on man-made navigable waterways of the first industrial era, based on his historical novel, *The Canal*. However, insufficient note-taking makes it difficult to determine the actual content of this lecture.

Another instructor in the hot tub was Courttia Newland; a fantasy fiction writer of minimal (or ‘napoleonesque’) stature, according to height charts obtained from the cloud. Indeed, he was so short that some believe he could have been the inspiration for Ralph Ellison’s *The Invisible Man*. This novel was made into a best-selling graphic periodical by DC Comics and later developed into a successful film franchise starring the actor and politician Tom Cruise. Newland authored a highly influential physics book about colour at the low frequency end of the light spectrum, entitled *A Book of Blues*, and gained notoriety for his gratuitous use of obscenities, including fuck and cunt.

Also mentioned within *The Notebook* is Jonathan Barnes, a critic and teacher of creative writing who preached under the pseudonym @jbarneswriter. Barnes had a strong affiliation to the avian system of disseminating information which was popular at this time. The avian enthusiasts dubbed it ‘twitter’, as a reference to the musical song of birds, but which eventually came to mean a short burst of inconsequential information.

It is unclear why the oral projection of feathered animals of the genus *avis* inspired such inane ejaculations. Perhaps the limitations of 140 characters imposed by the primitive technology of the time did not allow for well-considered expression. Yet despite its faults, this narcissistic cult of self-aggrandisers, known as ‘twits’, ‘twats’ and ‘angry birds’, found considerable success: it had 500 million active users in 2014AD and generated 340 million ‘tweets’ (or outbursts of inconsequential information) a day.

It would appear that @jbarneswriter became more disillusioned with twitter as his dependency on it increased. His addiction to avian communication and the resulting paralysis of mind, and ultimately body, is detailed in his autobiography, *The Somnambulist*, which describes the feeling of twitter addiction as akin to sleep-walking, or the act of being present but not fully conscious.

Twitter, and those who relied upon it as a means of communication, eventually died out as a result of influenza A virus subtype H5N1, also known as ‘avian influenza’ or ‘bird flu’. H5N1 was a highly pathogenic virus which quickly mutated to allow airborne transmission between birds, mammals and digital platforms.

Pete Townshend, leader of the World Health Organisation (The WHO), announced a total of 700 confirmed human cases in 2012AD. But by the end of 2016AD the spectre of a global pandemic was apparent, as human and digital strains of the virus converged. It was both contagious and fatal, and was transmitted quickly through public WiFi networks or ‘hotspots’. Biotechnologists were unable to produce an anti-virus in time due to multiple complex encryptions.

*The Notebook* contains numerous references to Marxism, the political and economic theories of four brothers; Karl, Groucho, Harpo and Chico. The brothers



were Jewish Americans whose films were a visionary prediction of the overthrowing of capitalism and the eventual attainment of a classless society. Marxism is now obsolete and will be deleted from record by the Censorship Secretariat.

Drawn in the margins of *The Notebook* is a stick figure hanging from gallows, known as a ‘hangman’<sup>9</sup>. It is unclear why this symbol appears in the document, or why it is surrounded by characters randomly placed in non-alphabetical order with score lines through them. However, we believe the naïve pictogram of a human being punished by strangulation demonstrates uncanny foresight of the return of the death penalty. Once popular, this practice had been largely abandoned in most jurisdictions, with the exception of the wasteland formerly referred to as the United States of America, which we now know as *الولايات المتحدة*, or “I will show you fear in a handful of dust”.

Following the universal declaration on capital punishment, civil order has been fully restored, and death is now the second most effective crime deterrent, after transportation to Orbital 42.

Researchers discovered a torn shred of propagandist literature (known as ‘newspaper’) tucked between two pages of *The Notebook*, upon which the name Boris Johnson appears. We cannot find any other record of Boris, but believe this may be a misspelling of the name Doris. A typographical error such as this would have been easily made, due to the standard data inputting procedure of the time, on which the roman characters ‘B’ and ‘D’ are in close proximity. It was called the ‘Qwerty’ system<sup>10</sup>; and was a method of notation that proved ineffective and time consuming, especially after human hands evolved from four fingers and one small thumb, to one larger dominant digit and three ancillary digits. Occasionally new humans are erroneously created with an extra digit, colloquially known as the ‘redundant pinkie’. These are removed at birth with a simple and pain-free procedure.

If the scrap of newspaper does indeed refer to Doris Johnson, it is a significant discovery and may shed light on the role he played in the decline and fall of society in the AD years. Perhaps the author of *The Notebook* foresaw the beginning of the end.

We know now that the end of the era was brought about by the Global Conflict of 2016, but unrest can be traced back to London's Tottenham Riots of 2011; the civil war in Syria, which spread quickly throughout the Arabian Spring region; and the Pussy Riots, animal rights protests which began in Moscow and were supported worldwide by lesbian activists. At this time, China appears to have been the most content and peaceful nation on earth as there is no record of public unrest or civil disorder.

Doris Johnson inflamed the supranationalist community (the confederation of earth known as the United Nations or UN<sup>11</sup>) by declaring war on the notorious 'Third Runway' regime. The 'Third Runway' was the 21<sup>st</sup> Century equivalent to the 'Third Reich' of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, according to our source at 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox. Indeed, we found evidence in the cloud showing that during a UN-sponsored sporting competition, (the Olympic Games, held in London in the summer of 2012) Doris Johnson made protest against the 'Third Runway' by suspending himself above London's primary waterway, the Thames River.<sup>12</sup> He remained there for forty days and forty nights, at which point the UN intervened and he was summarily dismissed from his position as Mayor of London, England. This fuelled his revolutionary spirit and he became leader of the multilateral rebellion.

Finally, despite numerous tests, biotechnologists are unable to identify the donor of traces of seminal fluid found on the cover of *The Notebook*. The presence of this reproductive mammalian fluid (in this case, human) is a physical manifestation of the contents within; that is, it contains the seeds of ideas. *The Notebook's* discovery cannot be underestimated: it is, both literally and metaphorically, a seminal work.

#### Notes:

1. Only one other artefact, albeit fragmented, has been recovered from the Age of Deference. It is currently undergoing reconstruction and analysis in our laboratories. The fragments were found half sunk on the sand, and consist of two vast and trunkless legs of stone, and a shattered visage bearing a frown

and wrinkled lip. There is a pedestal, inscribed with these words: "My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!" Nothing beside remains. Early indications are that these are the remains of a statue of The Pale King, a revolutionary who also went by the name of David Foster Wallace.

2. The alleged Ecuadorian rapist Julian Assange was thought to be responsible for creating 'wikipedia', although he is more commonly associated with the organisation that supplied black market incontinence drugs, known as 'wikileaks'.
3. Sir Malcolm of Bradbury is largely acknowledged as the founder of creative writing education. He devised instructional courses in a desperate attempt to resuscitate the novel as a legitimate art form. They took place in a remote enclave on the island of East Anglistan, a region of the former UK. Our records show this learning centre was called 'uea', which we now know to be a corruption of the word 'urea'; a soluble colourless crystalline nitrogenous compound contained in the urine of mammals. The ureal designation would perhaps indicate something about the nature of these creative writing courses; although 'urine' or 'piss' could also mean 'mock' or 'deride', so we cannot ascertain how seriously these courses were considered at the time.
4. Televisual commercials were used as a method of disseminating information to large numbers of the population. Shakespeare was a direct contemporary of the most influential commercial writer of that time, Salman-Joseph Anton-Rushdie, who coined the phrase 'naughty but nice', in order to sell baked goods that were high in fat and sugar, to consumers in the former UK.
5. Lars W. von Iyer/Trier/Tryer also produced visual documentaries. His parents were committed nudists and as a child he regularly visited nudist camps, which perhaps influenced his work. In addition to his complete history of literature, he also founded the world's first mainstream film company to

produce hard-core pornographic films. Indeed, *Constance* (1998AD) and *Pink Prison* (1999AD) were directly responsible for the legalization of pornography in Norway (then a separate Scandinavian state) in March 2006AD.

6. The ‘Abyss’ refers to ‘The Abyssinians’; a musical group who performed Jamaican reggae, and who were famous for their close harmonies and promotion of the Rastafari movement in their lyrics. We have been unable to establish why The Abyssinians were present in the hot tub.
7. The human diet during the Age of Deference was extremely detrimental to health, and relied on flour-based products such as bread, bagels, pasta and cupcakes. It was later discovered that those cultures dependant on rice rather than flour-based products, for example, Japan, China and India, developed higher intellectual achievement due to the dietary impact on synaptic brain function.
8. Binary was a non-decimal system of notation in which information could be expressed by combinations of the digits 0 and 1. 0 and 1 were used to represent ‘off’ and ‘on’ in early digital computer engineering, and allowed for complex mathematical functions to be executed without the need for calculation.

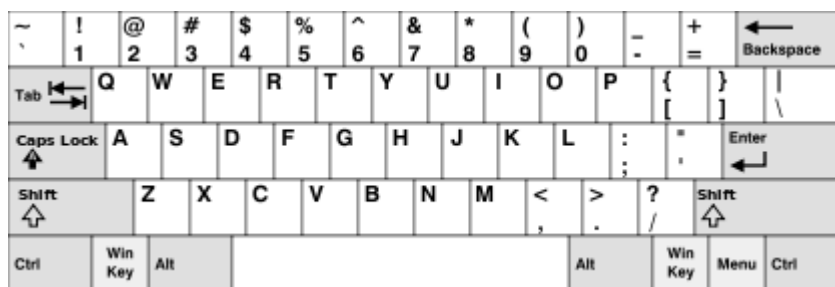
Binary	Arabic-Hindu numeral	Roman numeral	Common digit	Techcode equivalent
0000	0	0	๐	ศูนย์
0001	1	I	๑	หนึ่ง
0010	2	II	๒	สอง
0011	3	III	๓	สาม
0100	4	IV	๔	สี่

0101	5	V	๐	ห้า
0110	6	VI	๖	หก
0111	7	VII	๗	เจ็ด
1000	8	VIII	๘	แปด
1001	9	IX	๙	เก้า
1010	10	X	๑๐	สิบ
10100	20	XX	๒๐	ยี่สิบ
10101	21	XXI	๒๑	ยี่สิบหนึ่ง
110010	50	L	๕๐	ห้าสิบ
1100100	100	C	๑๐๐	หนึ่งร้อย
1111101000	1000	M	๑๐๐๐	หนึ่งพัน

9. The mysterious ‘hangman’ symbol:



10. A representation of the archaic data inputting device known as ‘QWERTY’:



11.

It is unclear as to what the bar of blank space at the bottom of the diagram would have represented.

12. The acronym ‘UN’ (also ‘un’) was the French word for ‘one’, meaning that France considered there to be only one nation in the world, i.e. itself. It would appear that none of the other UN members realised this.