

Paper wins out over computer for note taking

By Wray Herbert, [Huffington Post](#)

I went to college long before the era of laptops, so I learned to take notes the old-fashioned way: ink on paper. But that does not mean my note-taking system was simple. Indeed it was an intricate hieroglyphic language, in which asterisks and underscoring and check marks and exclamation points all had precise meaning, if only to me.

It's a lost art. Many college students have some kind of electronic note-taking device nowadays, and most will swear by them. And really, only a Luddite would cling to pen and notebook in the 21st century. Typing is faster than longhand, producing more legible and more thorough notes for study later on.

But has anyone actually compared the two? Is it possible that laptops somehow impair learning – or conversely, that pen and paper convey some subtle advantage in the classroom? Two psychological scientists, Pam Mueller of Princeton and Daniel Oppenheimer of UCLA, wondered if laptops, despite their plusses, might lead to a shallower kind of cognitive processing, and to lower quality learning. They decided to test the old and the new in a head-to-head contest.

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