



Mathijs Koenraad

A Teenage Philosophy of Awareness and Existence

Analysis of the Columbine
Shooters' Worldview

A Teenage Philosophy of
Awareness and Existence

Mathijs Koenraadt

A Teenage Philosophy of Awareness and Existence

Analysis of the Columbine Shooters' Worldview

Second edition 2015
First published in The Netherlands 2014
Copyright © 2014, 2015 by Mathijs Koenraadt

Published by Morningtime
www.koenraadt.info

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

Paperback ISBN 978-1511520003
E-book ISBN 978-0463373781

Cover photography © 2011 by Steven Bratman / CC BY 2.0

Contents

Preface vii

Part I

- 1 Eric Harris on Awareness 3
- 2 Dylan Klebold on Existence 23

Part II

- 3 Transcript of Eric Harris's Journal 41
- 4 Transcript of Dylan Klebold's Journal 77

Notes 105

Further Reading 109

Preface

On April 20th, 1999, several hundreds of students flooded the Columbine High School cafeteria to have lunch. Two high school seniors waited outside near their cars, wearing black leather coats. Moments earlier they had visited the cafeteria and left behind two duffel bags that each contained a propane bomb with a detonator. While the bombs sizzled, the teenage men geared up and walked towards the school entrance. They intended to kill any fleeing victims running towards them. Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold would leave thirteen dead before taking their own lives. Without anyone noticing, they had planned the attack for nearly a year.

After the attacks, officers of the Jefferson County Police Office found a number of video tapes at the Harris residence. Dubbed the *Basement Tapes*, named after where they were recorded, the videos show how the teenagers explained their motives and bragged about how they had successfully hidden their elaborate preparations from both their peers and their parents.¹

I wrote this short book in defense of rebel ideas that either force us to think about the way that we organize our society, or that question our understanding of reality. In their writings, the Columbine High School shooters, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, showed their ability to have intelligent and original thoughts, highly critical of society and the world

around them. If we as members of civilized societies wish to better understand the mind and motives of teenage mass murderers, we must begin by taking their ideas seriously. We should attempt to understand the world from their point view in order to see why they felt so left out in the first place.

However, I did not write this book to solicit compassion for the Columbine shooters and their actions. The horrific events shattered many lives. If Eric and Dylan had not taken their own lives, then they deserved long-term imprisonment.

But I have always believed that we should not dismiss other people's ideas on the basis of their author's character. Someone's character, behavior, appearance or criminal record often hinders our ability to understand. When we overzealously discard good ideas and great insights on such grounds, then we lose a chance to improve ourselves. History provides such examples. When Greek philosopher Socrates had asked too many critical questions about the meaning of life, the annoyed Athenians ultimately sentenced him to death.

As much as I disagree with harming human beings, I cannot deny that Eric Harris's and Dylan Klebold's insights positively surprised me. Eric criticized a society that suppresses people's self-awareness so that they can be reduced to "good little robots".² Dylan discussed the idea that human thought induces reality as we perceive it, a theme not unfamiliar to the science of quantum mechanics. He believed that thoughts live in a separate dimension of reality, beyond what science can measure.

I came to write this book while I researched the Columbine massacre for a chapter in another book. I felt drawn to the ideas in the killers' journals. At the time of the shootings, on April 20th, 1999, I was a few months short of a year their senior. The aftermath of the attack preoccupied my mind for weeks. Although I am European, they were a lot like me.

Their plans had been so elaborate, so well prepared, and while the media were looking for answers and blaming pop culture boogiemens, I traced down some of Eric's personal websites that had not yet been taken down by the FBI. We had played the same video games such as *Doom*, *Quake* and *Duke Nukem*. We had listened to the same German rock bands such as *Rammstein* and *KMFDM*, and we had watched the same Hollywood movies like *The Fifth Element* and *Event Horizon*. Like Eric, I had also downloaded the infamous *Anarchist Cookbook* from the World Wide Web and I too had experimented with making pipe bombs, although unsuccessfully.

Despite an Atlantic abyss that separated us, we were children of the same European-American cultural uniformity.

For my research I read thousands of pages of the *Columbine Documents* that Jefferson County Sheriff's Office had released to the public in 2006. The documents include copies of the killers' personal journals, school essays, day planners and various other documents. I decided to track down every single cultural reference I could find, such as Eric's mention of Goethe's *Erlkönig* poem or his Shakespeare quotes. Besides literature, I also investigated the nineties culture and re-watched movies like Oliver Stone's *Natural Born Killers*, whose script apparently influenced Eric's plot for the attacks, sometimes word for word.

There is a reason for such in-depth analysis, beyond nineties nostalgia. One of Eric Harris's statements triggered me: "I think people should learn more about what they are listening to. They need/should actually HEAR what they are listening to every day. People generally listen to music because it 'sounds' good. Not many people listen to songs for the lyrics."³ Similarly, in an explanatory text for one of his computer game designs, Eric Harris wrote, "a person could write a book

on all of the symbolism and double-meanings used in these levels.”⁴ These instructions pushed me to *listen* to the lyrics, *see* the symbolism and *find* the double-meanings, all in an attempt to truly understand what drove them.

What I found, buried deep among pages of hatred and depression, was a set of views, highly critical of the world, bordering on the philosophical. This little book starts your journey into the world of rebel ideas.

This is my first attempt at a philosophical analysis, admittedly a radical one. I chose the approach to “define [the] project in terms of arguments and views that [I] basically agree with.”⁵ I collected the most meaningful statements from the killers’ journals and searched for connections with mainstream philosophy, physics or other sources.

I improved the statements with proper punctuation, grammar and capitalization. Spelling, being a form of authority, was not much appreciated by Harris: “I say, spell it how it sounds, it’s the [expletive] easiest way.”⁶ For clarity, sometimes a word was added or removed, but without altering the statement’s meaning. These things were done to avoid distraction from the content.

Part I

Eric Harris on Awareness

“Don’t give yourselves to these unnatural men,
machine men with machine minds and machine
hearts! You are not machines! You are not cattle!
You are men!”¹

—Charlie Chaplin

We all know that feeling when someone is watching over us, observing our every move. This is called self-consciousness, an acute sense of self-awareness. Eric Harris, however, wrote about self-awareness in a more philosophical manner, namely the way that his individual being related to society. Eric criticized society and was annoyed by other people’s behavior. He looked at people much like an anthropologist who observes the human herd.

Eric David Harris, born on April 9th, 1981, wrote his journal entries in the year leading up to the attack, between March 10th, 1998 and March 3rd, 1999. Sometimes weeks or months apart, he wrote eighteen entries in total. They express various themes, ranging from practical matters that describe how he prepared for the attacks to themes of hatred and contempt of essentially everyone on Earth, including himself.

But besides expression of anger, Eric’s writings also offer a near philosophical social commentary. He made it a central

theme to question why most people follow rules that other people literally made up, often in the interest of an imagined Greater Good that sometimes, if not always, happens to serve those people's own best interests.

In one of his journal entries Eric wrote, "There's no such thing as True Good or True evil, it's all relative to the observer."² Who are we to *not* question the rules that govern our lives? If we never question what society makes us believe is good for us, then we live out our lives as members of a herd, clever and self-conscious, but perfectly unaware of how other people control our productive lives.

Eric read a lot of books, not just for his favorite English composition class³, for which he wrote many reports, but also in his spare time. He read anything from serious works by Shakespeare, Nietzsche or Hobbes to less serious works of fiction like the *Aliens* and *Doom* novels, but he also read about the ideologies of mass murderers Adolf Hitler and Charles Manson.⁴

Eric would often cite from these and other authors. Peter Langman, an expert on the psychology of school shooters, traced influences of specifically Hitler, Nietzsche, Hobbes and Charles Manson in an article on the ideology of Eric Harris⁵, but I decided not to attach much value to this analysis. For several reasons. Aside from Langman's arbitrary focus, which ignored for example Shakespeare or even *Les Misérables*, Langman's approach relies on too many loose ends. In the case of Nietzsche, Langman writes, "Eric would have reveled in [...]", "Eric may have taken heart in [...]", "Eric might have been thrilled by [...]", "Nietzsche's writing could help explain [...]", "Nietzsche may also shed light on [...]"⁶ and so forth, while he admits that Eric's only written reference to the German philosopher was "I just love Hobbes and Nietzsche!"⁷ This is not very helpful to understand Eric Har-

ris. Someone can probably find a Nietzsche quote that may also shed light on the way Eric flavored his coffee.

While Langman's hunches stimulate the intellect, they are indemonstrable. His approach poses the fundamental problem that he may have confused cause and effect. Did Hitler and Nietzsche really influence Eric's ideology, or did Eric merely find validation with them for ideas that he already embraced? The difference matters, because if Langman's view of the world is correct, authorities should immediately ban all books in order to prevent teenagers from magically transforming into mass murdering monsters overnight. In my view however, traumatized children will likely grab hold of anything they can find that supports a pre-existing emotional conflict.

For this reason, my book does not pretend to be a scientific exploration of what influenced Eric's ideology. Instead, I assume that Eric was influenced by the culture of the eighties and the nineties. I will hopefully show some level of mainstream support for his more philosophical ideas, because finding such support questions whether Eric's ideas resulted from a psychopathic mind. Perhaps, in order to better understand Eric's motives, we should take note of the subtle pains that he hid in his writings.

The Book of God

In the so-called *Basement Tapes*, Eric referred to his journal as *The Book of God*. To identify oneself with a god means to lay claim to the highest authority. On a philosophical level, such a claim may also express a desire for ultimate freedom, the will to live freely and without any form of oppression.

While some may call this a “brush with blasphemy”, it appears that Eric rebelled against all adults in authority positions, which to him included God.⁸ He wrote as much in his journal: “But people (i.e., parents, cops, God, teachers) telling me what to do, think, say, act makes me not want to [expletive] do it!”⁹

Such a statement sounds like the everyday complaint of a teenager. But besides teenagers, many other people still feel the same all throughout adulthood. A great example is the first time that Charlie Chaplin spoke on film and said: “Soldiers! Don’t give yourselves to brutes, men who despise you, enslave you, who regiment your lives, tell you what to do, what to think and what to feel!”¹⁰

I analyzed the journal and distilled what I found the most meaningful statements from three journal entries, in chronological order. I added my own subtitles for reference, but they are not part of the original text:

Self-Awareness—April 10th, 1998

Fictional Order—April 21st, 1998

Human Nature—May 6th, 1998

Self-Awareness

April 10th, 1998

In this first journal entry, Eric describes several of the things that a teenager does not like about the world, such as the way people dress and other people’s opinions. The entry ends with a list of types of people who in his view deserve to be killed, but a number of statements contain more meaningful insights.

E Pluribus Unum?

Too many thoughts and different societies all wrapped up together in this [expletive] place called AMERICA. Everyone has their own god [expletive] opinions on every god [expletive] thing and you may be saying “well what makes you so different?” Because I have something only me and V have, SELF AWARENESS.

America represents many different societies wrapped into a multicultural ‘melting pot’. Although America’s cultural roots are originally European (and later also African, Latin-American and Asian), Europe and America differ as much from one another as classical Roman civilization differed from ancient Greek culture.¹¹ Social scientists identified three important differences. First, from its inception, the United States had no big church and no state sanctioned religion, which allowed people to found new religious movements, such as the churches of the Amish, the Mormons and Scientology. Secondly, unlike European nation-states, the absence of big government gave rise to free enterprise and market capitalism. Thirdly, until 1940, America lacked a “big military to threaten to take over government”, allowing for greater personal freedom so that local communities flourished.¹²

But as a consequence of those freedoms, we may need to America today as an economic union rather than a social one, despite a common anthem and flag.

Confronted with such diversity of culture an opinion, both Eric and Dylan Klebold frequently brought up the theme of self-awareness, also in their personal communications. Their sense of awareness set them apart from other members of society. They prided themselves that they could

see the rules by which the human herd conforms to desired behaviors. While most people willingly surrender at least a part of their autonomy in favor of a sense of belonging, Eric and Dylan fully embraced autonomous opinion, even though doing so condemned them both to the status of social outcast.

While Eric mentioned twice that “self awareness is a wonderful thing”, Dylan disagreed and felt burdened by it. He wrote: “Awareness signs the warrant for suffering.”¹³

Follow the Leader

People say it is immoral to follow others, they say be a leader. Well here is a [expletive] news flash for you stupid [expletive], everyone is a follower!

Eric noticed society’s hypocrisy. We warn our children not to follow other people’s cults and bullies, but at the same time we quietly follow our own. Everyone is a follower, because uncertainty forces us to rely on others. One overlooked theme in leadership literature may be the question of how many leaders an organization really needs. At least in centralized hierarchies we only need one leader. Therefore motivational mantras such as “be a leader” have about the same purpose as winning the ‘employee of the month’ award. These mantras merely serve to boost worker morale, promote competition or attempt to increase worker productivity.

True leadership means to break free from the pack of followers and responsibly lead others towards a better future. But the type of leadership society and business teach us exploits other people’s productivity. Analogous to a meat processing facility, the leading cow enters the slaughterhouse first.

Better advice sounds as follows: “Build your own dreams, or someone else will hire you to build theirs.”¹⁴

Great Expectations

All these standards and laws and Great Expectations (Webb) are making people into robots even though they might ‘think’ they aren’t and try to deny it.

“Great Expectations” refers to a report that Eric wrote titled *Great Senior Expectations*, about what to expect of his last year in high school.¹⁵ He writes that he wishes to “learn to express [his] opinions and beliefs in a civilized, respectable manner.” On leadership he writes: “Being a leader is a very admirable quality. I respect people who are good strong leaders and know what they are doing, and I do not respect people who are weak, uneducated leaders. This is why I want to be a strong leader. [...] If I am considering a military career, then leadership is an extremely important quality.”

Eric’s personal writings contrast with what he wrote for his class. Was Eric keeping up appearances, trying to blend in, doing what was expected of him? Eric’s father was an Air Force pilot. Growing up in a military family, Eric probably felt pressured to live up to military ideals of leadership, while he privately rejected such ideals.

In this statement he complained precisely about the military obedience that turns people with a conscience into soldiers. Modern militaries have perfected the narratives that make soldiers willing to die for their countries; the Great Expectations of Honor, Loyalty and the Privilege to serve. Soldiers surrender their whole existence to an imagined greater good, officially the continued existence of their people, but in reality more often the profits of the few.

According to behavioral science, people can be motivated to postpone present gratification in favor of perceived benefits in the future. For example, when researchers promised children that they would get a greater number of marshmallows in the near future instead of just one right now, on the condition that they waited patiently, the children who best controlled their urge for instant gratification often devised strategies such as sitting on their hands or singing to pass time.¹⁶ Children who postponed their immediate needs best, grow up to become more successful adults.

But what works for children also works for adults and soldiers. Given a Great Political Ideology, people have perfected the skill of postponing gratification to the point that they can postpone indefinitely. When a feudal ruler in medieval Europe had successfully convinced his serfs that they would be rewarded for their hard work in the afterlife, then he could more easily demand taxation. In other words, people can be fooled to give up their whole lives for nothing but the promise an imagined afterlife.

The patrician elites who understand this powerful mechanism can abuse religion as a means to exploit the productivity of the common people. The perfect slave believes that he is free. Even today, how are corporations that promise old-age security and equal treatment different from feudal rulers who promised an afterlife?

Society offers little room for self-aware individuals who wish to break free from such Pavlovian conditioning. The majority of the people do as they are told, because their reproductive urges demand for a means to support a family and a home to live in. Homes need mortgages, mortgages need jobs and jobs need bosses who tell you what to do. To get a job you need a track record of 'good behavior', which is your resume, your college degree or your high school diploma.

Without a track record you have no access to the system, and without access you will be discarded, cast out and forgotten.

Where is the freedom in all of this? Is it a surprise that many young Americans explosively celebrate ‘life before work’? Have we become a society of biological robots, programmed to act, but denied to think, and controlled by an elite of puppet masters? Is social security the new afterlife we crave? It was Charlie Chaplin who tried to warn us 75 years ago: “Don’t give yourselves to these unnatural men, machine men with machine minds and machine hearts! You are not machines! You are not cattle! You are *men!*”¹⁷

The Socratic Method

Hey try this sometime, when someone tells you something, ask “why?” Eventually they will be stumped and can’t answer any more. That’s because they only know what they need to know in society and school, not real life science.

What Eric describes here is called the Socratic Method of philosophy. Socrates confronted his fellow Athenians with their own beliefs by incessantly asking them about why they believed in them. Barefoot, he would ask about the meaning of life or the purpose of politics. He would claim not to know the answers himself, but by questioning others’ beliefs in this manner Socrates made people aware of the flaws in their own thinking.

The Socratic Method is also a way to win an argument by asking your opponent the right questions, which force him to admit that you are right.

Fictional Order

April 21st, 1998

In this relatively civilized entry Eric introduced two concepts central to his view of the world, namely the ability to question man-made reality and that everything we believe in, such as religions, nations and society, is fictional order.

Robot Factories

Ever wonder why we go to school? Besides getting a so-called education. It's not too obvious to most of you stupid [expletive] but for those who think a little more and deeper you should realize it. It's society's way of turning all the young people into good little robots and factory workers. That's why we sit in desks in rows and go by bell schedules, to get prepared for the real world because "that's what it's like."

Schooling passes on to the next generation a culture's knowledge, morals or the technology needed for economic progress. People have schooled younger generations at least since the end of the last ice age, either through oral tradition, song, initiation rites or even art; more recently through classroom textbooks and the internet.

In our time, we necessarily school children so they become masters of advanced technology and information systems that we need for our survival. Governments enforce public schooling to make sure it happens.

But the weight of our increasingly complex civilization may have become a heavy burden on the shoulders of our children, a burden which they carry from kindergarten through college, university and career life.

Each new generation of people dreams of a better future than the one their parents had. What happens when we roll the cost of our increasingly expensive future on to next generations who may no longer be able to afford it? Children study longer hours, while parents take second jobs to afford their children's education.

As a consequence of industrialization, we force our children to overachieve only to compete with other overachievers, at the expense of personal freedom and happiness. We demand technological progress to make life easier, but at the same time we force our children to behave more like machines. The machine world dictates the rules and people follow.

American educationalist Horace Mann first introduced public schooling in 1837, after which it became a model for Europe and other parts of the post-Industrial world. The Industrial Age demanded that governments organized schooling on a national scale for at least two reasons: first, standardized schooling reduced the cost per educated individual, which made schooling the masses feasible; and second, business and industry could more easily dictate their need for specific types of workers.

We did not design schools to get the best out of people, but to fit the best people to available job descriptions, regardless of talent. Even if every child was born with the ability to graduate from university, business dictates that approximately 3.5 million US truck drivers have to go to work tomorrow morning, but they do not need university degrees. The question is, do the right number of people always come into this world to be truck drivers, or do we deliberately 'undereducate' people to make them fit assembly lines? Many schools educate for the marketplace. Schools have no real incentive to educate classrooms full of geniuses. As a consequence,

many people will leave schools less intelligent than they were when they entered.

Class inequality therefore is not accidental—it is deliberate, by design. We designed modern education systems to meet the needs of the Industrial Age, an age which never really ended, but expanded and accelerated into the 21st century. Possibly, schools like Columbine High School merely supply uncritical workers to local business and industry. Such schools indeed smother their students' ability to think for themselves. The machine world allows no room for autonomous thought, perhaps with the exception of the ruling class.¹⁸

School operate like factories with bell schedules that dictate what students think about; English class—*BELLS*—history class—*BELLS*—math class—*BELLS*. Such mental abuse 'educates' talented kids to become assembly line workers, chicken farmers or bureaucrats. We sit in desks in rows because that how offices make efficient use of commercial floor space. Eric Harris saw through this Pavlovian machinery.

We train people for the mechanical efficiency of industry, at the expensive of our humanity.¹⁹ Or in other words, we used to grow more potatoes to feed more people, nowadays we breed more people to sell more fries; *people* are the means of production.

Fictional Reality

Why can't we learn in school how we want to, why can't we sit on desks and on shelves and put our feet up and relax while we learn? Because that's not what the "real world is like." Well hey [expletive], there is no such thing as an

actual “real world.” It’s just another word like justice, sorry, pity, religion, faith, luck and so on.

In this statement, Eric continues on the theme of education and questions why he has no personal freedom to “put his feet up and relax” while he learns. Perhaps we can find less totalitarian ways to educate people. Perhaps children need the freedom to learn how and what they want.

But Eric then introduced an idea that historian Yuval Harari now calls *fictional order*. Fictional order is a collective belief that some socially constructed reality is true. We create fictional order ourselves whenever we found a new company or think of a new name for a product or service. Other examples of fictional order include any commercial brand, a politician’s social status, the artistic value of a painting, but also friendship, religion, entire corporations, sports teams, nationalities or even the United Nations.

Fictional order may appear real to us, because much of it does not change during our lifetimes. People born in the United States today may expect there still to be a United States by the time their grandchildren grow up. But it is not a given, the like any country even the United States may fall apart someday, because fictional order only exists for as long as there are people who believe in it.

But as individuals born into the fictional order that our ancestors, parents and peers created through their actions and choices, we can in most cases neither influence nor change it, because we need a majority consensus to do so. Harari writes that “a fictional order can only be maintained when large parts of the population—especially large parts of the security forces and the elite—really believe in them.”²⁰ Especially children and teenagers will therefore find it hard to

question the rules of society, because they lack the power to convince others.

Fictional order plays an important role throughout human history. Egyptian pharaoh Khufu could only convince his people to invest time and resources into building his great pyramid, because his people already believed that their pharaoh's safe passage to the stars would bring prosperity, safety and security for themselves and their children. The Egyptians believed that their pharaoh linked the people to the world of the divine. But without such religion already in place, without already having established this fictional order of a divine pharaoh in the minds of common Egyptians, they would not have moved a single boulder of rock to build Khufu his pyramid.

This brings up the question of power, which is itself fictional order than only exists because people believe in it. Those who successfully create new fictional order definitely have power, and those who already have power are most likely to influence or create new fiction. Power therefore means the ability to instill a belief onto others. However, this mechanism can also work in reverse: people can freely ascribe powerful features to a leader figure, either for religious reasons or some other perceived benefit.

The United States itself was made up by its founding fathers. The belief in the value of the US dollar is entirely fictional, as is a gold standard. But we can see why such fictional order persists, because in order to dismantle it we must erase the idea of a United States from the minds of powerful people, their security forces and a majority of Americans. Even then, the world outside still considers America real until their beliefs have been updated.

This erasure process, to erase fictional order from people's conscience, is by no means impossible. Barbarians col-

lapsed the Roman Empire centuries ago. While Roman ruins remain today, nobody hails to the Caesars anymore. Ancient Greek culture disappeared as did Egyptian culture before it.

Sometimes we purposefully destroy fictional order when it no longer serves us. When Hitler established his Third Reich, from nothing, he claimed his order on the grounds of some Aryan superiority, but neighboring peoples disagreed. Allied forces eventually destroyed not only the cities and armies of the Third Reich, but in doing so, they also crushed the fiction of German superiority. Hitler's fiction of a thousand year Reich only lasted fourteen years.

Science and Math

Wrong, only science and math are true, everything, and I mean every [expletive] thing else is man made.

This is a nuance of the previous statement. Eric probably meant *physics* instead of science, because people made up the scientific method. It echoes words of Steve Jobs, who said in an interview, "When you grow up you tend to get told the world is the way it is and your life is just to live your life inside the world. [...] Life can be much broader once you discover one simple fact, and that is—everything around you that you call life, was made up by people that were no smarter than you."²¹ Perhaps it was the zeitgeist of the nineties, but it shows that ideas similar to Eric's have some mainstream support.

Science wants to remove human interpretation from observation. When we attempt to observe the world as it really is, science expects different people to consistently find the same result when they observe the same phenomenon. But how blue is the sky? To answer such a question, science

codifies observations in terms of, for example, mathematics or physics, which scientists consider to be universal languages of the universe. However, science is itself based on the assumption that some 'real' reality truly exists outside of human observation, and that the mathematics on Earth are the same everywhere else.

They may be right, but paradoxically, the science of quantum mechanics now claims that the act of observation itself induces the reality that we observe, and that therefore real reality is not real.²²

Herding

You aren't human. You are a Robot. You don't take advantage of your capabilities given to you at birth. You just drop them and hop onto the boat and head down the stream of life with all the other [expletive] of your type. Well god [expletive] it I won't be part of it!

If it is so difficult to change fictional order, if the cost of being the fish that swims upstream is so high, then most people have an incentive to adopt the ways of the herd. People opt for a sense of belonging and security at the expense of a less autonomous life.

Human Nature

May 6th, 1998

Eric continues along the theme of fictional order in this entry. He feels that the rules of society smother his instincts.

Deleted Instincts

Human nature is smothered out by society, jobs, and work and school. Instincts are deleted by laws.

Societies and government are only created to have order and calmness, which is exactly the opposite of pure human nature. Take away all your laws and morals and just see what you can do. If the government was one entity it would be thinking, “hey, let’s make some order here and calm these crazy [expletive] down so we can be constructive and fight other governments in our own little so-called self-created ‘civilized world’ and get rid of all those damn instincts everyone has.”

In a report on *Return From the Stars*, a book by science fiction author Stanislaw Lem, Eric summarizes, “[Hal] reads about a process called ‘betrization’. This process was started about twenty years after Hal left Earth. What it does is it neutralizes strong impulses and nullifies immoral thoughts. It becomes simply impossible for one to imagine harming another. [...] This has changed humanity altogether, one article Hal observed had a meaningful quote in it; ‘they took the man out of man.’”. The neutralization and nullification of impulses and thoughts, do they belong to the realm of science fiction or is this ‘betrization’ the same thing we call ‘schooling’?

When Eric cites such passages, he makes clear that he found support in literature for his own worldview, instead of his views being influenced by literature. But then where did Eric get his idea that “human nature is smothered out by society” if not from his overly strict father²³, his school teachers who served the status quo, school bullies and the oppressive

jock culture at Columbine High School, or Eric's psychologist, who prescribed him a suppressant drug "to stop getting angry" but who never unearthed the roots of Eric's anger?

A Limited Life

Society may not realize what is happening but I have; you go to school, to get used to studying and learning how you're "supposed to" so that drains or filters out a little bit of human nature. But that's after your parents taught you what's right and wrong even though you may think differently, you still must follow the rules. After school you are expected to get a job or go to college. To have more of your human nature blown out your ass. Society tries to make everyone act the same by burying all human nature and instincts. That's what schools, laws, jobs, and parents do. If they realize it or not. And them, the few who stick to their natural instincts are casted out as psychos or lunatics or strangers or just plain different.

We grow up in the world with people who tell us about the fictional order that they expect us to believe in. Evolution designed children's minds to accept parental instructions as definitive truth, which helps children to avoid dangerous situations. But while our parents pass on useful knowledge, the traditions of our culture or social skills, they can also abuse a child's mind and teach it superstition.

Steve Jobs once said, "When you grow up, you tend to get told that the world is the way it is and your life is just to live your life inside the world. Try not to bash into the walls too much. Try to have a nice family life, have fun, save a little money. That's a very limited life."

The Crazy Ones

Crazy, strange, weird, wild. These words are not bad or degrading.

Peter Langman associated this statement with Charles Manson, because it echoes statements from the book *Helter Skelter* which Eric's friend Dylan had written a report on. That association attempts to prove that Eric embraced the ideas of psychopathic mass murderers. However, when we stop associating ideas with their author's character, we can see deeper meaning.

Besides, the famed 1997 Apple *Think Different* TV commercial goes, "Here's to the crazy ones, the misfits, the rebels, the troublemakers. The round pegs in the square holes, the ones who see things differently. They're not fond of rules and they have no respect for the status quo." Without crazy people, society never ventures off the beaten track.

Dylan Klebold on Existence

“Of all the words yet spoken, none comes quite as far as wisdom, which is the action of the mind, beyond all things that may be said.”¹

—Heraclitus

Philosophers have wondered about the meaning of existence as early as written history. But what does it mean to exist beyond our daily life? One philosopher attempted to define existence itself. In his famous book *Being and Time*, German philosopher Martin Heidegger distinguished between *Sein* (being) and *Dasein*.² The latter has no English translation but generally means ‘being there’ or ‘existence’. Existence was also a main topic throughout Dylan Klebold’s journal. In his writings, he refers to existence with possibly different meanings, but he generally considers existence to be a property of the mind, e.g. existence of his self-aware thoughts and insights.

Dylan Bennet Klebold was born on September 11th, 1981. He kept a journal and left entries spanning through March 31st, 1997 and January 20th, 1999, totaling 14 entries, which include a separate document and one undated entry. Dylan wrote in a style very different from Eric Harris’s, in a more inward looking manner about his depressions and his

social life, exploring the meaning of topics such as existence, the mind, suicide and love.

Love plays an important part in Dylan's writings. He feels very distant from the seemingly worry-free lives of his high school peers, the jocks who have relationships and friendships, but he finds their lives shallow and empty. In over half of Dylan's entries Dylan he writes about the difficulty to find love, how much he desperately needs it, and spends a number of entries expressing his feelings for someone named 'Harriet', someone who never came forward after the attacks. The lack of love and the emotional support he believed it would bring appears to be a major cause for his suicidal depression.

Dylan sometimes used made-up words. He calls himself the "everything-dweller" and the "true existor of the everything". He blends words like "perceivations", from *perceive* and *perceptions*, or forms new ones like "un-existable". According to one source, "Dylan was very smart. [...] You could tell by talking to him his vocabulary was extensive," so it seems possible that his linguistic gift pushed him to use words creatively.³

But others came to the wholly different conclusion based on such distortions of language that Dylan suffered a schizotypal personality disorder.⁴ While most psychologists do not believe that anyone can assess a mental disorder merely based on someone's writings, without ever meeting the subject in person, Jade Vega concludes that Dylan met various criteria of schizophrenia. She mentions for example that Dylan displayed "social and interpersonal deficits [...] and reduced capacity for close relationships".⁵ But if that were true, why were Dylan and Eric Harris such close friends, and why had Dylan also been good friends with Zack Snyder in his early teens? Vega disregards this circumstantial evidence and even

goes so far to conclude that Dylan showed “odd beliefs and magical thinking” for calling his classmates “zombies”.⁶

Peter Langman also believed that Dylan suffered mental delusions, but I disagree.⁷ Dylan struggled with the concepts of existence, reality and ‘being’ like many philosophers have done before him, and they too sometimes needed to invent new vocabulary to express their most abstract thoughts. The “magical thinking” Dylan supposedly displayed has more in common with Heidegger and the great Greek philosopher Heraclitus than with schizotypal delusion. I believe that Dylan did not suffer an immediate mental disorder—rather, he suffered from unrecognized genius.

One can only speculate, but if Dylan had been given the opportunity to grow a long grey beard, then his words might have been taken more seriously. When Heraclitus published his work at the oracle of Delphi, he was a voluntary mountain recluse in his fifties. Dylan, an involuntary social outcast, wrote his thoughts on existence at age fifteen and sixteen. A lifetime more of such thought experiments might have made him a great American philosopher.

A Virtual Book of Existences

The title of Dylan’s journal is as abstract as its contents. When we take into account that this personal document may have been a description of thought exercises and hypothetical situations, the contents should seem less odd.

As I did with Eric Harris’s journal, I will discuss or mention only the parts from Dylan’s journal entries that I found meaningful, in chronological order, taken from a subset of all entries. Several entries were left out because they were personal love letters or otherwise not valuable enough for

further discussion. I added my own subtitles for reference, although Dylan did title his entries:

Human Existence—March 31st, 1997

The Everything—April 15th, 1997

Dimensions of Thought—May 21st, 1997

The Meaning of Love—February 2nd, 1998

Human Existence

March 31st, 1997

In his first entry Dylan dwells on the past and describes how different he feels from the lives that jocks have. But he also brings up deeply philosophical themes of existence, the mind and human nature.

Everything Connects

My existence is [expletive] to me—how I feel that I am in eternal suffering, in infinite directions in infinite realities—yet these realities are fake—artificial, induced by thought, how everything connects, yet it's all so far apart.... & I sit & think...

At first glance Dylan means to say that his personal suffering was the consequence of his own thinking. People sometimes feel depressed, not because of true events, but because of their own negative perceptions of otherwise neutral or even positive events.

Dylan indirectly questions the fabric of reality. The idea that thought induces reality is supported by the science of quantum mechanics: "*As observers, we are personally involved*

with the creation of our own reality,”—in other words, magical thinking.⁸ Quantum science explains how matter and energy behave at the smallest levels that scientists can measure. A key concept of quantum science is that scientific observation directly influences the behavior of, for example, electrons and photons. A specific experiment called the *Double Slit Experiment* proves that certain ‘elements’ can behave as either waves of water or as particles of matter depending on whether a scientific instrument actively observed the individual elements. When the observing device is turned off, the elements behave as waves. When turned on, they behave as particles.

This means that human consciousness, in the form of a scientific observation, provably influences reality at quantum levels.⁹ The strangeness of this result left physicists wondering whether there exists a ‘real’ reality that can explain the behavior of quantum elements as either waves or particles. Albert Einstein believed in such a real reality, but his contemporary colleague Niels Bohr disagreed and concluded that reality is not real. “Observations not only disturb what has to be measured, they produce it. ... We compel [the electron] to assume a definite position. ... We ourselves produce the results of the measurement.”¹⁰

Dylan’s comment that “everything connects, yet its *all* so far apart” echoes statements by Greek philosopher Heraclitus: “What was scattered gathers, what was gathered blows apart.”¹¹ Also: “From the strain of binding opposites comes harmony.”¹²

Science of the Mind

Science is the way to find solutions to everything, right?
I still think that, yet I see different views of [expletive]

now—like the mind—yet if the mind is viewed scientifically...

Eric Harris made a similar statement on April 21st, 1998 that only “science and math are real”. Dylan and Eric both accepted the scientific worldview in an otherwise religious America.

Yet if according to quantum science, the mind induces physical reality through the act of conscious observation, then what is the conscious mind, when viewed scientifically? On a biological level, according to philosopher Sam Harris who found support with the science of neurobiology, the conscious mind seats in the secondary brain that wraps around the ‘primitive’ primary brain, or the animal brain.¹³ But while we perceive to have free will, this sensation is the result of a cognitive dissonance which means that our primary brain executes commands before the secondary brain becomes aware of them. Our brains fool ourselves into believe we make conscious decision, while in reality our animal brain does. The conscious secondary brain merely rationalizes our subconscious choices *ex post facto*, after the facts.

Even spookier, neurobiologists have proven that, for example, when we ‘decide’ to move our index finger, the primary brain has already fired the electronic signal down our nerve paths before the secondary brain becomes aware of it. Nonetheless, the secondary brain believes to be the initiator of the movement, the source of cognitive dissonance. In this sense, people’s brains fool themselves into believing that they have free will.

But what is the mind itself? Where does the sensation of awareness and consciousness come from? The answer has implications in terms of technological progress when we want to build robots that do not just possess artificial intelligence,

but also have a conscious mind that can make moral decisions on its own account. Over a decade ago, philosophers such as Dan Dennet¹⁴ and scientists such as Jeff Hawkins¹⁵ brought popular attention to the scientific study of the mind.

Past, Present and Future

A lot on the past though... I've always had a thing for the past—how it reacts to the present & the future—or rather vice versa.

Dylan spent a great deal of his waking life dwelling on the past, on things that depressed him, such as the loss of an important friendship or the monotonous school routines he endured at Columbine High.

In several places he expressed the idea that past, present and future influence each other. One way to interpret this odd belief is from a philosophical point of view. As we grow older, we accumulate experiences and we develop our personality and emotions. We gain new insights and gain a better understanding of our own social realities. As a consequence, the view we have of ourselves changes over time, and we alter our interpretation of the past. As teenagers we may find fault in ourselves when a love interest rejects us, while as adults we learn that others reject us because they fail to see the good in us, and that rejections therefore is not our fault.

How much we remember of our past selves also changes our perception. The mind is not a device that flawlessly records events, but one that produces sensations blurred by emotion and faulty memory. Who we are today depends on the narrative we tell of our past. Conversely, who we imagine to be in the future influences how we act today, which in turn affects how we see our past selves. For example, if I decide to

become a CEO in the future, I may tell myself that I have always been interested in business ever since I was a kid, or that I was born to be a business leader.

When we look at a picture of ourselves when we were a baby, we have to tell a story of how we grew up and became the adult we are today, but this story will be largely a fiction based on incomplete memories and wishful polish.¹⁶

True Human Nature

They don't know beyond this world (how I do in my mind or in reality, or in this existence) yet we each are lacking something that the other possesses—I lack the true human nature that Dylan owned, & they lack the overdeveloped mind / imagination / knowledge tool.

Everything we know about the world around us comes through our biological senses of smell, touch, sight, sound and taste. Even when we use scientific equipment to supposedly observe reality without interference from human sense, we interpret those scientific results with our senses nonetheless. It therefore makes sense that Dylan jumbled together the concepts of mind, reality and existence. Everything we call reality exists only as an observation of the mind that processes our senses. The image we have of our reality can therefore never be of any real reality.

In this statement, Dylan tells us how far he feels removed from 'normal' people, because of his 'overdeveloped' mind. He means to say that normal people have a seemingly natural access to 'true' human nature, namely love, friendship and relationships. But they lack the ability for deeper interpretations of the world around them. Dylan would rather

have been be less intelligent and more intuitive. He considers himself a sufferer of.

When he writes about “the true human nature that Dylan owned” he refers to an earlier remark “when Dylan Benet Klebold got covered up by this entity containing Dylan’s body”. It seems that Dylan feels the he went through a transformation, from an ordinary human being into a person with an overactive mind. At the same time, his newfound intellect, this ability to incessantly question the reality of the world around him, became a burden.

What does it mean when your intellect gets in the way of acting human? If ignorance is bliss, what should the intellectual do?

Eternal Peace

The thinking of suicide gives me hope, that I’ll be in my place wherever I go after this life... that I’ll finally not be at war with myself, the world, the universe—my mind, body, everywhere, everything at PEACE in me—my soul (existence).

Life is war. Dylan expressed his teenage inability to cope with life’s challenges. Here he offered a hint of what he really means with the word *existence*: “[...] me, my soul (existence),” namely his own being, how he exists in the world among his peers. Of course, in this context the word *soul* is as obscure as Dylan’s use of the word *existence*.

The Everything

April 15th, 1997

Dylan further explores the topic of existence and attempts to define how his life relates to it.

The Transceiver of Everything

Existence.... what a strange word. He, set out by determination & curiosity, knows no existence, knows nothing relevant to himself. The petty declarations of others & everything on this world, in this world, he knows the answers to. Yet they have no purpose to him. He seeks knowledge of the unthinkable, of the undefineable, of the unknown. He explores the everything... using his mind, the most powerful tool known to him. Not a physical barrier blocking the limits of exploration, time thru thought thru dimensions... the everything is his realm. Yet, the more he thinks, hoping to find answers to his questions, the more come up. Amazingly, the petty things mean much to him at this time, how he wants to be normal, not this transceiver of the everything. Then occurring to him, the answer. How everything is connected yet separate. By experiencing the petty others' actions, reactions, emotions, doings, and thoughts, he gets a mental picture of what, in his mind, is a cycle.

Existence is indeed a strange word. The word *existence* comes from the Latin *existere* or *existere* (*ex sistere*), which means "stand forth, come out, emerge; appear, be visible, come to light; arise, be produced; turn into."

Compare Dylan's statement "He explores [...] through dimensions..." with Heraclitus: "Wisdom is the oneness of

mind that guides and permeates all things.” Assuming Dylan was writing about himself, this quest to seek “knowledge of the unthinkable” is in other words his desire to understand abstract reality. As the language of mathematics shows, some thoughts or ideas cannot be expressed in words, they are in a sense “unthinkable” but nonetheless part of the world around us.

Dylan’s intelligence bothers him. He is consciously aware how of much more intelligent he is compared to his peers. But trying to be normal means to act his part by “experiencing the petty others’ actions, reactions, emotions, doings and thoughts.” He immersed himself in human nature, or his view thereof, an expression of his desire to be free of intellectual anxiety. He wishes to be like most people who do not question the world around them.

The “mental picture of a cycle” that is the result of answers leading to more questions and so forth, has a deeper meaning. Accompanying his text, Dylan frequently drew what he called a ‘thought box’, which resembles a sort of mollusk shell that twists clockwise. One of these drawings includes a note that reads “goes on infinitely” with an arrow pointing inwards. Dylan probably meant that this cycle refers to the infinite loop of questions and answers. For example: Why do we go to school? Because we need an education. Why do we need an education? Because society needs an educated people. Why does society need an educated people? This line of questioning has neither beginning nor end and could be what Dylan’s inquisitive mind continuously produced.

Dylan’s discovered that we can break out of circular logic, such as “teenagers go to school because society needs skilled workers; society has skilled workers because teenagers go to school”. When we do, we open up endless new questions and potential answers. Therefore, we must conclude the unthink-

able, namely that the universe is unknowable because we can never answer all questions.

The Hall of Existence

Existence is a great hall, life is one of the rooms, death is passing thru the doors, & the ever-existent compulsion of everything is the curiosity to keep moving down the hall, thru the doors, exploring rooms, down this never-ending hall. Questions make answers, answers conceive questions, and at long last he is content.

People are not primarily driven by hunger, emotion, sleep or sex, but by the curiosity of the mind to explore such things in life.

“Existence is a great hall,” reminds of *Valhalla*, the hall of fallen heroes in Nordic mythology. “Ever-existent compulsion of everything” means the entropy of the universe, the arrow of time, always moving compulsively.

Concerning “death is passing through the doors”, villain Vigo expressed a similar sentiment in the Hollywood production *Ghostbusters II*: “Death is but a door. Time is but a window.”¹⁷ Perhaps Dylan had watched it too. The idea of death as a door is also expressed in Christian religion, where St. Peter guards the entrance of heaven. And people with near-death experiences often describe that they passed through a tunnel towards a bright light (induced by hallucination). The “never-ending hall”, eternal existence, is also a tunnel.

Dimensions of Thought

May 21st, 1997

Dylan further discusses the properties of the physical reality, how his thoughts are the most powerful creator.

Time, Space and Thought

Within the known limits of time... within the conceived boundaries of space.... the average human thinks those are the settings of existence... Yet the ponderer, the outcast, the believer, helps out the human. "Think not of 2 dimensions," says the ponderer, "but of 3, as your world is conceived of 3 dimensions, so is mine. While you explore the immediate physical boundaries of your body, you see in your 3 dimensions—L, W, & H. Yet I, who is more mentally open to anything, see my 3 dimensions, my realm of thought—Time, Space, & THOUGHT. Thought is the most powerful thing that exists—anything conceivable can be produced, anything & everything is possible, even in your physical world." After this so called 'lecture' the common man feels confused, empty, & unaware. Yet those are the best emotions of a ponderer. The real difference is, a true ponderer will explore these emotions & what caused them. Another... a dream.

The universe is approximately 13.8 billion years old, which makes the outer boundaries twice that in light years.¹⁸ Yet beyond the physical boundaries of the universe, the thoughts we can think appear limitless. The language of mathematics allows us to write 'infinity to the power of infinity'. The mind can think thoughts that cannot really exist outside the mind.

Dylan's prose expresses once more an important aspect of quantum science, as explained earlier, namely that the observing mind induces the result of its own measurement. While this may only be true when we observe the behavior of electrons and photons, it does mean that an underlying 'real' reality does not exist. Reality is an illusion that helps observing minds make logical sense of how one thing leads to another.

But some scientists express a bigger concern. As science digs deeper in the world of atoms and its particles, will there ever be an end to new scientific discovery? Or do scientists themselves induce new layers of reality simply when they ask new questions? For example, we now know that atoms are made of protons and electrons, and they themselves are made of quarks. The problem is that reality may be a sort of onion having infinite layers, in which case science will never be able to answer what the universe is made of and will have to admit defeat.

However, if the science could really be the cause its own measurements, then the human mind that invents such science truly is the creator of its surroundings. Have we built the world we live in by collectively dreaming it up? Do we give birth to a new answer when we pose an original question?

It appears to me that thought *is* the most powerful thing that exists. The thinking mind can imagine abstract, infinite realities that we cannot communicate with words or images.

Quantum mechanics takes a toll on the senses of even seasoned scientists, because of its implication that real reality does not exist. But others emphasize that we should embrace the ideas of quantum science: "Someone who has learned to accept that nothing exists but observations is far ahead of

peers who stumble through physics hoping to find out ‘what things are.’”¹⁹

Dylan’s passages once again echo Heraclitus’s thinking. Compare, “Thought is [...] physical world,” with Heraclitus: “Of all the words yet spoken, none comes quite as far as wisdom, which is the action of the mind, beyond all things that may be said.”²⁰ Compare, “After this [...] what caused them,” with “Many fail to grasp what they have seen, and cannot judge what they have learned, although they tell themselves they know.”²¹

God Complex

I think, too much, I understand, I am GOD compared to some of those un-existable brainless zombies. Yet, the actions of them interest me, like a kid with a new toy.

Not *cogito, ergo sum*—I think, therefore I am—but *cogito nimium, intelligo*—I think too much, I understand.

Compare the first sentence of this statement with Heraclitus: “Those unmindful when they hear, for all they make of their intelligence, may be regarded as the walking dead.”²² With great intellect comes great arrogance. While it is not healthy to look down on people so much, in such a misanthropic manner, both Heraclitus and Dylan Klebold generally felt incapable to communicate their ideas to their peers, which became the cause of their social reclusion.

When Dylan calls others “brainless zombies”, it is simply a mental revenge on the school bullies that cast him out. In terms of intellect, he felt socially and emotionally as far removed from Average Joe as “God” to “un-existable, brainless zombies.”

Jade Vega wrote in her ‘applied final project’ titled *Dylan Klebold and Schizotypal Personality Disorder*: “This is one of several instances in Dylan’s journal where he not only demonstrated odd thinking, but odd speech, as well. He used several words which were not real, in addition to using words in inappropriate contexts.”²³ But Klebold’s “un-existable, brainless zombies” are simply a reference to the humanoid enemies in the computer game *Doom*, and they are coincidentally called ‘zombiemen’, Former Humans or Former Sergeants.

The odd adjective “un-existable” refers to people who, in Klebold’s view, are like primitive animals who live in the three dimension of space, but never in the three dimensions of “Time, Space and Thought”. They do not have the overdeveloped mind that burdens Dylan, that makes him question everything about the world around him.

What bothers most about Vega’s interpretations is that by her measure almost every philosopher would have to suffer some personality disorder. The oddest thing about Klebold’s writings is that he manages to express highly abstract ideas using the limited vocabulary available to him—*limited* because of language, not because of Klebold.

Part II

Transcript of Eric Harris's Journal

For my research into the minds and motives of Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, I initially used two transcriptions of the original handwriting. The one by C. Shepard, webmaster of A Columbine Site, and the other by Peter Langman of School Shooters. However, both included several errors. Below is my original transcription of Eric Harris's journal, with notes, and I improved punctuation, spelling and capitalization to make the text easier to read.

April 10th, 1998

I hate the fucking world, too much god damn fuckers in it. Too many thoughts and different societies all wrapped up together in this fucking place called AMERICA. Everyone has their own god damn opinions on every god damn thing and you may be saying "well what makes you so different?" Because I have something only me and V¹ have, SELF AWARENESS. Call it existentialism or whatever the fuck you want. We know what we are to this world and what everyone else is. We learn more than what caused the civil

1. V stands for Dylan Klebold's nickname *VoDKa*, which includes his initials D and K.

war and how to simplify quadratics in school. We have been watching you people. We know what you think and how you act, all talk and no actions. People who are said to be brave or courageous are usually just STUPID. Then they say later that they did it on purpose because they are brave when they did on fucking accident. GOD everything is so corrupt and so filled with opinions and points of view and people's own little agendas and schedules. This isn't a world anymore, it's H.O.E.² and one knows it. Self awareness is a wonderful thing. I know I will die soon, so will you and everyone else. Maybe we will be lucky and a comet will smash us back to day 1. People say it is immoral to follow others, they say be a leader. Well here is a fucking news flash for you stupid shits, everyone is a follower! Everyone who says they aren't followers and then dresses different or acts different... they got that from something they saw on TV or in film or in life. No originality. How many JO MAMMA jokes are there and how many do you think are original and not copied? Keine³. It's a fucking filthy place we live in. All these standards and laws and *Great Expectations* (Webb)⁴ are making people into robots even though they might "think" they aren't and try to deny it. No matter how hard I try to NOT copy someone, I still AM! Except for this fucking piece of paper right here, and B.T.W. spelling is stupid unless I say, I say spell it how it sounds, it's the fucking easiest way! Hey try this sometime, when someone tells you something, ask "why?" Eventually they will be stumped and can't answer any more. That's be-

2. H.O.E. refers to the subtitle of the computer game *Doom II: Hell on Earth*, for which Eric designed several levels.

3. German: None.

4. Webb, the name of Eric's English composition teacher. Great Expectations refers to his report on *Great Senior Expectations*. Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, "Columbine Documents," 26723-24.

cause they only know what they need to know in society and school, not real life science. They will end up saying words = to this "Because! Just shut up!" People that only know stupid facts that aren't important should be shot, what fucking use are they. NATURAL SELECTION. Kill all retards, people with brain fuck ups, drug addicts, people who can't figure out how to use a fucking lighter. Geeeeawd! People spend millions of dollars on saving the lives of retards, and why. I don't buy that shit like "oh, he's my son, though!" So the fuck what, he ain't normal, kill him. Put him out of his misery. He is only a waste of time and money, then people say "but he is worth the time, he is human too." No he isn't, if he was then he would swallow a bullet because he would realize what a fucking waste and burden he was.⁵

5. In these last few lines, Eric might have projected his own perceived inferiority onto others. He was born with an inclined chest, *pectus excavatum*, and had undergone surgery to correct it in junior high. Cullen, *Columbine*, 7.

April 12th, 1998

As I said before, self awareness is a wonderful thing. I know what all you fuckers are thinking and what to do to piss you off and make you feel bad. I always try to be different, but I always end up copying someone else. I try to be a mixture of different things and styles, but when I step out of myself I end up looking like others or others THINK I am copying. One big fucking problem is people telling me what to fucking do, think, say, act, and everything else. I'll do what you say IF I feel like it. But people (i.e., parents, cops, God, teachers) telling me what to do, think, say, act makes me not want to fucking do it! That's why my fucking name is REB⁶! No one is worthy of shit unless I say they are. I feel like God and I wish I was, having everyone being OFFICIALLY lower than me. I already know that I am higher than most anyone in the fucking welt⁷ in terms of universal intelligence. And where we stand in the universe compared to the rest of the UNIVERSE and if you think I don't know what I'm talking about then you can just "BUCK DICK⁸" and saugen mein hund⁹! Isn't America supposed to be the land of the free? How come, if I'm free, I can't deprive a stupid fucking dumbshit from his possessions if he leaves them sitting in the front seat of his fucking van out in plain sight and in the middle of fucking nowhere on a Frifuckingday night.¹⁰ NATURAL

6. Reb is short for Eric's nickname *Rebel*, inspired by the Columbine High School sports team nickname, the *Columbine Rebels*. Ibid.

7. German: world. Corrected: *Welt*.

8. German: bend over. Corrected: *Bück Dich*, also the title of a song by Rammstein, a German rock band.

9. German (word for word): suck my dog. Corrected: *Blase mein Hund*.

10. On January 30th, 1998, Eric and Dylan broke into a van and stole equipment. Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, "Columbine Documents," 26525.

SELECTION. Fucker should be shot. Same thing with all those rich snotty toadies at my school. Fuckers think they are higher than me and everyone else with all their \$ just because they were born into it? Ich denk NEIN¹¹. BTW, “sorry” is just a word. It doesn’t mean SHIT to me. Everyone should be put to a test, an ULTIMATE DOOM test, see who can survive in an environment using only ‘smarts’ and military skills.¹² Put them in a *Doom* world, no authority, no refuge, no BS cop-out excuses. If you can’t figure out the area of a triangle or what “cation” means, you DIE! If you can’t take down a demon with a chainsaw or kill a hell prince with a shotgun, you die! Fucking snotty rich fuckheads [censored by Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office] who rely on others or on sympathy or \$ to get them through life should be put to this challenge. Plus it would get rid of all the fat, retarded, crippled, stupid, dumb, ignorant, worthless people of this world. No one is worthy of this planet, only me and who ever I choose. There is just no respect for anything higher than your fucking boss or parent. Everyone should be shot out into space and only those people I say should be left behind.

11. German (word for word): I think not. Corrected: Ich denke nein.

12. In an essay for his writing class, Eric described playing such ‘military missions’ as a child with his brother and friends. Combat simulation play appears to have been a central theme throughout Eric’s early childhood. Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office, “Columbine Documents,” 26609–10.

April 21st, 1998

Ever wonder why we go to school? Besides getting a so-called education. It's not too obvious to most of you stupid fucks but for those who think a little more and deeper you should realize it. It's society's way of turning all the young people into good little robots and factory workers. That's why we sit in desks in rows and go by bell schedules, to get prepared for the real world because "that's what it's like." Well god damn it no it isn't! One thing that separates us from other animals is the fact that we can carry on actual thoughts. So why don't we? People go on day by day routine shit. Why can't we learn in school how we want to, why can't we sit on desks and on shelves and put our feet up and relax while we learn? Because that's not what the "real world is like." Well hey fuckheads, there is no such thing as an actual "real world." It's just another word like justice, sorry, pity, religion, faith, luck and so on. We are humans, if we don't like something we have the fucking ability to change! But we don't, at least you don't, I would. You just whine / bitch throughout life but never do a goddamn thing to change anything. "Man can eat, drink, fuck, and hunt and anything else he does is madness"—Based on Lem's quote.¹³ Boy oh fucking boy is that true. When I go NBK¹⁴ and people say things like, "oh, it was so tragic," or "oh he is crazy!" or "It was so bloody." I think, so the fuck what, you think that's a bad thing? Just because

13. Stanislaw Lem, the science fiction author. The quote Eric referred to is: "A human being must eat, drink and clothe himself; and the rest is madness." Stanislaw Lem, *Return from the Stars* (Boston: Mariner Books, 2012).

14. NBK means *Natural Born Killers*, a reference to the 1994 film by Oliver Stone. NBK was also Eric's and Dylan's code word for the attack on Columbine High School.

your mumsy and dadsy told you blood and violence is bad, you think it's a fucking law of nature? Wrong, only science and math are true, everything, and I mean *everyfucking* thing else is man made. My doctor wants to put me on medication to stop thinking about so many things and to stop getting angry.¹⁵ Well, I think that anyone who doesn't think like me is just bullshitting themselves. Try it sometime if you think you are worthy, which you probably will you little shits, drop all your beliefs and views and ideas that have been burned into your head and try to think about why you're here? But I bet most of you fuckers can't even think that deep, so that is why you must die. How dare you think that I and you are part of the same species when we are soooooo different. You aren't human. You are a Robot.¹⁶ You don't take advantage of your capabilities given to you at birth. You just drop them and hop onto the boat and head down the stream of life with all the other fuckers of your type. Well god damn it I won't be part of it! I have thought too much, realized too much, found out too much, and I am too self aware to just stop what I am thinking and go back to society because what I do and think isn't "right" or "morally accepted." NO, NO, NO. God fucking damn it NO! I will sooner die than betray my own thoughts. But before I leave this worthless place, I will kill whoever I deem unfit for anything at all. Especially life. And if you pissed me off in the past, you will die if I see you. Because you might be able to piss off others and have

15. Eric's psychologist prescribed him Luvox, an anti-psychotic drug and an anti-depressant.

16. In the movie *Natural Born Killers*, protagonist Mickey makes similar statements: "You and me, we're not even the same species. I used to be you, then I evolved. From where you're standing, you're a man. From where I'm standing, you're an ape." Oliver Stone, "Natural Born Killers," (1994).

it eventually all blow over, but not me. I don't forget people who wronged me¹⁷, like [censored]. He will never get a chance to read this because he will be dead by me before this is discovered.

17. After Brooks Brown had gotten into a fight with Eric, Brooks's mother Judy Brown experienced Eric's unforgiving attitude first hand: "Eric held grudges and he never let them go." Brown and Merritt, *No Easy Answers: The Truth About Death at Columbine*, 75.

May 6th, 1998

The human race sucks. Human nature is smothered out by society, jobs, and work and school. Instincts are deleted by laws. I see people say things that contradict themselves, or people that don't take any advantage to the gift of human life. They waste their minds on memorizing the stats of every college basketball player or how many words should be in a report when they should be using their brain on more important things. The human race isn't worth fighting for anymore. WWII was the last war worth fighting and was the last time human life and human brains did any good and made us proud. Now, with the government having scandals and conspiracies all over the fucking place and lying to everyone all the time and with worthless, pointless, mindless, disgraceful TV shows on and with everyone ob-*fucking*-sessed with Hollywood and beauty and fame and glamour and politics and anything famous, people just aren't worth saving. Society may not realize what is happening but I have; you go to school, to get used to studying and learning how you're "supposed to" so that drains or filters out a little bit of human nature. But that's after your parents taught you what's right and wrong even though you may think differently, you still must follow the rules. After school you are expected to get a job or go to college. To have more of your human nature blown out your ass. Society tries to make everyone act the same by burying all human nature and instincts. That's what schools, laws, jobs, and parents do. If they realize it or not. And them, the few who stick to their natural instincts are casted out as psychos or lunatics or strangers or just plain different. Crazy, strange, weird, wild, these words are not bad or degrading. If humans were let to live how we would naturally, it would be chaos and anarchy and the human race wouldn't probably

last that long, but hey guess what, that's how it's supposed to be!!!! Societies and government are only created to have order and calmness, which is exactly the opposite of pure human nature. Take away all your laws and morals and just see what you can do. If the government was one entity it would be thinking, "hey, let's make some order here and calm these crazy fucks down so we can be constructive and fight other governments in our own little so-called self-created "civilized world" and get rid of all those damn instincts everyone has." Bullshit. I'm too tired to write anymore tonight, so until next time, fuck you all.

May 9th, 1998

It has been confirmed, after getting my yearbook and watching people like [censored] and [censored] the human race isn't worth fighting for, only worth killing. Give the Earth back to the animals, they deserve it infinitely more than we do. Nothing means anything anymore, most quotes are worthless, especially the rearranged ones like "don't fight your enemies, make your enemies fight." You know, quotes that use the same phrase just rearranged, dumb fuck shit [illegible]. It's funny, people say "you shouldn't be so different" to me, and 1ST I say fuck you don't tell me what I should and shouldn't be and 2ND mother fuckers different is good, I don't want to be like you or anyone which is almost impossible this day with all the little shits trying to be "original copycats", I expect shits like you to criticize anyone who isn't one your social words; "normal" or "civilized" – see: *Tempest* and Caliban¹⁸. All you degrading worthless shits. All caught up and brainwashed into the 90's society. "What? You AR-EN'T going to college, are you crazy?" Holy SHIT that is one fucking BIG quote that just proves my point. Step back and look at yourself fuckers, I dare you, maybe I'll get lucky and you'll step back to far like Nick in E1m3¹⁹ with the same consequence.

18. Caliban is the deformed son of the witch Sycorax in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

19. A possible reference to a *Doom* level. It's not clear who Nick is.

May 20th, 1998

Wooh, different pen. HA! Alright you pathetic fools listen up; I have figured it out. The human race strives for excellence in life and community always wanting to bring more =good= into the community. And nullify =bad= things. Anyone who thinks differently than the majority or the leader is deemed “unusual” or weird or crazy. People want to be a part of something, a family, a service, a club, a union, a community, whatever. That’s what humans want. Who cares what you as an individual thinks, you must do what you are told, whether it is jump off a bridge or drive on the right side of the road. Protesters in the past protested because the human race that was dominant (Ghandhi and the Brits or the King or the Americans) wasn’t working out = they had fault = they failed = their ideas didn’t work. Humans don’t change that much, they only get better technology to do their work quicker / easier. People always say we shouldn’t be racist. Why not? Blacks ARE different. Like it or not. They are. They started out on the bottom so why not keep ’em there. It took them centuries to convince us that they are equal but they still use their color as an excuse, or they just discriminate us because we are white. Fuck you, we should ship yer black asses back to Afri-*fuckin*-ca were you came from. We brought you here and we will take you back. America = white. Gays.... Well all gays, ALL gays, should be killed. Mit keine fragen²⁰. Lesbians are fun to watch if they are hot but still, its not human. It’s a fucking disease. You don’t see bulls or roosters trying to fuck, do you? No, I didn’t think so. Women, you will always be under men. It’s been seen throughout nature, males are almost

20. German (word for word): with no questions. Improved: Ohne Fragen (without questions).

always doing the dangerous shit while the women stay back. It's your animal instincts, deal with it or commit suicide, just do it quick. That's all for now.

June 12th, 1998

If you recall your history the Nazis came up with a “final solution” to the Jewish problem. Kill them all.²¹ Well, in case you haven’t figured it out yet, I say “KILL MANKIND.” No one should survive. We all live in lies. People are always saying they want to live in a perfect society, well utopia doesn’t exist. It is human to have flaws. You know what, fuck it, why should I have to explain myself to you survivors when half of this shit I say you shitheads won’t understand and if you can then woopie fucking do. That just means you have something to say as my reason for killing. And the majority of the audience won’t even understand my motives either! They’ll say “ah, he’s crazy, he’s insane, worthless! All you fuckers should die! DIE! What the fuck is the point if only *some* people see what I am saying, there will always be ones who don’t, ones that are to dumb or naive or ignorant or just plain retarded. If I can’t pound it into every single person’s head then it is pointless. Fuck money fuck justice fuck morals fuck civilized fuck rules fuck laws... DIE manmade words... people think they apply to everything when they don’t / can’t. There’s no such thing as True Good or True evil, it’s all relative to the observer. It’s just all nature, chemistry, and math. Deal with it. But since dealing with it seems impossible for mankind, since we have to slap warning labels on nature, then... you die, burn, melt, evaporate, decay. Just go the fuck away. YAAAAAH!!!

21. Dylan Klebold’s mother was Jewish. Judy Brown recounted a segment of the *Basement Tapes* when Dylan distances himself from his Jewish background, as if not to upset Eric.

“When in doubt, confuse the hell out of the enemy.”²²
Fly²³ 9/2/98²⁴

KEIN MITLEID²⁵ wait, mercy doesn't exist....

22. Compare with Mark Twain: “When in doubt tell the truth. It will confound your enemies and astound your friends.”

23. Fly could be short for Flynn Taggart, the protagonist in the *Doom* novels by Dafydd ab Hugh and Brad Linaweaver.

24. At the time of Eric's entry, this date was in the future.

25. German: No mercy. Eric listened to German rock band KMFDM, which is an acronym for *Kein Mitleid für die Mehrheit* (no mercy for the majority).

June 13th, 1998

Here's something to chew on...: today I saw a program on the Discovery Channel about satellites and radar and aircraft and stuff, and at the end of the show the narrator said some things that made me think "damn, we are so advanced, we kick ass, America is awesome, we have so many things in our military, we would kick anyone's ass." For a minute I actually had some pride in our nation... Then I realized, "hey, this is only the GOOD things that I am seeing here. Only the pros, not the cons. Maybe that's what people see, only the pros, and that's why they are under control, but me, I see all... You can only blind me for so long, but alas, I have realized that Yes, the human race is still indeed doomed. It just needs a few kick starts, like me, and hell, maybe even [censored]. If I can wipe a few cities off the map, and even the fuckhead holding the map, then great. Hmm, just thinking if I want ALL humans dead or maybe just the quote-unquote "civilized, developed, and known-of" places on Earth, maybe leave little tribes of natives in the rain forest or something. Hmm, I'll think about that. Eh, done for tonight. -REB-

July 29th, 1998

As part of the human race, and having the great pleasure of being blessed with a brain, I can think. Humans can do whatever they want. There are no laws of nature that prevent humans from making choices. Maybe from actually DOING some of those choices, but not from making the choice. If a man chooses to speed while driving home one day then it is his fault for whatever happens. If he crashes into a school bus full of kiddies and they all burn to death, it's his fault. It's only a tragedy if you think it is, and then it's only a tragedy in *your* own mind so you shouldn't expect others to think that way also. It could also be a miracle for another person. Maybe that bus stopped the car from plowing into a little old lady walking on the sidewalk, one could think it was a "miracle" that she wasn't hit. You see, anything and everything that happens in our world is just that, a HAPPENING. Anything else is relative to the observer, but yet we try to have a "universal law" or "code" of what is good and bad and that just isn't fucking correct. We shouldn't be allowed to do that. We aren't GODS, just because we are at the top of the food chain with our technology doesn't mean we can be "judges" of nature. Sure we can think what we want, but you can "think" and "behave" you can judge people and nature all you want, but you are still wrong! Why should your morals apply to everyone else. "Morals" is just another word, and that's it. I think we are all a waste of natural resources and should be killed off, and since humans have the ability to choose... and I'm human... I think I will choose to kill and damage as much as nature allows me to. So take that, fuck you, and eat napalm + lead! HA! Only nature can stop me. I know I could get shot by a cop after only killing a single person, but hey guess the fuck WHAT! I chose to kill that one person so get over

it! It's MY fault! Not my parents, not my brothers, not my friends, not my favorite bands, not computer games, not the media. IT is MINE! Go shut the fuck up! –REB–

October 23rd, 1998

Someone's bound to say "what were they thinking?" when we go NBK or when we were planning it, so this is what I am thinking. "I have a goal to destroy as much as possible so I must not be sidetracked by my feelings of sympathy, mercy, or any of that, so I will force myself to believe that everyone is just another monster from *Doom* like FH²⁶ or FS²⁷ or demons, so it's either me or them. I have to turn off my feelings."²⁸ Keep this in mind, I want to burn the world, I want to kill everyone except about 5 people, who I will name later, so if you are reading this you are lucky you escaped my rampage because I wanted to kill you. It will be very tricky getting all of our supplies, explosives, weaponry, ammo, and then hiding it all and then actually planting it all so we can achieve our goal. But if we get busted any time, we start killing then and there, just like Wilks from the ALIENS books²⁹, I ain't going out without a fight.

Once I finally start my killing, keep this in mind, there are probably about 100 people max in the school alone who I don't want to die, the rest, MUST FUCKING DIE! If I didn't like you or if you pissed me off and lived through my attacks, consider yourself one lucky god damn NIGGER. Pity that a lot of the dead will be a waste in some ways, like dead hot chicks who were still bitches, they could have been

26. Former Human, an enemy in the computer game *Doom*.

27. Former Sergeant, an enemy in *Doom*.

28. In order to kill, Eric has to dehumanize his victims and psychologically desensitize himself. Soldiers who go to war submit themselves to the same processes. Evidence that Eric was not born a psychopath.

29. Refers either to the comic books by Mark Verheiden, or the 1992 novel *Aliens: Earth Hive* based on the comics, by Steve Perry. Since Eric devoured so much literature, he probably meant the novel.

good fucks. Oh well, too fucking bad. Life isn't fair.... Not by a long fucking shot when I'm at the wheel, too. God I want to torch and level everything in this whole fucking area but bombs of that size are hard to make, and plus I would need a fucking fully loaded A-10³⁰ to get every store on Wadsworth³¹ and all the buildings downtown. Heh, imagine THAT you fuckers, picture half of Denver on fire³² just from me and Vodka. Napalm on sides of skyscrapers and car garages blowing up from exploded gas tanks.... Oh man that would be beautiful.

30. A close air support fighter plane, the Fairchild Republic A-10 Thunderbolt II. Eric would have known about it because his father Wayne Harris was an Air Force test pilot. Briggs and Blevins, "Columbine—Tragedy and Recovery: A Boy with Many Sides."

31. Wadsworth Boulevard, Denver, Colorado.

32. Eric regularly discussed bigger attacks. His day planner contained a list of United States population statistics and he had crossed out the first several digits of Colorado's population size, leaving the number 47. Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, "Columbine Documents," 26059.

November 1st, 1998

You know what, I feel like telling about lies. I lie a lot. Almost constant, and to everybody, just to keep my own ass out of the water. And by the way (side note) I don't think I am doing this for attention, as some people may think. Let's see, what are some big lies I have told; "yeah I stopped smoking," "for doing it not for getting caught," "no I haven't been making more bombs," "no I wouldn't do that," and of course, countless of other ones, and yeah I know that I hate liars and I am one myself, oh fucking well. It's ok if I am a hypocrite, but no one else, because I am higher than you people, no matter what you say if you disagree I would shoot you. And I am one racist mother fucker too, fuck the niggers and spics and chinks, unless they are cool, but sometimes they are so fucking retarded they deserve to be ripped on. Some people go through life begging to be shot, and white fucks are just the same. If I could nuke the world I would, because so far I hate you all. There are probably around 10 people I wouldn't want to die, but hey, who ever said life is fair should be shot like the others too.

November 8th, 1998

Heh heh heh. I sure had fun this weekend. Let's see, what *really* happened. Before going to Rock-n-Bowl³³ we stopped by King Soopers³⁴ and me and [censored] picked up some big ass stogies. We then went to Rock-n-Bowl and I had a few cigarettes and one of my brand new cigars. We then went back to [censored] house where her mom had previously bought us all a fuck load of liquor. Personally I had asked for Tequila and Irish cream, Vodka got his Vodka, and there was beer, whiskey, schnapps, puckers, scotch, and of course, orange juice! So we had some fun there playing cards and making drinks. We eventually made it to bed at about 5 AM. Got up at 10, went to Safeway³⁵ got some doughnuts and then I took Vodka home. The bottle of Tequila is almost full and is in my car, right by my spare tire and right by the bottle of Irish cream. Heh heh. I'll have to find a spot for those. And by the way, this Nazi report³⁶ is boosting my love of killing even more. Like the early Nazi government, my brain is like a sponge, sucking up everything that sounds cool and leaving out all that is worthless. That's how Nazism was formed, and that's how I will be too!³⁷

33. Rock-n-Bowl, the bowling franchise at Bellevue Lanes. "Harris' style was odd: he would pick the lightest ball in the place, an eight-pounder, then heave it from his chest down the alley. It was loud but he got strikes." Briggs and Blevins, "Columbine — Tragedy and Recovery: A Boy with Many Sides."

34. King Soopers, a grocery store franchise.

35. Safeway, another grocery store.

36. For his writing class, Eric wrote a report on *The Nazi Culture*. Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, "Columbine Documents," 25964–78.

37. In that Nazi report, Eric cited, "Women who had 'many miscarriages, or who brought deformed, sick, or sickly children into the world' were considered inferior (Moose 37)." By this measure, his own

November 12th, 1998

Fuck you Brady³⁸! All I want is a couple of guns, and thanks to your fucking bill I will probably not get any! Come on, I'll have a clean record and I only want them for personal protection. It's not like I'm some psycho who would go on a shooting spree.... Fuckers. I'll probably end up nuking everything and fucking robbing some gun collector's house. Fuck, that'll be hard. Oh well, just as long as I kill a lot of fucking people. Everyone is always making fun of me because of how I look, how fucking weak I am and shit, well I will get you all back, ultimate fucking revenge here. You people could have shown more respect, treated me better, asked for my knowledge or guidance more, treated me more like a senior, and maybe I wouldn't have been so ready to tear your fucking heads off. Then again, I have *always* hated how I looked, I make fun of people who look like me, sometimes without even thinking sometimes just because I want to rip on myself. That's where a lot of my hate grows from.³⁹ The fact that I have practically no self-esteem, especially concerning girls and looks and such. Therefore people make fun of me... constantly... Therefore I get no respect and therefore I get fucking PISSED. As of this date I have enough explosions to kill about 100 people, and then if I get a couple bayonets, swords, axes, what-

mother would have been considered inferior, because Eric came into the world with a chest deformity. It is possible that Eric projected his own perceived inferiority outwardly and that the Nazi examples helped him in doing so. See also his May 9th reference to Caliban, the deformed son of a witch.

38. Reference to the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act.

39. Another example of Eric's inferiority complex, his outward projection thereof and how it fed into his hate.

ever I'll be able to kill at least 10 more. And that just isn't enough!

Guns! I *need* guns! Give me some fucking firearms!

November 17th, 1998

HATE! I'm full of hate and I love it. I HATE PEOPLE and they better fucking fear me if they know what's good for 'em. Yes I hate and I guess I want others to know it, yes I'm a racist and I don't mind. Niggs and spics bring it on to themselves, and another thing, I am very racist towards white trash P.O.S.'s like [censored] and [censored]. They deserve the hatred, otherwise I probably wouldn't hate them. It's a tragedy, the human nature of people will lead to their downfall. People's human nature will get them killed. Whether by me or Vodka, it's happened before, and not just in school shootings like those pussy dumbasses over in Minnesota who squealed. Throughout history, its our fucking nature! I know how people are and why and I can't stand it! I love the Nazis too... by the way, I fucking can't get enough of the swastika, the SS, and the iron cross.⁴⁰ Hitler and his head boys fucked up a few times and it cost them the war, but I love their beliefs and who they were, what they did, and what they wanted. I know that form of government couldn't have lasted long once the human equation was brought in, but damn it, it sure looked good. Every form of government leads to downfalls, everything will always fuck up or yeah something. It's all doomed, god damn it. This is beginning to make me get in a corner. I'm showing too much of myself, my views and thoughts, people might start to wonder, smart ones will get nosy and something might happen to fuck me over, I might need to put on one helluva mask here to fool you all some more. Fuck fuck fuck. It'll be very fucking hard to hold out until April. If people would give me more compliments all of this

40. In his room, Eric kept a knife with a swastika symbol carved on its sheave.

might still be avoidable... but probably not. Whatever I do people make fun of me, and sometimes directly to my face. I'll get revenge soon enough. Fuckers shouldn't have ripped on me so much huh! Ha! Then again it's human nature to do what you did... so I guess I am also attacking the human race. I can't take it, it's not right... true... correct... perfect. I fucking hate the human equation. Nazism would be fucking great if it weren't for individualism and our natural instinct to ask questions. You know what maybe I just need to get laid. Maybe that'll just change some shit around. That's another thing, I am a fucking dog. I have fantasies of just taking someone and fucking them hard and strong. Someone like [censored] where I just pick her up, take her to my room, tear off her shirt and pants and just eat her out and fuck her hard. I love flesh... Weisses fleisch! Dein weisses fleisch erregt mich so, Ich bin doch u rein Gigolo!⁴¹ I want to grab a few different girls in my gym class, take them into a room, pull their pants off and fuck them hard. I love flesh... the smooth legs, the large breasts, the innocent flawless body, the eyes, the hair, jet black, blond, white, brown, ahhh I just want to fuck! Call it teenager hormones or call it a crazy fucking racist rapist. Es ist mir egal.⁴² I just want to be surrounded by the flesh of a woman, someone like [censored] who I wanted to just fuck like hell, she made me practically drool, when she wore those shorts to work... instant hard on... I couldn't stop staring. And others like [censored] in my gym class, [censored] or whatever in my gym class, and others who I just want to overpower and engulf myself in them. Mmm. I can taste the sweet flesh now... the salty sweet, the animalistic movement... icchhhh... lieeebe..... fleiscchhhh.⁴³ ("Weiss-

41. Lines from the Rammstein song *Weißes Fleisch*.

42. German: I don't care.

43. German: I... love... flesh.

es fleisch” – perfect song for me.)⁴⁴ Who can I trick into my room first? I can sweep someone off their feet, tell them what they want to hear, be all nice and sweet, and then “fuck ’em like an animal, feel them from the inside”⁴⁵ as Reznor⁴⁶ said. Oh – that’s something else... that one NIN⁴⁷ video I saw, “Broken” or “Closer”⁴⁸ or something. The one where the guy is kidnapped and tortured like hell... actual hell. I want to do that too. I want to tear a throat out with my own teeth like a pop can. I want to gut someone with my hand, to tear a head off and rip out the heart and lungs from the neck, to stab someone in the gut, shove it up to their heart, and yank the fucking blade out of their rib cage! I want to grab some weak little freshman and just tear them apart like a wolf, show them who is god. Strangle them, squish their head, bite their temples in the skull, rip off their jaw, rip off their collar bones, break their arms in half and twist them around, the lovely sounds of bones cracking and flesh ripping, ahhh... so much to do and so little chances.⁴⁹

44. The song by Rammstein.

45. Lines from *I Want to Fuck You Like an Animal* by Nine Inch Nails, a rock band.

46. Trent Reznor of Nine Inch Nails.

47. Acronym for Nine Inch Nails.

48. Songs by Nine Inch Nails.

49. Do these gory details remind of Eric’s own chest surgery? Depending on the method, surgical correction of Eric’s inclined chest could have been extremely invasive and painful.

November 22nd, 1998

Well folks, today was a very important day in the history of R⁵⁰. Today, along with Vodka and someone else⁵¹ who I won't name, we went downtown and purchased the following; a double barrel 12 ga. Shotgun, a pump action 12 ga. Shotgun, a 9mm carbine, 250 9mm rounds, 15 12 ga slugs, 40 shotgun shells, 2 switch blade knives, and a total of 4 10-round clips for the carbine. We..... Have..... GUNS! We fucking got 'em you sons of bitches! HA!! HAHahaha! Neener! Booga Booga. Heh. It's all over now, this capped it off, the point of no return, I have my carbine, shotgun, ammo and knife all in my trunk tonight and they'll stay there till tomorrow... after school you know, its really a shame. I had a lot of fun at that gun show, I would have loved it if you were there dad. We would have done some major bonding. Would have been great. Oh well. But alas, I fucked up and told [censored] about my flask. That really disappointed me. [censored] I know you thought it was good for me in the long run and all that shit, smart of you to give me such a big raise and then rat me out, you figure it was supposed to cancel each other? God damn flask, that just fucked me over bigtime. Now you all will be on my ass even more than before about being on track.⁵² I'll get around it though. If have to cheat and lie to everyone then that's fine. THIS is what I am motivated for, THIS is my goal. THIS is what I want "to do with my life". You know what's weird, I don't feel like punching through

50. R for Reb, or Rebel, Eric's nickname.

51. Robyn Anderson, a mutual friend who helped them acquire their first guns because she was 18 while Eric and Dylan were 17.

52. He means 'on track with his life', Eric's father Wayne Harris was very strict. Cullen, *Columbine*, 112.

a door because of the flask deal⁵³, probably cause I am fucking armed. I feel more confident, stronger, more God-like. I have confidence in my ability to deceive people. Hopefully I'll make it to April, but that might not happen. Ug, its been a busy weekend, I need to sleep, I'll continue tomorrow.

53. Eric would sometimes express his suppressed anger at work or school by punching into a wall, but never in front of his parents. *Ibid.*, 218.

December 3rd, 1998

Yesterday we fired our first firearms ever. 3 rounds from the carbine. Taught that ground a thing or 2. I even had the 2 clips in my pocket while talking to Vodka's dad about senior ditch day. God it felt great firing off that bad boy, and hopefully I'll be able to get more than just 4 clips for it. I dubbed my shotgun "Arlene" after Arlene Sanders⁵⁴ from the *Doom* books. She always did love the shotgun. Vodka's DB⁵⁵ is looking fucking awesome, all cut down to the proper lengths. This is a bitch trying to keep up with homework while working on my guns, bombs, and lying. By the way, I bought that flask⁵⁶ in the mall and I had a friend fill it up with scotch whiskey, only had about 3 swigs in the 3 weeks I had it. Plus Monday I gave my T⁵⁷ and IC⁵⁸ to Vodka, just in case. I never really did like alcohol, just wasn't my thing, but it felt good to just have around. That argument on the 22nd⁵⁹ was a real bitch, but I think I should have won a fucking Oscar. I even quoted a few movies, remember "what the hell am I gonna do now man?! What am I gonna do!?" That's good ole Hudson from "Aliens."⁶⁰ Sounded good too. And hey god damn it I would have been a fucking great marine⁶¹. It would have give me a reason to do good. And I would never drink and drive, either. It will be weird when we actually go on the rampage.

54. A protagonist in the *Doom* novels by Dafydd ab Hugh and Brad Linaweaver.

55. DB, their double-barrel shotgun.

56. The same flask mentioned in the November 22nd entry.

57. Tequila.

58. Irish Cream.

59. The argument with his father Wayne Harris over his flask.

60. A character in the 1986 film *Aliens* by James Cameron.

61. Eric Harris had tried to enroll for the Marine Corps. The protagonist in the *Doom* video games is also a marine.

Hopefully we will have plenty of clips and bombs. I'm gonna still try and get my calico 9mm. Just think, 100 rounds without reloading.... Hell yeah!

We actually may have a chance to get some machine pistols thanks to the Brady bill. If we can save up about 200\$ real quick and find someone who is 21+ we can go to the next gun show and find a private dealer and buy ourselves some bad-ass AB-10 machine pistols. Clips for those things can get really fucking big too.

December 17th, 1998

Woohoo, I'll never have to take a final again! Feels good to be free. I just love Hobbes and Nietzsche. Well tomorrow I'll be ordering 9 more 10-round clips for my carbine. I'm gonna be so fucking loaded in about a month. The big things we need to figure out now is the time bombs for the commons⁶² and how we will get them in and leave them there to go off, without any fucking Jews finding them. I wonder if anyone will write a book on me. Sure is a ton of symbolism, double meanings, themes, appearance vs reality shit going on here. Oh well, it better be fucking good if it is written.

62. Columbine High School cafeteria.

December 20th, 1998

Heh, get this. KMFDM's new album's entitled "Adios" and its release date is in April. How fucking appropriate, a subliminal final "Adios" tribute to Reb and Vodka, thanks KMFDM... I ripped the hell outta the system.

December 29th, 1998

Jesus Christ that was fucking close. Fucking shitheads at the gunshop almost dropped the whole project.⁶³ Oh well, thank god I can BS⁶⁴ so fucking well. I went and picked up those babies today, so now I got 13 of those niggers WOOHAH. The stereo is very nice, but having no insurance payments to worry about so I could concentrate of BOMBS would have been better. Oh well, I think I'll have enough. Now I just need to get Vodka another gun.

63. Eric's father Wayne Harris picked up the phone, but neither end asked any further questions. Cullen, *Columbine*, 295.

64. Bullshit.

April 3rd, 1999

Months have passed. It's the first Friday night in the final month. Much shit has happened. Vodka has a Tec 9⁶⁵, we test fired all of our babies, we have 6 time clocks ready, 39 crickets, 24 pipe bombs, and the napalm is under construction. Right now I'm trying to get fucked and trying to finish off these time bombs. NBK came quick, why the fuck can't I get any? I mean, I'm nice and considerate and all that shit, but nooooo. I think I try too hard. But I kinda need to, considering NBK is closing in. The amount of dramatic irony and foreshadowing is fucking amazing. Everything I see and hear I incorporate into NBK somehow. Either bombs, clocks, guns, napalm, killing people, any and everything finds some tie to it. Feels like a goddamn movie sometimes. I wanna try to put some mines and trip bombs around this town too maybe. Get a few extra frags on the scoreboard. I hate you people for leaving me out of so many fun things. And no don't fucking say "well that's your fault" because it isn't, you people had my phone#, and I asked and all, but no. No no no don't let the weird looking Eric KID come along, ooh fucking nooo.

65. Michael Douglas carries a TEC-9 gun in the 1993 movie *Falling Down*, as well as a sawed off shotgun, also used by the Columbine killers. C. Shepard, "Movies, Films and Plays about School Shootings," <http://www.acolumbinesite.com/films.html>.

Transcript of Dylan Klebold's Journal

Below is my original transcription of Dylan Klebold's journal, with notes, and I improved punctuation, spelling and capitalization to make the text easier to read. Dylan used several drawings or pictographs that had meaning to him, but I did not reproduce them.

Fact: People are so unaware.... well, Ignorance is bliss I guess.... that would explain my depression. —Dylan

A Virtual Book

EXISTENCES

By: Dylan

Properties: This book cannot be opened by anyone not Dylan. (Some supernatural force blocks common people from entering)

March 31st, 1997

Life-existence

EL THOUGHTZOS

Ah yes, this is me writing... just writing, nobody technically did anything, just I felt like throwing out my thoughts—this is a weird time, weird life, weird existence. As I sit here (partially drunk with a screwdriver) I think a lot. Think... think... that's all my life is, just shit loads of thinking... all the time... my mind never stops... music runs 24/7 (except for sleep), just songs I hear, not necessarily good or bad, & thinking... about the asshole [censored by Jefferson County Sheriff's Office] in gym class, how he worries me, about driving, & my family, about friends & doing things with them, about girls I know (mainly [censored] & [censored]) how I know I can never have them, yet I can still dream... I do shit to supposedly 'cleanse' myself in a spiritual, moral sort of way (deleting the wads¹ on my computer, not getting drunk for periods of time, trying not to ridicule / make fun of people ([censored]) at school), yet it does nothing to help my life—morally. My existence is shit to me—[thought picture] how I feel that I am in eternal suffering, in infinite directions in infinite realities—yet these realities are fake—artificial, induced by thought, how everything connects, yet it's *all* so far apart.... & I sit & think... Science is the way to find solutions to everything, right? I still think that, yet I see different views of shit now—like the mind—yet if the mind is viewed scientifically... Hmm I dwell in the past... thinking of good & bad memories.

1. Level designs for the computer game *Doom*.

A lot on the past though... I've always had a thing for the past—how it reacts to the present & the future—or rather vice versa. I wonder how/when I got so fucked up with my mind, existence, problem – when Dylan Benet² Klebold got covered up by this entity containing Dylan's body... as I see the people at school—some good, some bad—I see how different I am (aren't we all you'll say) yet I'm on such a greater scale of difference than everyone else (as far as I know, or guess). I see jocks having fun, friends, women, LIVEZ.

Or rather shallow existences compared to mine (maybe) like ignorance = bliss. They don't know beyond this world (how I do in my mind or in reality, or in this existence) yet we each are lacking something that the other possesses—I lack the true human nature that Dylan owned, & they lack the overdeveloped mind / imagination / knowledge tool. I don't fit in. The thinking of suicide gives me hope, that I'll be in my place wherever I go after this life... that I'll finally not be at war with myself, the world, the universe—my mind, body, everywhere, everything at PEACE in me—my soul (existence). & the routine is still monotonous, go to school, be scared & nervous, somewhat hoping that people can accept me... that I can accept them... the NIN³ song Piggy is good for thought writing... *The Lost Highway*⁴ sounds like a movie about me...⁵ I'm gonna write later, bye.

2. Bennet.

3. Nine Inch Nails, a rock band.

4. *The Lost Highway* (1997) by David Lynch.

5. In this film, a devil figure murders the wife of protagonist Fred, who is bored with his dull life and uninspiring sex life. The devil figure met Fred at a party and said that he never enters someone's life uninvited. After the death of his wife, the police arrest Fred and a court sentences him to death. In his cell, Fred then transforms into another person, Pete. Pete is a younger man with a thrilling life. Near the end of the movie, Pete turns back into Fred. While driving down a 'lost'

April 15th, 1997

Poetry? My way

Da ThoughtZ Yeah

Well well, back at it, *yes* (you say) whoever the fuck 'you' is, but yeah. My life is still fucked, in case you care... maybe,... (not?) I have just lost fucking 45\$, & before that I lost my zippo & knife (I did get those back). Why the fuck is he being such an ASSHOLE???. (God I guess, whoever is the being which controls shit.) He's fucking me over big time & it pisses me off. Oooh god I HATE my life, I want to die really bad right now—let's see what I have that's good: A nice family, a good house, food, a couple good friends, & possessions. What's bad—no girls (friends or girlfriends), no other friends except a few, nobody accepting me even though I want to be accepted, me doing badly & being intimidated in any & all sports, [thought picture] me looking weird & acting *shy*—BIG problem, me getting bad grades, having no ambition of life, that's the big shit. Anyway... I was Mr. Cutter⁶ tonight—I have 11 depressioners on my right hand now, & my favorite contrasting symbol, because it is so true & means so much [points to pictograph]. The battle between good & bad never ends... OK enough bitching... well I'm not done yet. OK go... I don't know why I do wrong with people (mainly women)—it's like they are set out to hate & ignore me. I never know what to say or do. [censored] is soo fucking lucky he has no idea how I suffer...

highway, Fred's skin burns up, as if burning in hell for having sold his soul to the devil. Perhaps Dylan also felt trapped in a boring life, equally willing to die for a few short moments excitement—if so, his wish came true on April 20th, 1999.

6. Mr. Cutter, Dylan probably cut himself by accident.

OK here's some poetry.... this is a display of one man in search of answers, never finding them, yet in hopelessness understands things...

Existence.... what a strange word. He, set out by determination & curiosity, knows no existence, knows nothing relevant to himself. The petty declarations of others & everything on this world, in this world, he knows the answers to. Yet they have no purpose to him. He seeks knowledge of the unthinkable, of the undefineable, of the unknown. He explores the everything... using his mind, the most powerful tool known to him. Not a physical barrier blocking the limits of exploration, time thru thought thru dimensions... the everything is his realm. Yet, the more he thinks, hoping to find answers to his questions, the more come up. Amazingly, the petty things mean much to him at this time, how he wants to be normal, not this transceiver of the everything. Then occurring to him, the answer. How everything is connected yet separate. By experiencing the petty others' actions, reactions, emotions, doings, and thoughts, he gets a mental picture of what, in his mind, is a cycle.

Existence is a great hall, life is one of the rooms, death is passing thru the doors, & the ever-existent compulsion of everything is the curiosity to keep moving down the hall, thru the doors, exploring rooms, down this never-ending hall. Questions make answers, answers conceive questions, and at long last he is content. TTYL⁷

7. Talk to you later.

May 21st, 1997

My thoughtz shit
Thoughtz

Yo... whassup... Heeheehe... Know what's weird? *Everyone* knows *everyone*. I swear—like I'm an outcast, & everyone is conspiring against me... Check it... (this isn't good, but I need to write, so here....)

Within the known limits of time... within the conceived boundaries of space.... the average human thinks those are the settings of existence... Yet the ponderer, the outcast, the believer, helps out the human. "Think not of 2 dimensions," says the ponderer, "but of 3, as your world is conceived of 3 dimensions, so is mine. While you explore the immediate physical boundaries of your body, you see in your 3 dimensions—L, W, & H. Yet I, who is more mentally open to anything, see my 3 dimensions, my realm of thought—Time, Space, & THOUGHT. Thought is the most powerful thing that exists—anything conceivable can be produced, anything & everything is possible, even in your physical world." After this so called "lecture" the common man feels confused, empty, & unaware. Yet those are the best emotions of a ponderer. The real difference is, a true ponderer will explore these emotions & what caused them. Another... a dream.

Miles & miles of never ending grass, like a wheat. A farm, sunshine, a happy feeling in the presence. *Absolutely* nothing wrong, nothing ever is, contrary 180° to normal life. No awareness, just pure bliss, unexplainable bliss. The only challenges are no challenge, & then.... [pictograph of a wall] BAM!!! realization sets in, the world is the greatest punishment. Life.

Hypnosis place—It is a sky—with one large cloud, & sort of a cloud-made chair—the sun is at the head of the chair... 10 o'clock up into the sky... Below, I sometimes see myself, & the *green* (forest green) Earth—sort of a city, yet I hear nothing. I relax on this chair—actually like a chaise—and I am talking... to *what*? I don't know—it's just there, I have the feeling that I know him, even though I consciously don't... & we talk like we are the same person—like he's my soul....

[pictograph of a 'thought box'] The everlasting contrast....

Dark. Light. God. Lucifer. Heaven. Hell. GOOD. BAD. Yes, the ever-lasting contrast. Since existence has known, the 'fight' between good & evil has continued. Obviously, this fight can never end. Good things turn bad, bad things become good, the 'people' on the earth see it as a battle they can win. HA fucking morons. If people looked at History, they would see what happens. I think, too much, I understand, I am GOD compared to some of those un-existable brainless zombies. Yet, the actions of them interest me, like a kid with a new toy. Another contrast, more of a paradox, actually, like the advanced go for the undevelopeds realm, while *some* of the morons become everything dwellers—but, exceptions to every rule, & this is a BIG exception—most morons never change, they never decide to live in the 'everything' frame of mind!

Laterz

July 23rd, 1997

A changing time

<<-VoDkA->>'s Thoughts

The [censored]⁸ Situation

It is not good for me right now (like it ever is)... but anyway... My best friend ever: the friend who shared, experimented, laughed, took chances with & appreciated me more than any friend ever did has been ordained.... "passed on"... in my book. Ever since [censored]⁹ (who I wouldn't mind killing) has loved him... that's the only place he's been with her... If anyone had any idea how sad I am... I mean we were the TEAM. When him & I first were friends, well I finally found someone who was like me: who appreciated me & shared very common interests. Ever since 7th grade, I've felt lonely.... When [censored] came around, I finally felt happiness (sometimes). We did cigars, drinking, sabotage to houses, EVERYTHING for the first time together & now that he's "moved on" I feel so lonely, without a friend. Oh well, maybe he'll come around... I hope.

That's all for this topic... maybe I'll never see this again...

My 1st Love???

OH my God..... I am almost sure I am in love... with [censored]¹⁰. Hehehe... such a strange name, like mine... Yet

8. "Zack"; Zack Heckler, a friend of Eric and Dylan.

9. "Devon"; Devon Adams.

10. "Harriet"; nobody named Harriet came forward since the attacks. Peter Langman believes Dylan meant Sasha Jacobs, because after the attacks she reported to have dated Dylan. I find that unbelievable considering how much Dylan wrote about not getting a girl. Another possibility is that Harriet is derived from *Harris* — Eric Harris. As we will see, Dylan left a number of clues in his following entries that he may in fact have meant Eric.

everything about her I love. From her good body to her (almost) perfect face, her charm, her wit & cunning, her NOT being popular, her friends (who I know)—some. I just hope she likes me as much as I LOVE her. I think of her every second of every day. I want to be with her. I imagine me & her doing things together, the sound of her laugh, I picture her face, I love her. If soulmates exist, then I think I've found mine. I hope she likes Techno....

[censored], I love you

—Dylan

September 5th, 1997

Life, sucks

My thoughts

Oooh god I want to die sooo bad... such a sad, desolate, lonely, unsalvageable I feel I am... not fair, NOT FAIR!!! I want-ed happiness!! I never got it... Let's sum up my life... the most miserable existence in the history of time.... My best friend has ditched me forever, but in bettering himself & having / enjoying / taking for granted his love.... I've NEVER been this... not 100 times near this... they look at me [censored] like I'm a stranger.... I helped them both out thru life, & they left me in the abyss of suffering when I gave them the boost out. The one who I thought was my true love, [censored], is not. Such a shell of what I want the most... The meanest trick was played on me—a fake love.... She in reality doesn't give a good fuck about me... doesn't even know me.... I have no happiness, no ambitions, no friends, & no LOVE!!! [censored] can get me that gun I hope, I wan to use it on a poor SOB. I know... his name is vodka, Dylan is his name too.¹¹ What else can I do / give... I stopped the pornography. I try not to pick on people. Obviously at least one power is against me. [censored]... funny how I've been thinking about her over the last few days... giving myself fake realities that she, others MIGHT have liked me, just a bit... my bad... I have always been hated, by everyone & everything, just never aware.... Goodbye all the crushes I've ever had, just shells... images, no truths... [pictograph] BUT WHY? YES, you can read this, why did [illegible].

11. He means to use the gun on himself.

[below the pictograph] A dark time, infinite sadness, I want to find love.

Ignorance is bliss
happiness is ambition
desolation is knowledge
pain is acceptance
despair is anger
denial is helpless
martyrism is hope for others
advantages taken are causes of martyrism
revenge is sorrow
death is a reprieve
life is a punishment
others' achievements are tormentations
people are alike
I am different
—Dylan

Goodbye, sorry to everyone... I just can't take it... all the thoughts... too many... make my head twist... I must have happiness, love, peace. Goodbye

me is a god, a god of sadness
exiled to this eternal hell
the people I helped, abandon me
I am denied what I want,
to love & to be happy
being made a human
without the possibility of BEING human
the cruelest of all punishments
to some I am crazy
it is so clear, yet so foggy

everything's connected, separated
I am the only interpreter of this
I would rather have nothing than be nothing
some say godliness isn't nothing
humanity is the something I long for
I just want something I can never have¹²
the story of my existence.
—Dylan

12. May refer to the Nine Inch Nail song *Something I can never have*.

October 14th, 1997

*Fuck ev.*¹³

ThoughtZ

Me. Sorry I didn't write, A SHITLOAD in my existence ride. ok... hell & back... I've been to the zombie bliss side....¹⁴ & I hate it as much if not more than the awareness part. I'm back now.... a taste of what I thought I want... *wrong*. Possible girlfriends are coming then [censored]. I'll give the phony shit up in a second. Want TRUE love... I just want something I can never have.¹⁵

True true. I hate everything, why can't I die... not fair. I want pure bliss... to be cuddling with [censored], who I think I love deeper than ever... I was hollow, thought I was right. Another form of the Downward Spiral¹⁶... deeper & deeper it goes, to cuddle with her—to be one with her, to love, just laying there. I need a girl. This is a weird entry... I [pictograph] should feel happy, but shit brought me down. I feel terrible. The Lost Highway apparently repeats... itself.¹⁷ I won't drink now. [censored] lucky bastard gets a perfect soulmate, who he can admit FUCKING SUICIDE to & I get rejected for being honest about fucking hate for jocks.

13. Everything or everyone.

14. Refers to the 'ignorant bliss' of the "un-existable brainless zombies", namely a happily unaware and fulfilling social life, see the May 21st entry.

15. May refer to the Nine Inch Nails song *Something I can never have*.

16. *Downward Spiral*, a song and album by Nine Inch Nails.

17. As explained in the note for the March 31st entry, the protagonist in the film *The Lost Highway* transforms a man bored with his life into a man with an exciting life. Dylan thought that the movie was about him. But he believes, apparently, it repeats itself: back to the boring life and start over.

From the wrong people maybe... [censored] & [censored]
 Anyway... here are 2 poems.¹⁸

Fuck me die me

Awareness signs the warrant for suffering. Why is it that the zombies achieve something *me* wants (overdeveloped me). They can love, why can't I? The true existor lives in solitude, always aware, always infinite, always, looking, for, his love. Peace might be the ultimate destination... destination unknown.... I want happiness... Abandonment is present for the martyr. My thoughts exist in, want to live in. I want to find a room in the great hall¹⁹ & stay there with my love & never. Sadness seems infinite, & the shell of happiness shines around. Yet the true despair overcomes in this lifetime. How tragic too my FUCKING DUMASS SHITHEAD. I HATE SHIT MOTHERFUCKING GODDAMN PIECE OF DEATH THOUGHT AND NOTHING FUCK FUCK FUCK!

No emotions, not caring. Yet another stage in this shit life. Suicide... Dylan Klebold

18. Probably refers to the two poems on the page before this.

19. See the April 15th entry on the meaning of the 'great hall'.

November 3rd, 1997

Fuck all
Thoughts

Farther and farther distant... That's what's happening... me & everything that zombies consider real... just images, not life. Soon I will be at peace I hope... Burn → [pictograph of musical notes] "with all your life fucked up around you" [musical notes]. I get more depressed with each day... more shit.... & I can't ever STOP IT!!!!

Some god I am.... All people I ever might have loved have abandoned me, my parents piss me off & hate me... want me to have fucking ambition!! How can I when I get screwed & destroyed BY EVERYTHING??!!!! I have no money, no happiness, no friends... Eric will be getting further away soon... I'll have less than nothing... how normal. I wanted to love... I wanted to be happy and ambitions and free & nice & good & ignorant.... everyone abandoned me... I have small stupid pleasures... my so called hobbies & doings... those are all that's left for me... clinging onto the smallest rocks... many [pictograph] people climbing up a never ending vertical cliff.... [censored] & [censored] found a plateau to exist on... they walked up me to get to it. Nobody will help me... only exist with me if it suits them. I helped, why can't they? [censored] will get me a gun, I'll go on my killing spree against anyone I want. More crazy... deeper in the spiral, lost highway repeating²⁰, dwelling on the beautiful past ([censored] & [censored] getting drunk) with me, everyone moves on, I always stayed. Abandonment. This room sucks. Want to die.

20. His third reference to *The Lost Highway*.

Everything is as least expected. The meek are trampled on, the assholes prevail, the gods are deceiving, lost in my little insane asylum with the outhouse redneck music playing.... want to die & be free with my love... if she even exists. She probably hates me... finds a [illegible] or a jock who treats her like shit. I remember details... nothing worth remembering I remember. I don't know my love: could be [censored], or [censored], or [censored], or [censored], or anyone. I don't know & I'm sick of not knowing!! To be kept in the dark is a punishment!! I have lost my emotions... like in Hurt²¹ the song. NIN.²² People eventually find happiness I never will. Does that make me a non-human? YES. The god of sadness.... [censored] church was so fun... the rec thing with [illegible].

[various pictographs]

21. A song by Nine Inch Nails.

22. Nine Inch Nails.

January 2nd, 1998

Beerr... Man I don't know what's up lately... never do in existence. All this shit with [censored] & [censored] friends... so weird & different from past.... yet again, that's the way in existence. I wonder if I'll ever have a love... my love. [censored] got his, I don't, won't ever get mine. Here's all the people I've loved, or at least liked (or thought I loved)—all the same meaning

[a list of names and a pictograph]

[censored] is the newest... the purest (for now)... seems perfect for me... I seem perfect for her. I was delusional and thought she waved at me the last day of school. Oh well... my emotions are gone. So much past pain at once, my senses are numbed. The beauty of being numb. Laters

February 2nd, 1998

The everything

Existence... to understand

Well well... so much changes... (like existence). I understand almost everything now... so close to my love—[censored]. The runes have shown it, she has shown it, I have felt it. I know the meaning of each life: to be loved by your love, & to be happy with oneself. *Only* for the gods though (me, [censored], etc.). The zombies & their society band together & try to destroy what is superior & what they don't understand & are afraid of. Soon... either I'll commit suicide, or I'll get with [censored] & it will be NBK for us.²³ My happiness. Her happiness. NOTHING else matters. I've been caught with most of my crimes – for example drinking, smoking & the house vandalism, & the pipe bombs. If, by fate's choice, [censored] didn't love me, I'd slit my wrist & blow up atlanta²⁴ strapped to my neck. It's good, understanding a hard road since my realization, but it gets easier. BUT IT DOESN'T! That's part of existence. Unpredictable. Existence is pure hell & pure heaven at the same time. I will never stop wondering. The lost highway will never end, the music in my head will never stop... It's all part of existence. The hall will never end.²⁵ The love will always be there. GOD I LOVE HER!!! It's so great to love.

23. NBK, or Natural Born Killers, was the code word for the attacks.

"NBK for us," while referring to Harriet is strange and may be a clue that *Harriet* means Eric Harris, at least to Dylan.

24. "Eric named the bombs he built. 'Atlanta' was one of his bombs." Langman, "Dylan Klebold's Journal."

25. The great hall of life, see earlier entries.

Society is tightening its grip on me, & soon I & [censored] will snap. We will have our revenge on society, & then be free, to exist in a timeless spaceless place of pure happiness. The purpose of life is to be happy & be with your love who is equally happy. Not much more to say. Goodbye.

Almost happiness is slavery—to be real, people (gods) are slaves to the majority of zombies²⁶, but we know & love being superior.

I didn't want to be a jock. I hated the happiness that they have—& I will have something infinitely better...

I love her, & she loves me.

(By the way, some zombies are smarter than others, some manipulate ... like my parents.)

I am GOD, [censored] is GOD

the zombies will pay for their arrogance, hate, fear, abandoned, & distrust

I love you [censored]. That's all I think about anymore... I know that this humanity is almost over, that we will be free. We have proven to fate that we are the everything of purity & halcyon, & that we deserve, need, love, can't exist without each other. It's hard, I think that I might not be enough, my mind sometimes gets stuck on its own things, I think about human things—all I try to do is imagine the happiness between us. That is something we cannot even conceive in this toilet earth. The everything, the halcyon, the happiness is ours, there will be no notes from me. Let the humans suffer without my knowledge of the everything. I am trying not to think about the happiness, somehow thinking that [pictograph] will destroy it if I conceive / relish in it when I'm a human, but I love her. We are soulmates. [pictograph]

26. Dylan's frequent use of 'zombies' means the common man, including also his own parents.

I love you, [censored]

You don't consciously know who I am (please don't skip to the back: read the note as it was written), & undoubtedly unconsciously too. I, who write this, love you beyond infinity. I think about you all the time, how this world would be a better place. If you loved me as I do you. I know what you're thinking: "(some psycho wrote me this harassing letter)" I hoped we could have been together... you seem a bit like me. Pensive, quiet, an observer, not wanting what is offered here (school, life, etc.) You almost seem lonely, like me. You probably have a boyfriend though, & might not have given this note another thought. I have thought you my true love for a long time now, but... well... there was hesitation. You see I can't tell if you think of anyone as I do you, & if you did who that would be. Fate put me in need of you, yet this earth blocked that with uncertainties. I will go away soon, but I just had to write this to you, the one I truly loved. Please, for my sake, don't tell anybody about this, as it was only meant for you. Also, please don't feel any guilt about my soon-to-be "absence" of this world (it is solely my decision: no one else's) oh... the thoughts of us... doing everything together, not necessarily anything, just to be together would have been pure heaven. I guess it's time to tell you who I am. I was in a class with you 1st semester, & was blessed with being with you in a report. I still remember your laugh. Innocent, beautiful, pure. This semester I still see you—rarely. I am entranced during 5th period, as we both have it off. To most people, I appear... well... almost scary, but that's who I appear to be as people are afraid of what they don't understand. I denied who I was for a long time. Until high school....²⁷ anyway, you

27. What did he deny until high school?

have noticed me a few times, I catch every one of these gazes with an open heart. I think you know who I am by now. Unfortunately... even if you did like me even the slightest bit, you would hate me if you knew who I was. I am a criminal. I have done things that almost nobody would even think about condoning. The reason that I'm writing you now is that I have been caught for the crimes I committed, & I want to go to a new existence. You know what I mean (suicide). I have nothing to live for, & I won't be able to survive in this world after this legal conviction. However, if it was true that you loved me as I do you... I would find a way to survive. Anything to be with you. I would enjoy life knowing that you loved me. 99/100 chances you probably think I'm crazy, & want to stay as far away as possible. If that's the case, then I'm very sorry for involving an innocent person in my problems, & please don't think twice. However, if you are who I hoped for in my dreams & realities, then do me a favor: leave a piece of paper in my locker saying anything that comes to you. Well, I guess this is it—goodbye, & I love(d) you.

Dylan Klebold

June 8th, 1998

Our halcyon

I LOVE [censored]!! I love her to infinince. I look back on my awareness journey, see the parts & sections of my understanding... it's almost done, yet it is never done, I love [censored]. She is my soulmate, my love, all the imaginative halcyons & pure existences I have with her (to me) are almost happiness... I just wish I could call her... something blocks me from calling her, my human side is putting up a wall to prevent me from calling her, like a fear of "its" truth. BS. I will overcome all fears, doubts, & zombie-based thoughts (oxymoron) ... I will follow our hearts to the halcyon, loving her. I love you [censored]

June 10th, 1998

I think, don't care

Forever fate, up & down spiral

1.5 human years... so much changed in small time, my friends (at my choice) are depleting & collapsing under each other (Eric & [censored]) like I thought they would, I am ready to be with [censored]. The ups & downs of fate are forever, good & bad, equal me. The lost highway, & downward spiral never end. Existence is like infinity times itself. [pictograph of ∞ to the power of ∞] I have passed thru this much of the ever existence, this is almost a checkpoint. The zombies have set their place in my mind [pictograph] for the cliff theory [1] I've jumped off with & we've floated away to the halcyon. The zombies will pay for their being, their nature. I know everything, yet I know nothing. I am a [pictograph of a 'thought box'] true god. My infinite memories, thoughts, perceivations of purity come a lot more with her, there is *pure pure* happiness—the purpose of *our* existence. I hate, love things, hate everything, love me & [censored]. I understand that I can never ever be a zombie, even if I wanted to. The nature of my entity. Soon we will live in the halcyons of our minds, the one thing that made me a god. Things are so simple, now that they are infinitely complicated. HAHAHAHA.

I understand the everything. I am the god of the everything. Fate is my only master. This is probably my last entry. I love my self close second to [censored] my everlasting love. Goodbye.

I will never stop learning

Dylan Klebold

January 20th, 1999

This Shit

This shit again. Back at writing, doing just like a fucking zombie. Lately I can't change my mind from the fucking deeds of zombies. Earth, humanity, HERE, that's mostly what I think about. I hate it. I want to be free... free... I thought it would have been time by now. The pain multiplies infinitely, never stops (yet?) I'm here, STILL alone, still in pain, so is she. The thing I have concluded is that [pictograph resembling 'fate'] will decide when we should be together. [pictograph resembling 'fate'] Decided when our existence started, it should end the same way, with us unknowing, in limbo. I love you [censored]. Always have, will. The scenarios, images, pieces of happiness still come. They always will. I love her she loves me. I know she is tired of suffering as I am. It is time. It is time. I love her. The journey, the endless journey started, it has to end. We need to be happy to exist truly. I see her in perfection, the halcyons. I await endless purity. I exist as less than nothing without her. -O. my humanity, -O. I don't know if I should call her, or wait for [pictograph resembling 'fate'] to act. Yet, calling her is a state of humanity. I'm forever sorry, infinitely, about the pornos. My humanity has a foot fetish & bondage extreme liking. I try to thwart it, sometimes to no effect. Yet the masturbation has stopped. I'm sorry [censored]. Always I feel the happiness here, thinking of her, for brief moments. That's how I know the everything is true.

I hate this non-thinking stasis. I'm stuck in humanity. Maybe going "NBK" (gawd) with Eric is the way to break free. I hate this.

The weather is a replication of our thoughts. The happiness is possible, imminent, I love you [censored].

The happiness is close, visible ending, end of the beginning of the halcyons.

The humanity is blocking me again. Time to go. Hahaha fuck all. Hate this shit, need to be me, [illegible], love her.

The framework of society stands above & below me. The hardest thing to destroy, yet the weakest thing that exists. I know that I am different, yet I am afraid to tell the society. The possible abandonment, persecution is not something I want to face, yet it is so primitive to me. I guess being yourself means letting people know about inner thoughts too, not just opinions & fashions.²⁸ (Heheh.) I will be free one day, in the land of purity & my happiness, I will have a love, someone who *is* me in a way. Someday... possibly thru this life, maybe another, but it will happen...

Love is more valuable than anything I know. To love is to enter a completion of oneself. I hate those who choose to destroy a love, who take it for granted. Love is greater than life even. As I look for love, I feel I can't find it. Ever. But something tells me I will, someday. Somewhere. As my love will find me, she feels as I do right now, I can feel it, we will be inseparable. Her & I. Whether it is or not, I think I'll find it (my love). We will be free, to explore the vast wonders of the stars. To cascade down everlong waterfalls, & thru the warmest seas of pure happiness... no limits.... no limits. Nothing will stop us.

28. Dylan feels "different", does not want to be abandoned and persecuted for it, but he does not let others know about these inner thoughts?

*Separate Document*²⁹

The humanity of here & now clouds all that I see. Yet the me, the one, can now control the pain, & it is done. 5 more days. 5..... a very influential number, another brick in my journeyed wall. Humans are zombies, they scratch for acceptance & greed & kill themselves thru each other. They will never learn, or maybe they will, but won't have the strength to learn. To be aware is not a trait, it's a godlike thing.³⁰ Blessed God, not a christian, jesus, Mt. Sinai, Abraham, David, bible gay shit god, but a true controller of existence. [pictograph] was to make us this way.

These moments will be lost in the depressions & caverns of the human books forever, like, tears, in, rain,³¹ but the thoughts will be eternal. To explain the happiness is impossible even for fate. It's just a pure halcyon set to last more existences than a conceivable number. Stupid gay nigger humans think I'm "crazy." Or they think I'm childish. Hahaha, because I can't solve [equation]. That makes me dumb! Because I can't stay thinking in a 2nd dimension, I go to the 5th! Haha. So I wait 5 more days. 5 more days. 5 eternities, & I know her & I are all conceived from ourselves & each other, every night of the self-awareness journey, every thought we conceived, we have finished the race. Time to die. Everything

29. Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, "Columbine Documents," 26484-85.

30. In an earlier entry, Dylan wrote that self-awareness "signs the warrant for suffering," but now he finds it a godlike quality.

31. "These moments will be lost [...] like, tears, in, rain" is a reference to Rutger Hauer's soliloquy in *Blade Runner* (1982). In the final scene, he says, "I have... seen things you people wouldn't believe... Attack ships on fire off the shoulder of Orion. I watched c-beams glitter in the dark near the Tannhäuser Gate. All those... moments... will be lost in time, like [*small cough*] tears... in... rain. Time... to die..."

we knew, we were able to understand it, to perceive it, into what we should. Everything we knew, we know & use. An understanding of the everything. An Einstein stuck in an ant's body. We are the nature of existence. The zombies were a test, to see if our love was genuine. We are in wait of our reward, each other. The zombies will never cause us pain anymore. The humanity was a test. I love you, love. Time to die³², time to be free, time to love.

1. One day, one is the beginning, ? the end. Hahaha. Reversed, yet true. About 26.5 hours from now the judgment will begin. Difficult, but not impossible, necessary, nerve-wracking & fun.

What fun is life without a little death?

It's interesting, when I'm in my human form, knowing I'm going to die. Everything has a touch of triviality to it. Like how none of this calculus shit matters. The way it shouldn't. The truth. In 26.4 hours I'll be dead, & in happiness. The little zombie human fags will know their errors, & be forever suffering & mournful. HAHAHA, of course I will miss things. Not really.

32. "Time to die," another reference to *Blade Runner*.

*Unknown**WILL*

Ok, this is my will. This is a fucking human thing to do, but whatever. [censored]—you were a badass, never failed to get me up when I was down. Thanks. You get FUCKT.

Notes

Preface

1. Dave Cullen, *Columbine* (London: Old Street Publishing, 2010), 35.
2. Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, "Columbine Documents," (1999), 26006.
3. *Ibid.*, 26113.
4. *Ibid.*, 26845.
5. G. Randolph Mayes, "How to Analyze a Philosophical Essay," <https://sites.google.com/site/grandolphmayes/how-to-write-a-philosophical-analysis>.
6. Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, "Columbine Documents," 26006.

1: Eric Harris on Awareness

1. Charlie Chaplin, "The Great Dictator," (1941).
2. Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, "Columbine Documents," 26010.
3. Bill Briggs and Jason Blevins, "Columbine — Tragedy and Recovery: A Boy with Many Sides," *The Denver Post Online* 1999.
4. Peter Langman, "Influences on the Ideology of Eric Harris," (2008).
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. Dave Cullen, *Columbine* (London: Old Street Publishing, 2010), Kindle e-book, 35.

9. Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, "Columbine Documents," 26005.
10. Chaplin, "The Great Dictator."
11. Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (Berlin: Bibliographisches Institut, 2007).
12. G. William Domhoff, "The Class-Domination Theory of Power," http://www2.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/power/class_domination.html.
13. Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, "Columbine Documents," 26399.
14. Farrah Gray, "Build Your Own Dreams..." (Facebook, 2012).
15. Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, "Columbine Documents," 26723-24.
16. Dan Ariely, "Wait for Another Cookie?," <http://danariely.com/2011/05/15/wait-for-another-cookie/>.
17. Chaplin, "The Great Dictator."
18. Domhoff, "The Class-Domination Theory of Power".
19. Erwin Wagenhofer, "Alphabet," (2013).
20. Yuval N. Harari, *Eine kurze Geschichte der Menschheit*, trans. Jürgen Neubauer (München: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2013), 143.
21. "Steve Jobs: Visionary Entrepreneur," (2013).
22. Richard Conn Henry, "The Mental Universe," *Nature* 436 (2005).
23. Brooks Brown and Rob Merritt, *No Easy Answers: The Truth About Death at Columbine* (New York City: Lantern Books, 2002), Kindle e-book.

2: Dylan Klebold on Existence

1. Heraclitus, *Fragments: The Collected Wisdom of Heraclitus*, trans. Brooks Haxton (New York: Penguin Group, 2001).
2. Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2006).
3. Stéphanie Kaim, "The Columbine Killers," (Doc en Stock, 2007).
4. Jade M. Vega, "Applied Final Project: Dylan Klebold and Schizotypal Personality Disorder," (University of Maryland, 2014).
5. *Ibid.*, 3.
6. *Ibid.*, 4.

7. "Was Dylan fascinated by the number 5 because he thought he lived in the 5th dimension?" Peter Langman, "Dylan Klebold's Journal," (2008), 12.
8. Henry, "The Mental Universe."
9. Dean Radin et al., "Consciousness and the Double-Slit Interference Pattern: Six Experiments," *Physics Essays* 25, no. 2 (2012).
10. *Ibid.*, 158.
11. Heraclitus, *Fragments: The Collected Wisdom of Heraclitus*, 40.
12. *Ibid.*, 31.
13. Sam Harris, *Free Will* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2012).
14. Dan Dennet, "The Illusion of Consciousness," (TED, 2013).
15. Jeff Hawkins, "How Brain Science Will Change Computing," (TED, 2003).
16. Richard Linklater, "Waking Life," (2001).
17. Ivan Reitman, "Ghostbusters II," (1989).
18. Steven Weinberg, *The First Three Minutes* (Basic Books: 1993).
19. Henry, "The Mental Universe."
20. Heraclitus, *Fragments: The Collected Wisdom of Heraclitus*, 13.
21. *Ibid.*, 5.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Vega, "Applied Final Project: Dylan Klebold and Schizotypal Personality Disorder."

Further Reading

- Brown, Brooks, and Rob Merritt. *No Easy Answers: The Truth About Death at Columbine*. New York City: Lantern Books, 2002.
- Cullen, Dave. *Columbine*. London: Old Street Publishing, 2010.

About the Author

Mathijs Koenraad grew up in The Netherlands, holds an M.Sc. degree in Management Studies from Wageningen University, The Netherlands, and has lived in Munich, New York City and Amsterdam. He has written several works in the genre of psycho-philosophy.

