

THE TRUE AXIOM

Writing Short Stories Inspired by Science

Matura Paper by Mattia Mantovani

The Project Summarised

I have always loved to write. Therefore, as the opportunity presented itself, I gathered all of my courage and decided to write and self-publish a book. The book, titled *A Quiet Night*, consists of eight short stories written in English, whereby each story is inspired by a scientific concept. My goal was to take purely mathematical or physical ideas and turn them into lively, fascinating narratives.

I chose to self-publish the stories through Kindle Direct Publishing, a service provided by Amazon.com. As such, I also designed the cover and formatted the interior of the book. A paperback copy of *A Quiet Night* is available for purchase worldwide on Amazon.

An Example

The fourth story in the collection, called *The Socialising Monkey Theorem*, draws inspiration from the so-called "Typing Monkey Theorem", a thought experiment in mathematics. It states that a monkey hitting keys at random on a typewriter will, given enough time, write out the complete works of William Shakespeare, by chance pushing the right keys in the right order. Of course, this would take a very long time.

In the story, I apply this concept to the universe: Given enough time, every combination of atoms will occur. Consequently, different versions of the earth will exist. With the help of an AI, the protagonist gets to see different versions of his life unfold, which ultimately leads him to a crucial realisation.

Main Themes



The Futile Pursuit of Truth

The characters in my stories often attempt to find simple answers or absolute truths, only to realise that there are no easy answers in life.



Circularity and the Ouroboros

The book as a whole follows a circular structure. This is represented by the ouroboros, the snake eating its own tail.

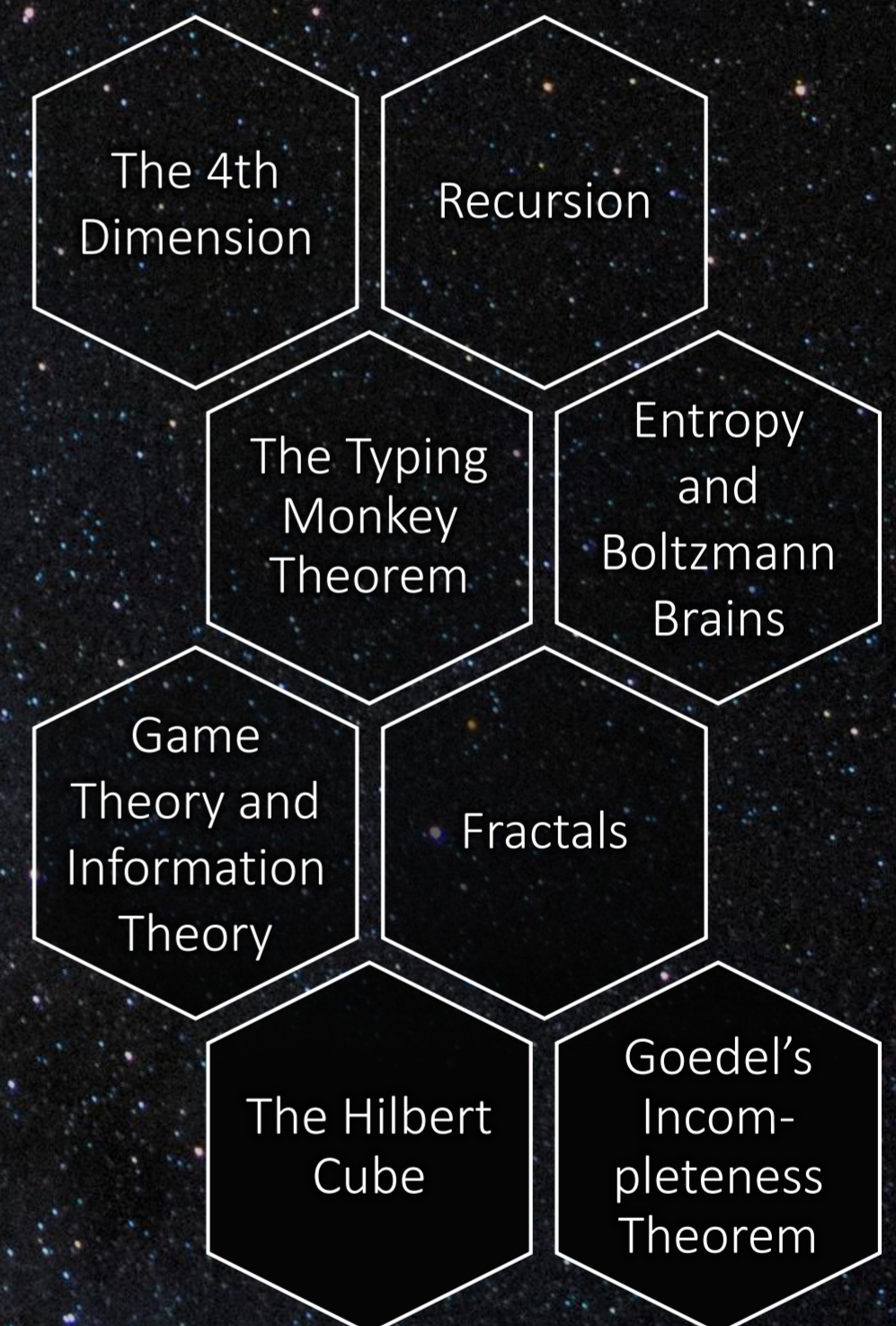


Consciousness in the Face of Reality

A central question in *A Quiet Night* is how mind and matter relate and how to deal with being conscious.



Scientific Concepts



The Writing Process

While writing, I found myself facing various new challenges and hurdles. Luckily, I could rely on the advice of famous authors. Here are a few of the recommendations that helped me most:

A short story must have a single mood and every sentence must build towards it.

– Edgar Allan Poe

Write with the door closed, rewrite with the door open.

– Stephen King

'Write about what you know' is the most stupid thing I've heard. It encourages people to write a dull autobiography.

– Kazuo Ishiguro

An Excerpt

I was floating in the barren black prairie that is the vacuum of outer space. The galaxy lay before me, its stars glowing specks of dust. It reminded me of water swirling down the drain of a bathtub, and in that moment, I knew that the two were of equal magnitude and of equal importance. I dove into the sea of light, searching with purpose a particularly peculiar pixel in this grand panoramic picture. The most insignificantly important speck of all: The earth. I admired it from afar, a dot of reflected sunlight. I moved closer, marvelling at the marble that contained the secrets of birth and death. Wisps of woven vapour veiling its blue oceans, soft gradients of brown and green painting the land. I had seen it countless times before, yet its beauty knew no name.