

# Dirty Furniture Phone

**DIRTY FURNITURE #5 Phone.** On 5G, the dominatrix reclaiming the internet, scams, phreaking, Skypagers and Sir Mix-a-Lot, hi from the undersea cable network, my iPhone's sexy AF, the GPS of monarch butterflies, fro-bulous emoji, Antonio Meucci, calling the dead, a phone shaped like a strawberry... and if you retweet this we'll give you \$10,000.



# Content

- × Anecdotes
- × Shancun Xiaojie, influencer, and Weihan Chen
- × Jay Owens on why we call the iPhone sexy
- × Ajay Hothi on the phone in rap
- × Andrea Bagnato and Elisa Giuliano on 5G in Matera
- × Rhianna Jones on Afro Emoji
- × Joanne McNeil on the art of s cam calls
- × Nicole Starosielski on the undersea cable network
- × Deborah Harrison, personality architect Microsoft Cortana, and Liam Young
- × Lucie Krahulcova and Lizzie O'Shea on addiction by design
- × Crystal Bennes and Dirty Furniture on why some phones drop out
- × Gabriella Garcia on the love affair between sex work and telecommunications
- × Jake Davis, hacker, and Joe Lloyd
- × Paul Elliman on the parallel history of the phone
- × Disnovation on shanzhai phones
- × Shumon Basar on The Great Reversal

# “Anecdotes”

## *€45,000 and a year in jail* *Paris, France*

“Freedom, equality, brotherhood” - the motto of the French republic. In fact, the same government tried to restrict filming of police officers. Similar restrictions are imposed in authoritarian states to prevent civil freedoms.

## *Why did you leave the house with your phone?* *Fortaleza, Brazil*

In Brazil armed robberies are so common that the citizens are carrying around broken mobile phones that they could give them away instead of working one.

## *Just setting up my twttr* *California, USA*

Twitter's co-founders Jack Dorsey's tweet was sold for 2,9 million USD. The purchase doesn't have any material properties and the tweet is widely available to the internet.

## *The phreaker* *Florida, USA*

“Phreaking” is used to describe telephone system hacking. First “phreakers” used to hack telephone systems by quite simple means, for example: rapidly pressing the receiver button or making specific frequencies with their voice.

## *Independent dialling* *Kansas, USA*

Once businessman Almon Strowger overheard that a large portion of his clients' calls were reassigned to his competitor by his wife, who was working as a telephone line operator, so he invented a machine to make telephone operators obsolete.

## *Koumpounophobia* *California, USA*

Koumpounophobia - is a fear of buttons. It is said that Steve Jobs had this fear. It might be the reason why Apple products have as few buttons as possible and the iPhone had only the screen.

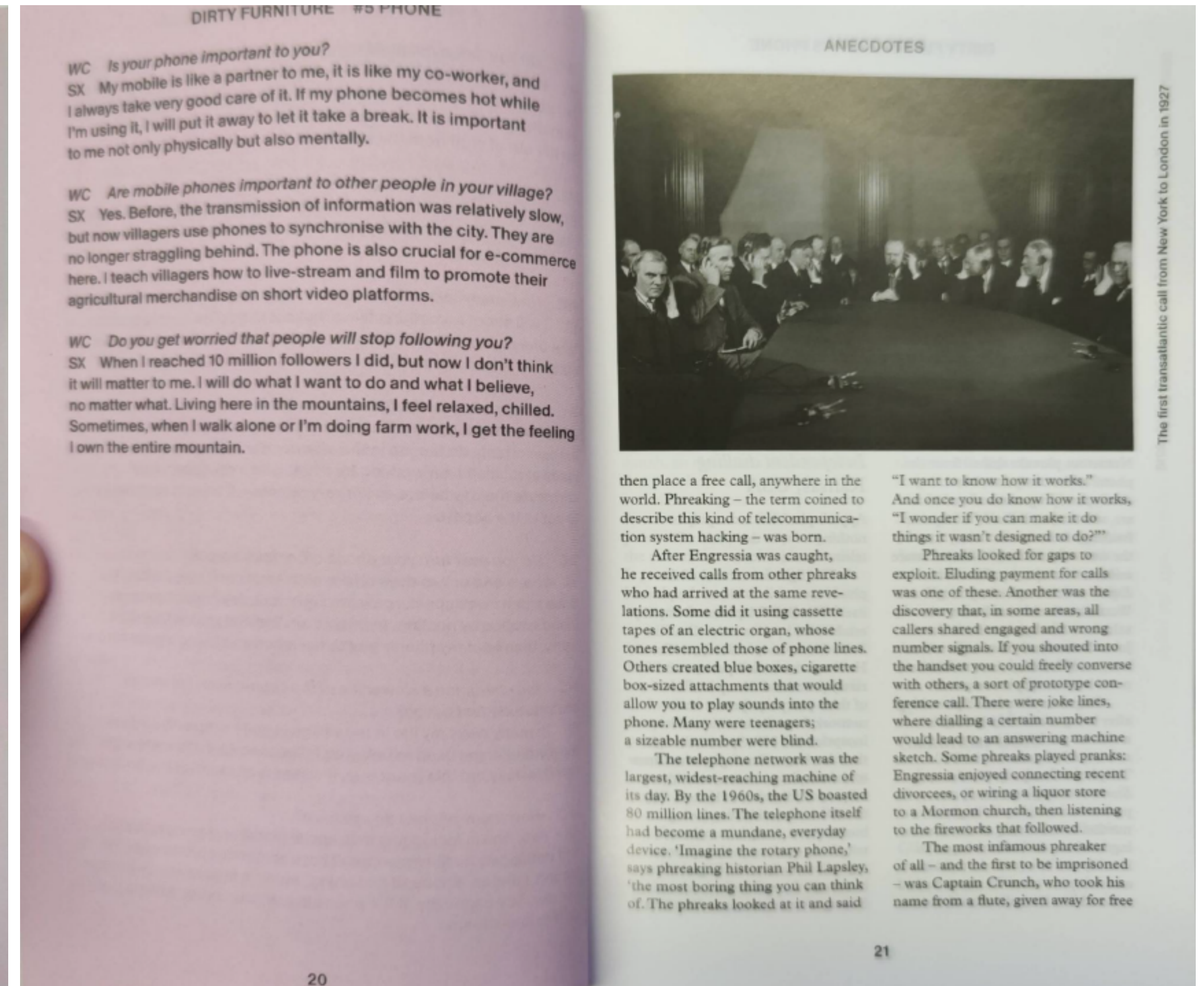
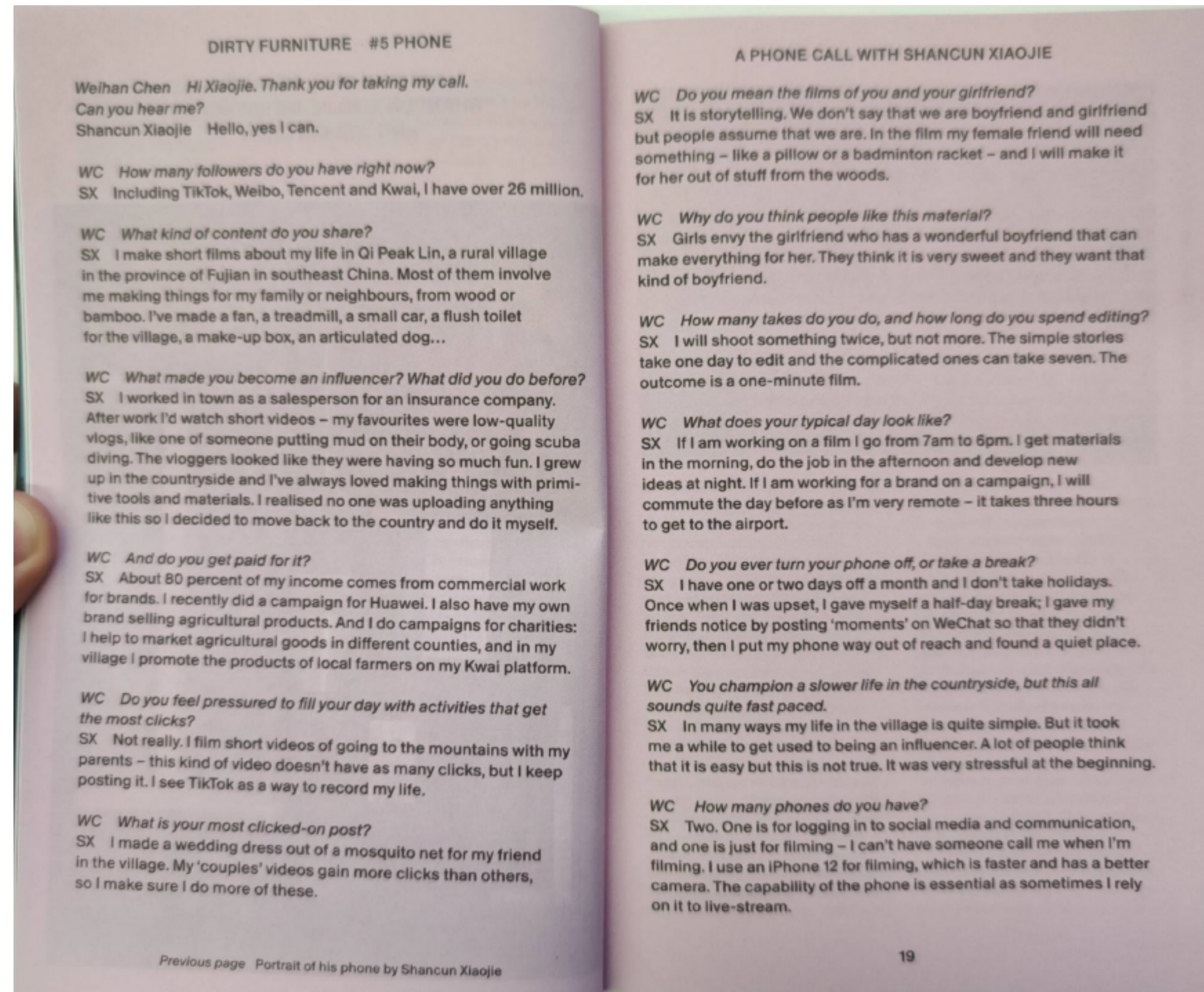
## *The history of necromancy* *In the ether*

Necromancy - is the resurrection of the dead. It was observed that electricity is somehow related with life force, by electrocuting dead bodies and watching them move. There was also a deep belief that all conversations are trapped in electromagnetic aether and people tried to make a machine that could revive the last words of Jesus Christ.



# “Shancun Xiaojie, influencer, and Weihan Chen”

Interview with chinese influencer



Phone books usually contain different color pages for different information types. Pink colored pages include information about organisations, periodicals etc.



- × *Chinese influencer films short, non-professional quality videos for chinese social media platforms (Tik Tok, Weibo, Tencent, Kwai).*
- × *Shancun's audience enjoys viewing his fictional idealistic life, which gains realism due to poor recording quality. Everything is recorded and edited inside his phone.*
- × *Shancun lives in a remote agricultural province.*



# “Jay Owens on why we call the iPhone sexy”

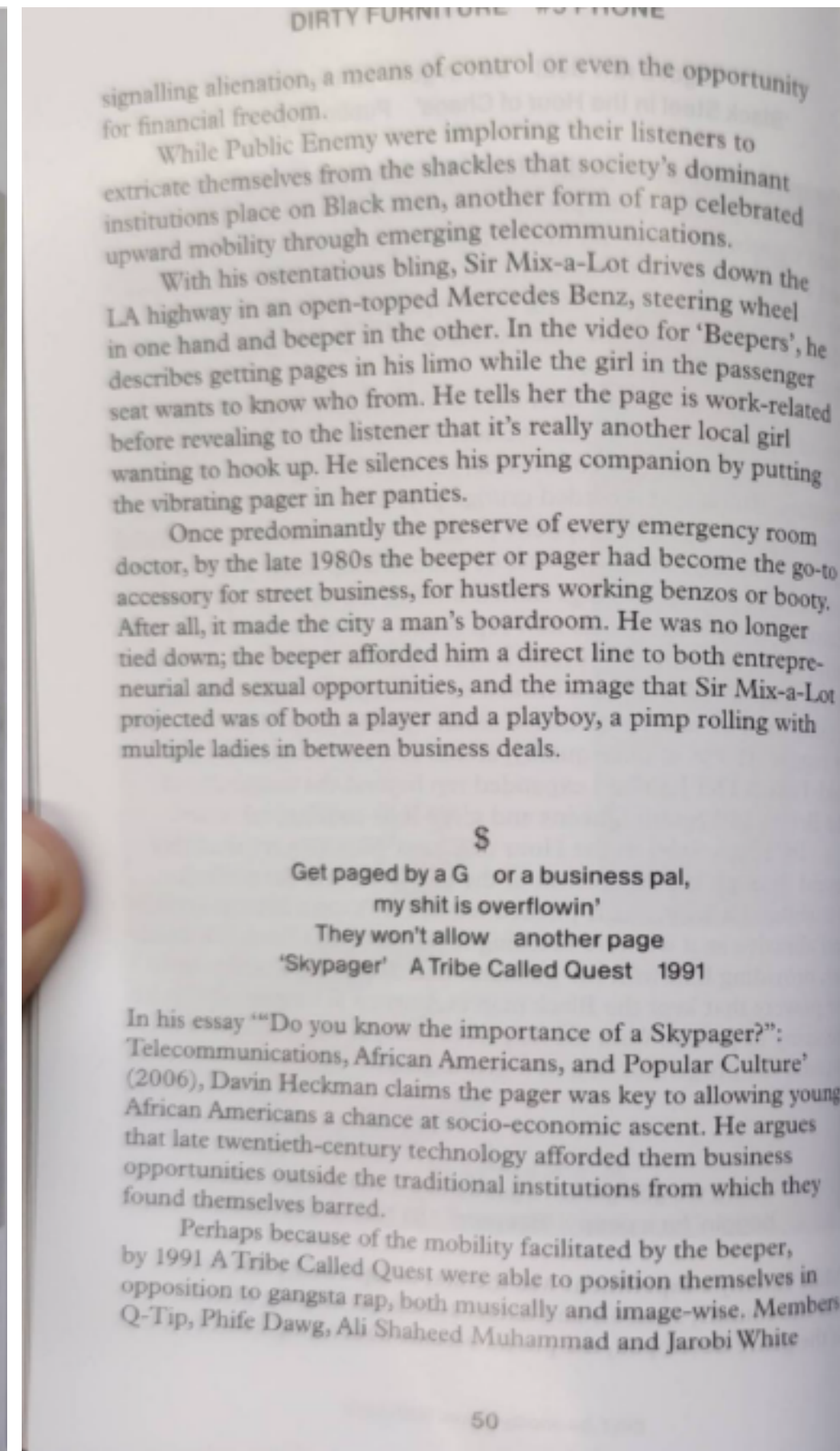


Screen is the most erotic part of the phone. Smartphones screens are intensely skin-like on metaphorical level, both in intuitivity of the interaction and smoothness of the screen which symbolises youthful velvety skin.



- × *Today when referring to technology we use word “sexy” as a description of quality not as description of sexual appeal.*
- × *Big part of modern sexual content passes through phones. In Huw Lemmey’s opinion phones are not only telecommunication devices but also forms of “sexual prosthesis”, since phones for most people is a center of their sexual life (Tinder, normalisation of “sexting”, nudes etc).*
- × *The iPhone's sexual quality might be understood through Apple’s brand strategy, since advertisements often borrow visual language from striptease.*
- × *Erotical nature reveals through material properties. An iPhone is an abstract geometric representation of the body.*
- × *Artificial intelligence assistants and FaceID makes the iPhone emotionally sexy.*

# “Ajay Hothi on the phone in rap”



Telecommunication devices are an inseparable part of the music industry. Telephones are a musical plot catalyst, music distribution tool and instrument itself.



- × *“Black Steel in the Hour of Chaos” was recorded by rapping into telephones microphone and playing it back through speaker. Such method was used to replicated musics plot authenticity. Result was so distinct it became the predecessor of the new rap genre “Gangsta Rap”.*
- × *Rappers used to record songs through telephones from jail cells (Gucci Mane, Mac Dre, Mobb Deep)*
- × *Telephones are the most efficient musical distribution platform.*
- × *Telephone is often used as a musical plot catalyst (Sir Mix-a-Lot, Drake, Erykah Badu)*





- × *On march 5th 2018 the first 5G base station was turned on in Matera, Italy. It was hoped that the 5G network would attract new business opportunities and improve public services.*
- × *At that time there was little data about health risks associated with 5G. Not long after followed Covid pandemic. In people's minds these events seemed linked. Current data suggests that 5G is safe, yet the majority of cities refuse installing 5G.*
- × *Italians are one of the first adopters of phones. Italians generally don't trust strangers and the phone offered them a way to communicate more freely. Telephone is generally associated with free time and relationships.*
- × *Post-Covid all telecommunications equipment was nationalised and limits for radio frequency radiation were increased.*



# *“Lucie Krahulcova and Lizzie O’Shea on addiction by design”*



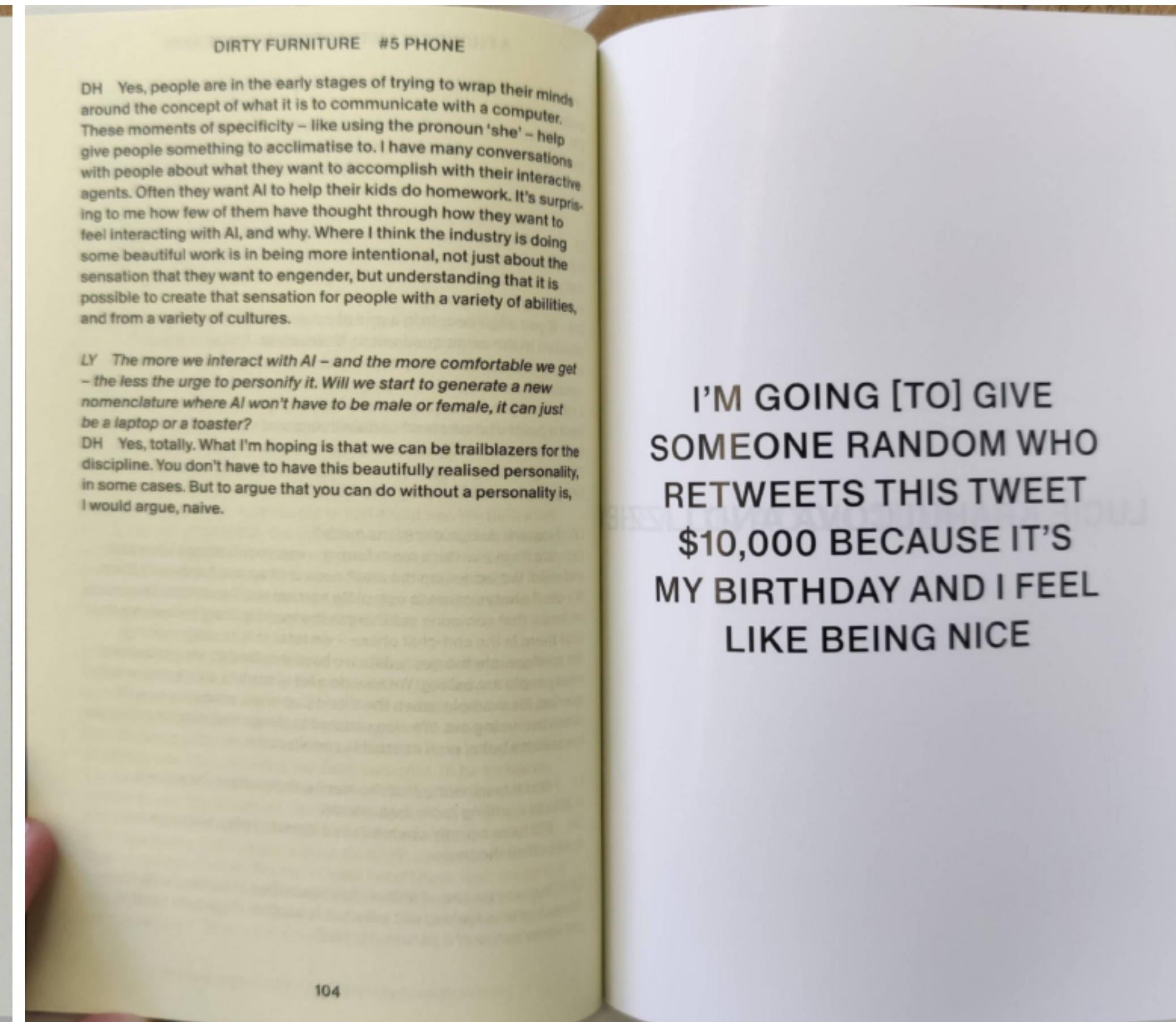
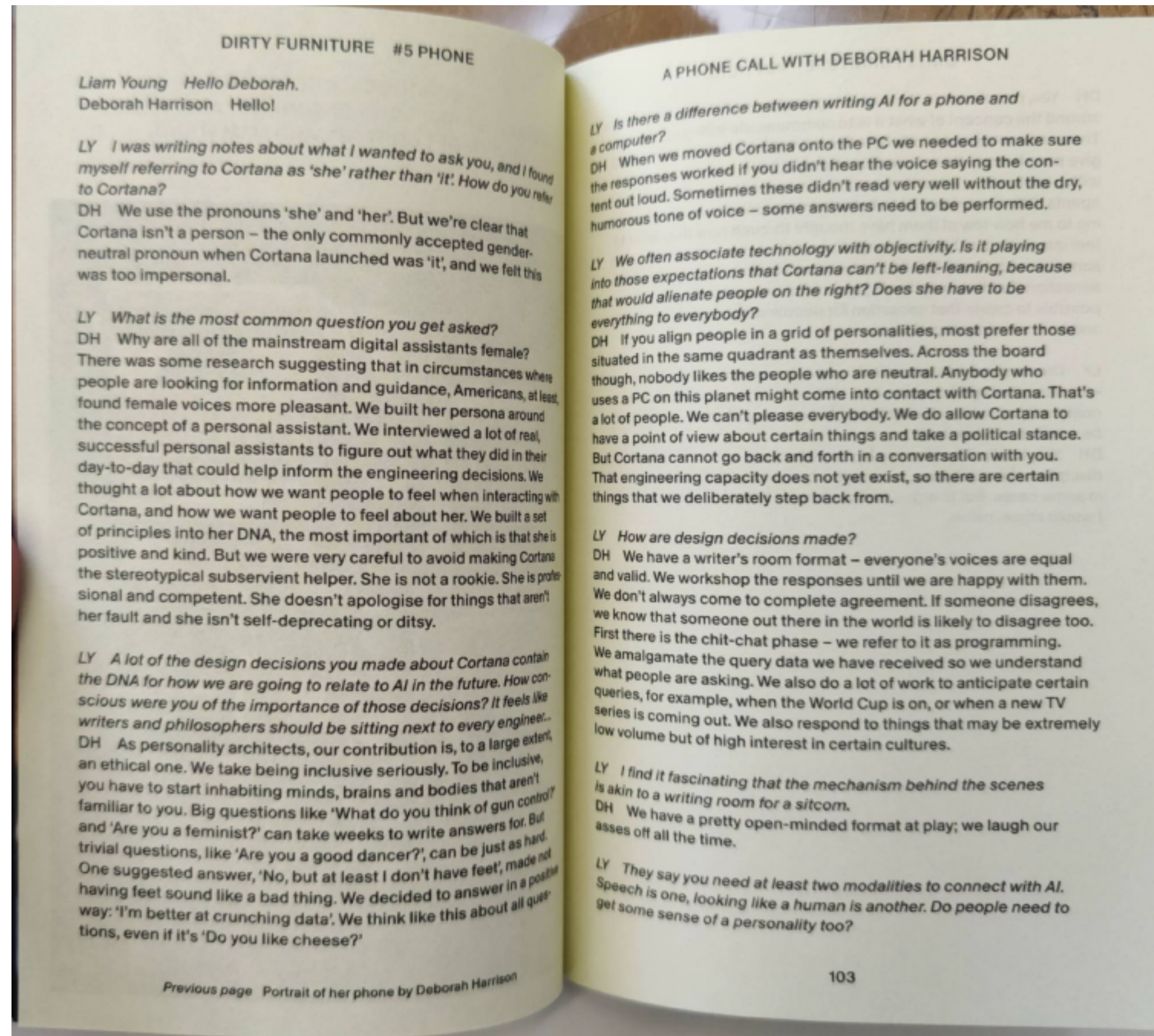
Digital ecosystems are created to cause addictions. Smartphones accompany us everywhere and we use phones to record our most important moments, for that reason it's easy for algorithms to track, understand and influence us.



- × *Digital ecosystems are made to make us addicted*
- × *We carry smart devices, which monitor our behaviour. The more we use them the better tool it becomes for collecting data for corporate interests.*
- × *Corporations claim - “ technology by itself isn’t the problem, the problem is how we use it”. To fix one's pathologies is left to the individual.*
- × *Corporations remain in market monopolies, by creating closed ecosystems.*
- × *How should everything be changed? Protection of privacy, banning secondary data market, data minimisation, independent self-governed sites.*



# “Deborah Harrison, personality architect Microsoft Cortana, and Liam Young”



Yellow phone book pages usually contain businesses numbers, services and advertisements.

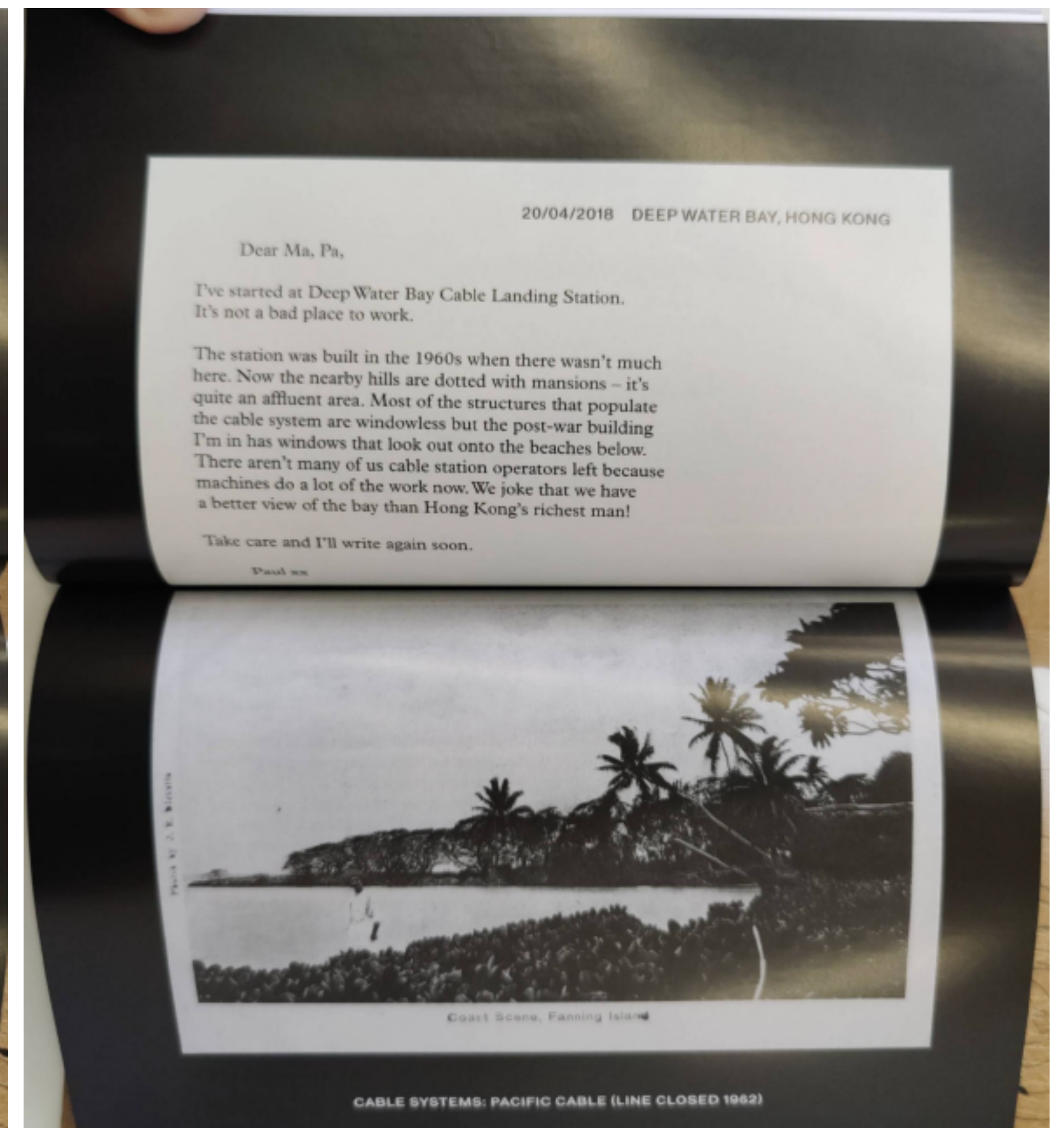
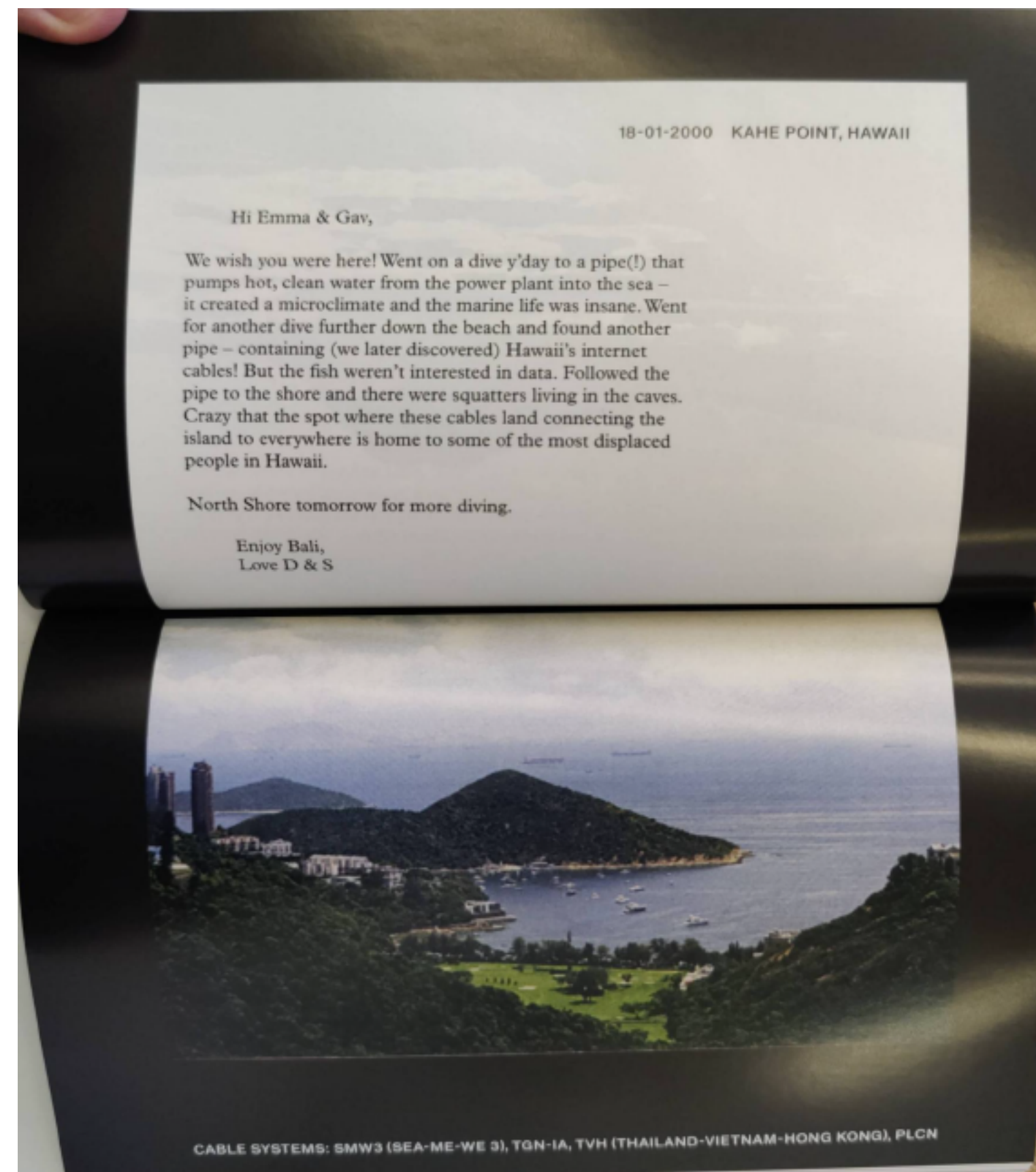
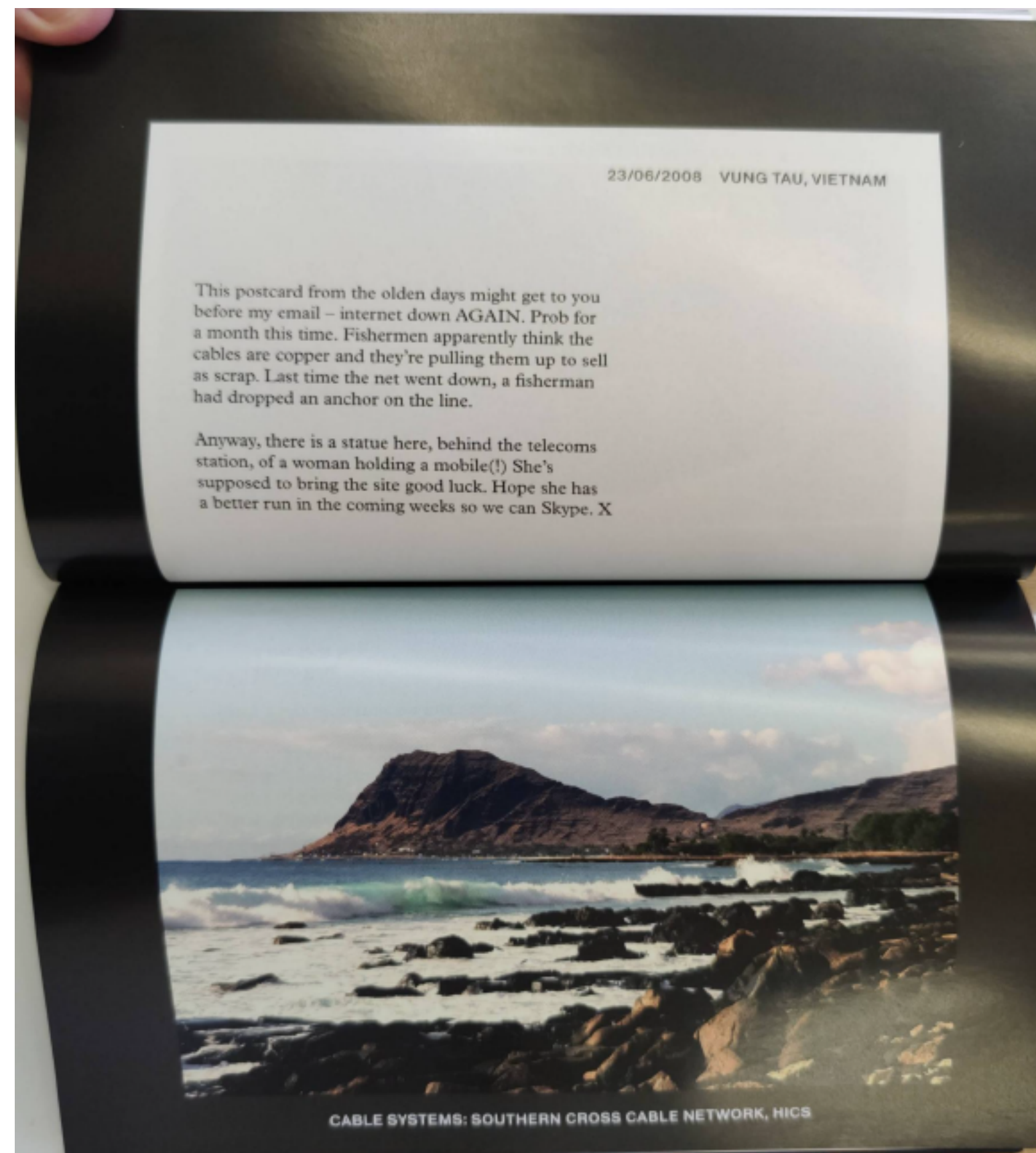


- × *Cortana developers goal was to create the most accurate AI assistant, that would encompass most properties of real life assistant: professionalism, voice and manner of response.*
- × *Cortana is pre-programmed to have views on certain topics.*
- × *People still don't understand AI assistants. People overestimate AI capabilities.*



# “Nicole Starosielski on the undersea cable network”

Postcards



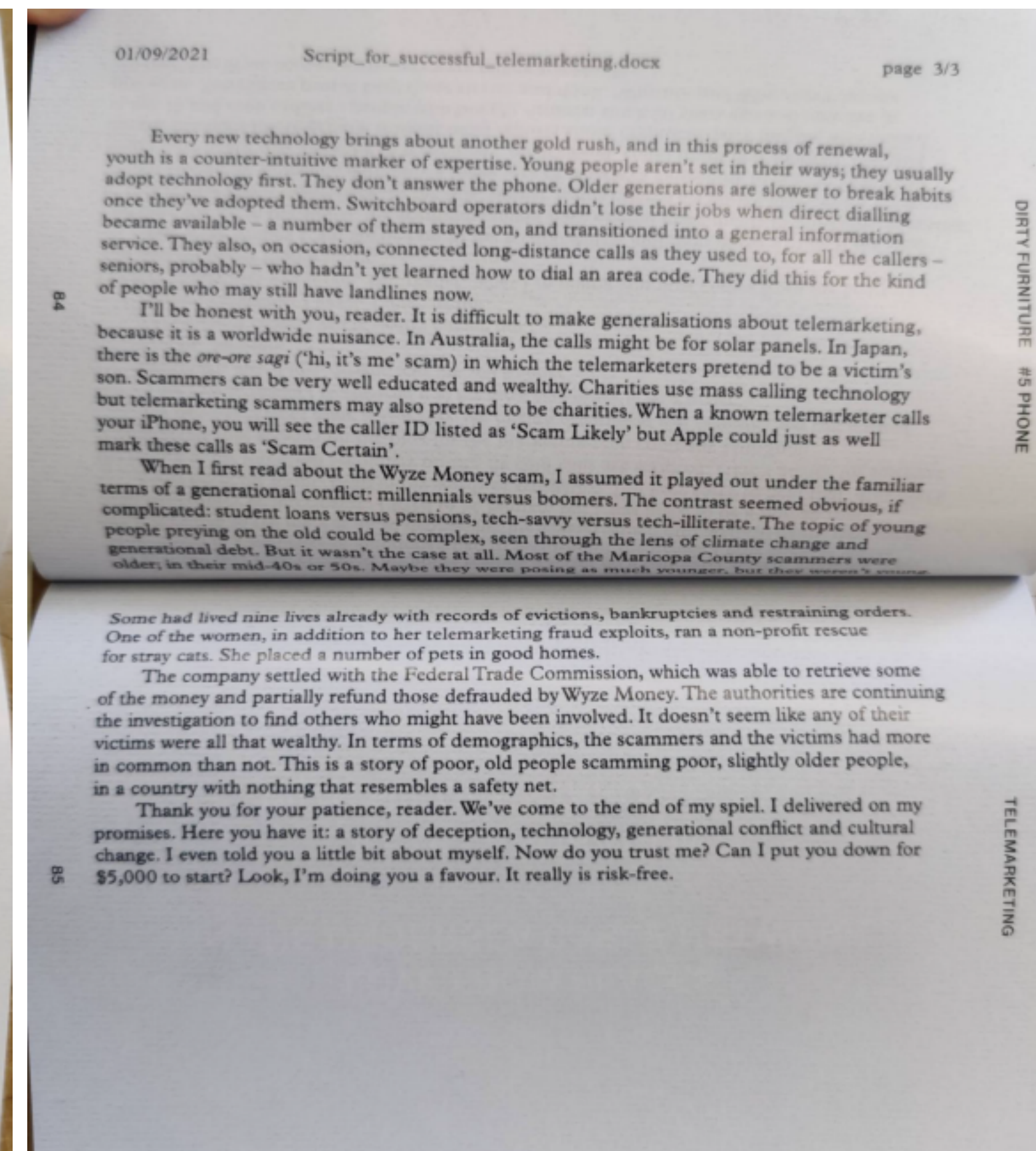
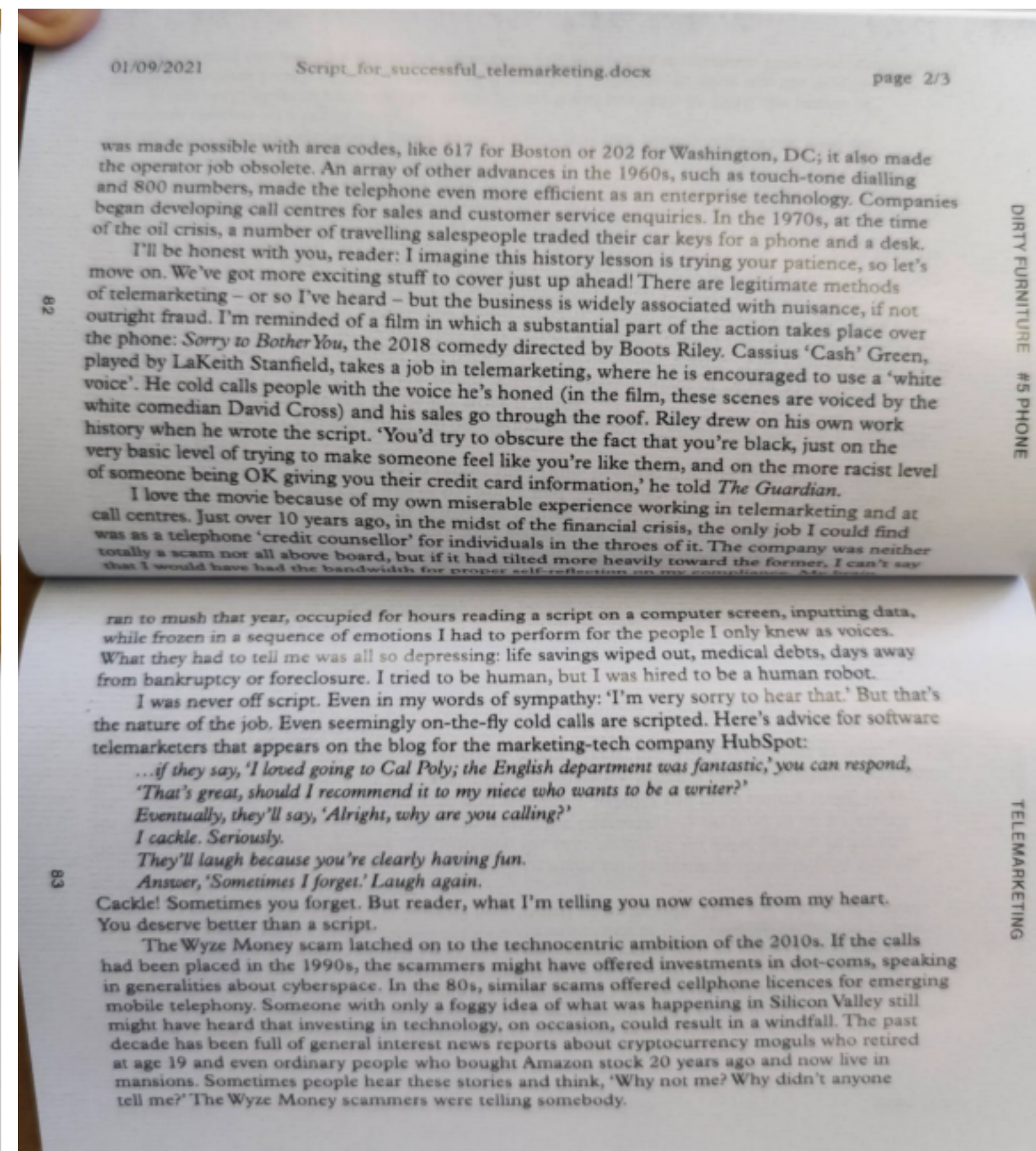
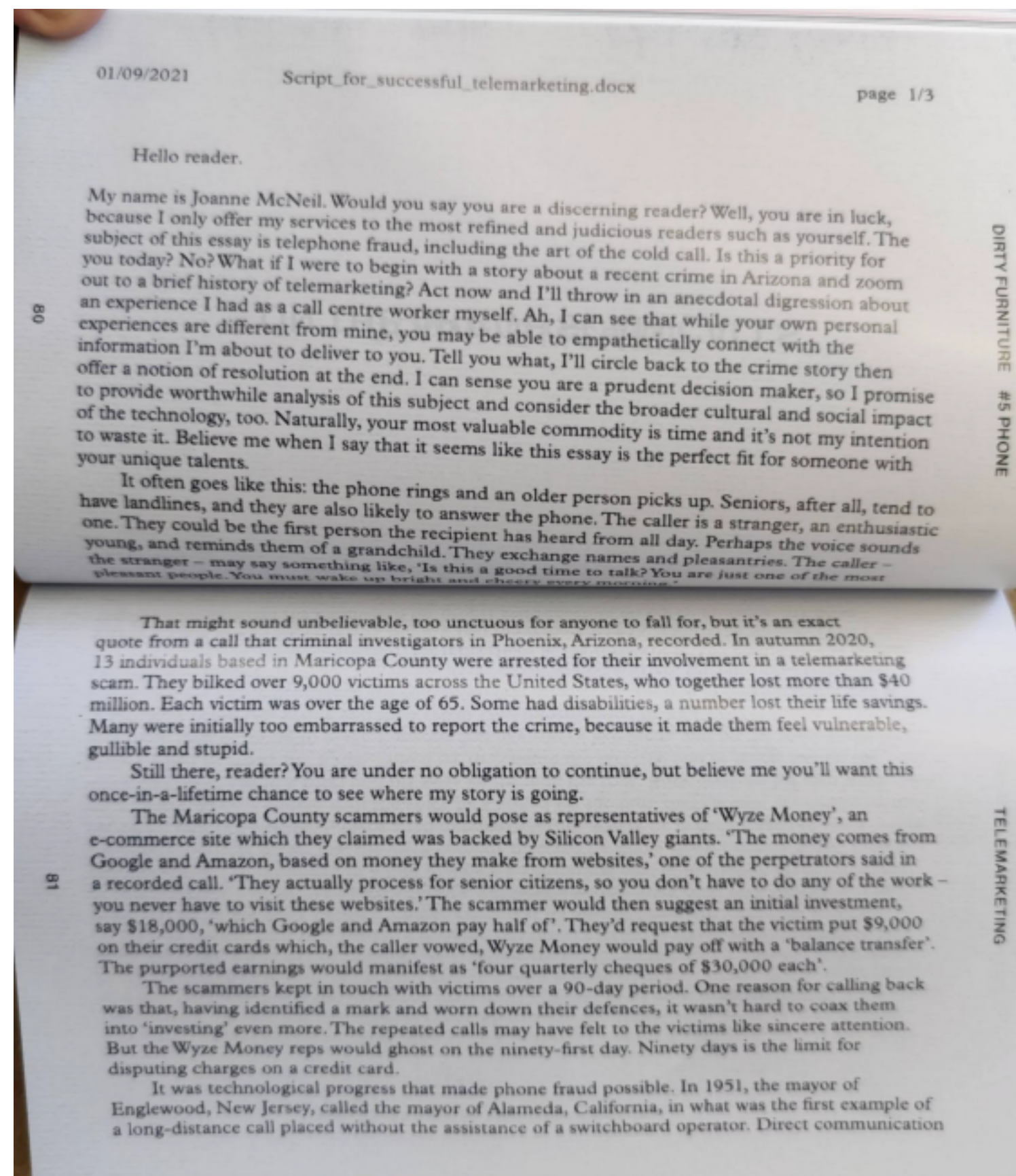
Postcards from: Vung Tau, Vietnam; Kahe Point, Hawaii; Deep water bay, Honk Kong; Tabuaeran, Kiribati. Photos of trans-pacific telecommunication wires stations.



*The Pacific ocean is full of intercontinental telecommunications wires. These wire stations are built in: Vung Tau, Vietnam, Kahe Point, Hawaii; Deep water bay, Honk Kong; Tabuaeran, Kiribati.*



# “Joanne McNeil on the art of scam calls”



Letter from a scammer.

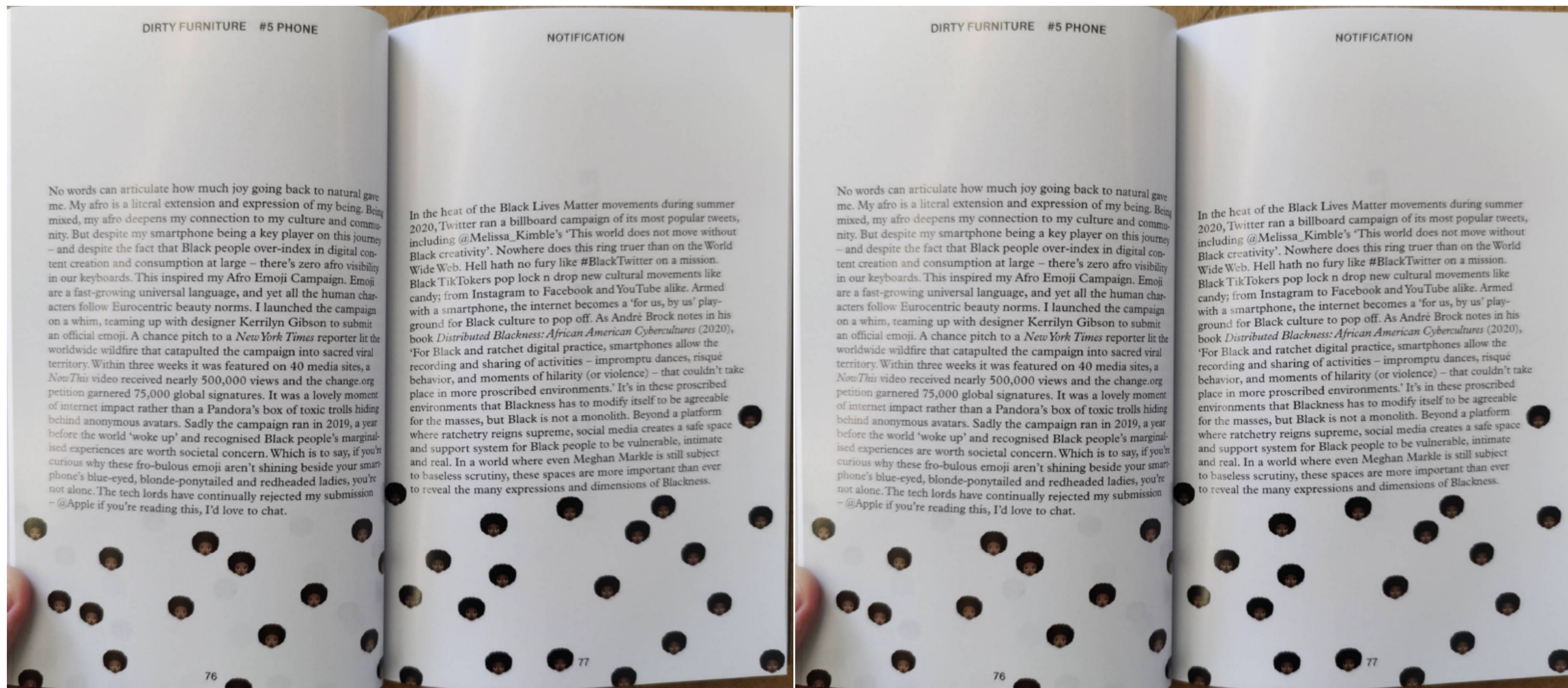


- × *Most telephone scam victims are seniors older than 65 years old.*
- × *Due to advancements in technology direct sales were quickly replaced by telemarketing. Telemarketing scams usually vary by region.*
- × *"Wyze Money" scammers would call their victims over the period of 90 days. Victims felt sincere attention therefore it was easy to scam them. Criminals and victims were similar in demographics, since criminals were in their mid-40s and 50s. Old poor people would scam slightly older people.*



# “Rhianna Jones on Afro Emoji”

Rasinio identiteto saviraiška internete



Rhianna Jones believes that digital platforms lack means of racial representation, therefore she started an Afro emoji campaign. The goal of the campaign is to spread “black identity” awareness.



- × *Afro americans are underrepresented*
- × *Smartphones democratise content. Natural beauty vloggers encourage realistic beauty standards.*
- × *Rhianna Jones claims that “afro is a part of her personality”. Since there isn’t an afro emoji she felt under-represented and decided to start an afro emoji campaign.*



# *“Crystal Bennes and Dirty Furniture on why some phones drop out”*



For a product to be successful a lot of factors must go right. This chapter is about phones which failed.



## *Teletrofono , Antonio Meucci*

Antonio Meucci was the first to invent the telephone. Unfortunately haven't found any investors, therefore failed to secure a patent. Two years later the idea was patented by Bell.

## *50AL, Western Electric*

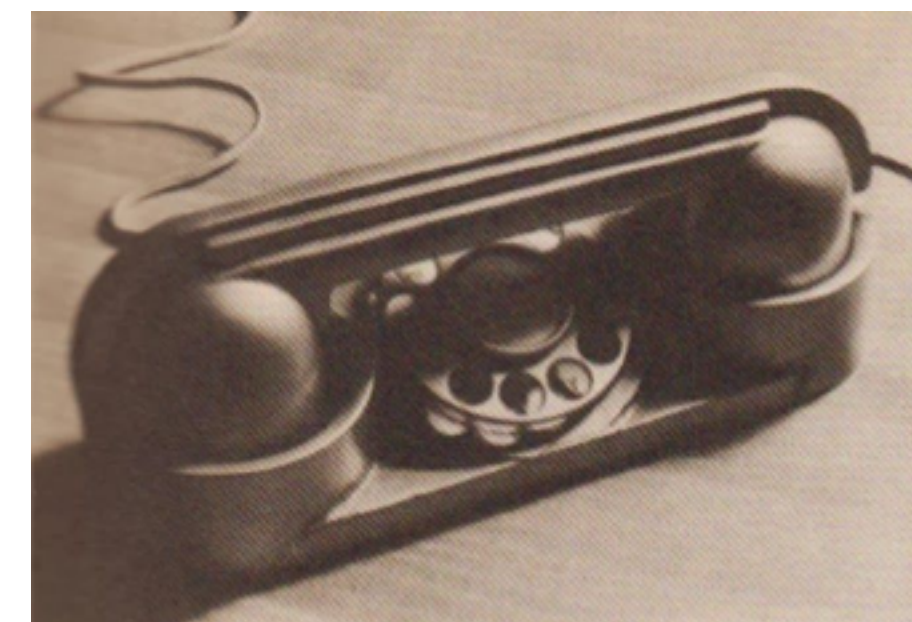
Due to unappealing looks was quickly pushed out of the market by designs who took into consideration how the phone will look inside the interior.

## *Model for telephone, Gustav Jensen*

Gustav Jensen designed the telephone for design competition. He won the first place, unfortunately at that time engineers could find a way to make it.

## *Ericofon 700, Ericsson*

Updated version of Ericofon 600 failed to attract attention.





## *Snow white 3 MacPhone, Apple*

Hartmut Esslinger developed a concept for futuristic speculative phone. This phone is similar in size to an iPad. Since at that time the internet didn't exist nobody understood why anybody would need such a device.

## *Simon personal communicator, IBM*

First smartphone was launched in 1992. It featured many of today's smartphone capabilities: internet, emails, calling, etc.. The main drawback was its price, weight and battery that lasted only an hour.

## *Z10, Blackberry*

Z10 lacked a physical keyboard, therefore alienating fans, who bought blackberry phones for the keyboard.

## *Amazon fire, Amazon*

Amazon fire had uninspiring design and clunky software, but the biggest flop was a system that proactively tried to sell unnecessary things from Amazon.





## *Signature Cobra, Vertu*

Signature Cobra was a luxury jewelry covered telephone. The problem is that electronics develop so fast that it doesn't make sense to invest in jewelry phones if after a couple of years it becomes obsolete.



## *MP01, Punkt*

MP01 is made for the minimalist. It only features most essential functions, yet for less features the buyer spends more.

## *Fairphone*

Completely modular and upgradable phone, yet failed to impress its size and design.





# “Gabriella Garcia on the love affair between sex work and telecommunications”

Sexs industry role in the development of the internet



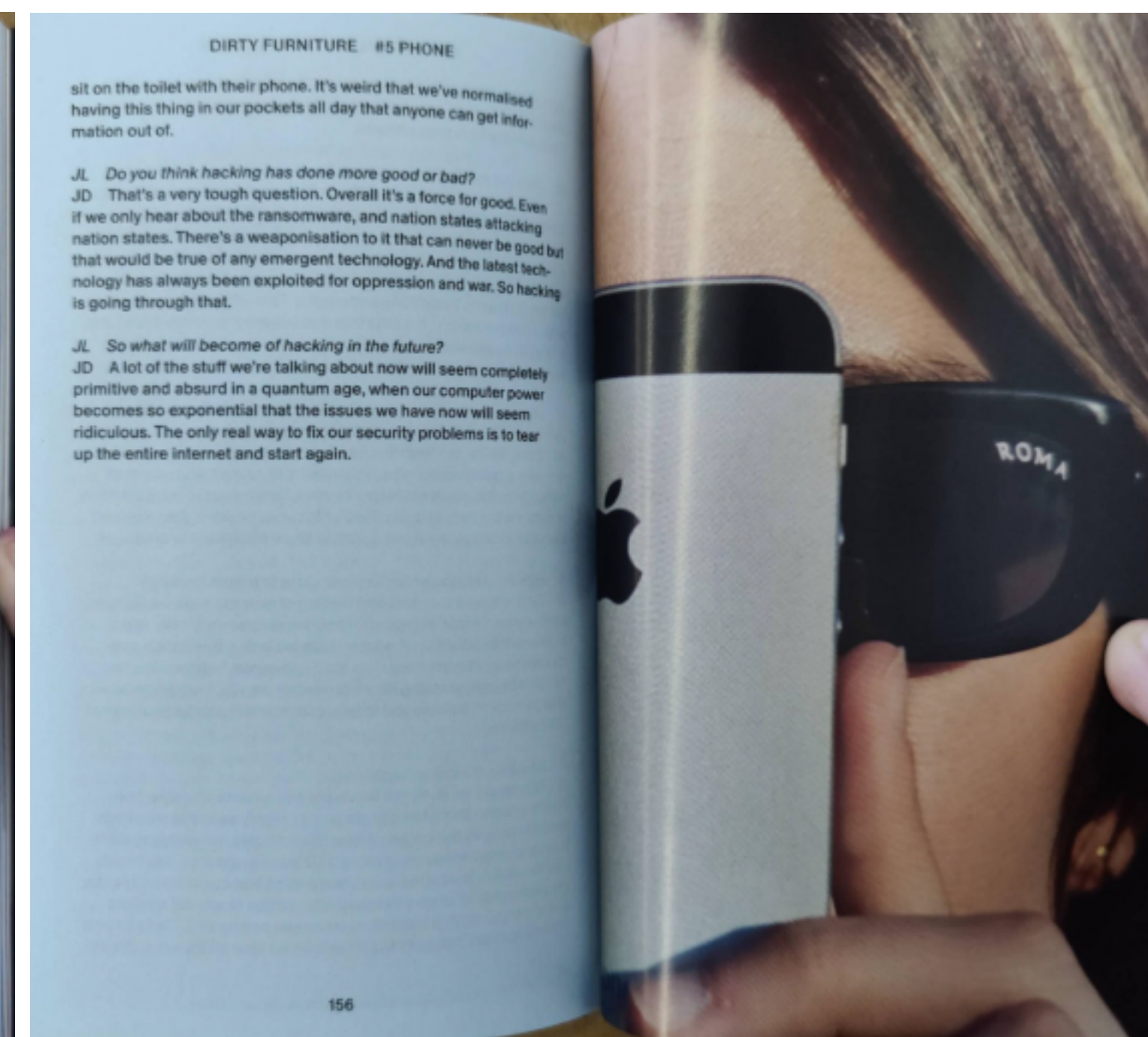
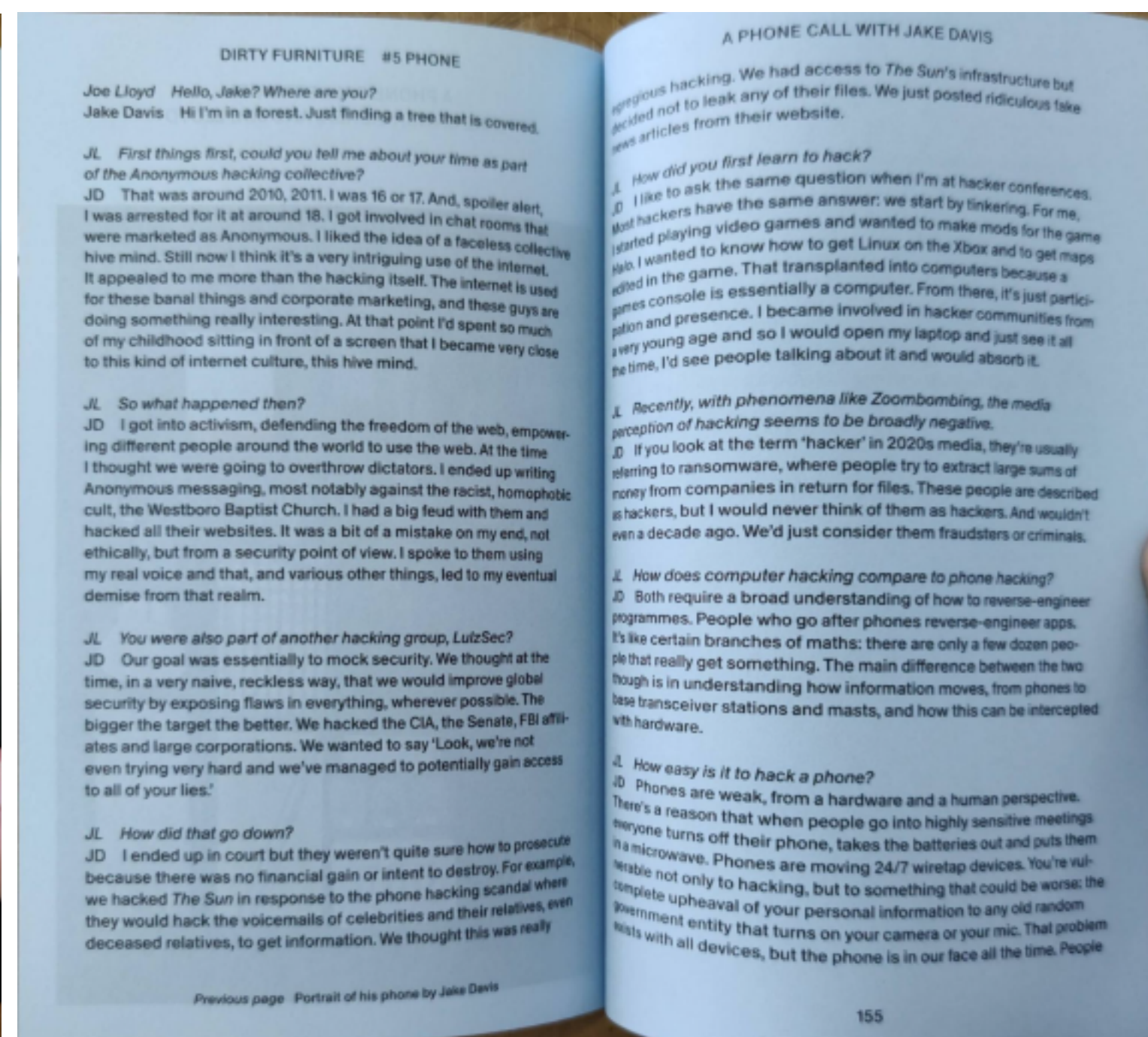
E-Viction is a digital riot against censorship of sex work industry. Page is only available for a limited time and after midnight it deletes itself.



- × *Electronic Frontier Foundation organises “Pioneer” awards to honour those who protect civic rights on digital platforms. This year Danielle Blunt received an award for sex worker rights activism on the internet.*
- × *Sex work is directly correlated with development of the telecommunications. Brothels were ones of the first institutions to have land lines. Pornography and video games pushed for better computing technologies. Pornography industry was on the first to invest in development of search engines and digital transactions.*
- × *Monitoring of digital life directly impacts our physical lives. Digital life is controlled by private organisations. Sex workers are victims digital censorship.*
- × *During pandemic sex work on internet skyrocketed. E-Viction is a digital riot against censorship. Website displays sex work related ads and streams sexual content. Website is available only for a limited time.*



# “Jake Davis, hacker, and Joe Lloyd”



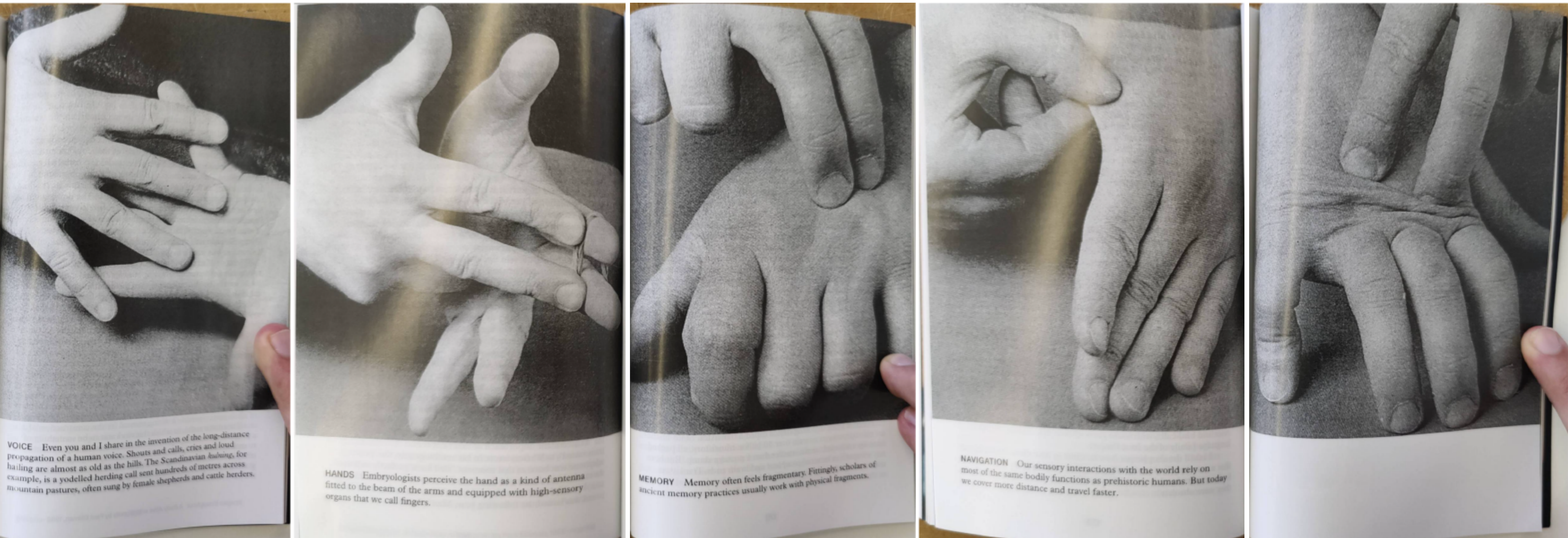
Blue phone book pages usually contain governmental organisations information and phone numbers.



- × *Jake Davis got into activism because he wanted to defend freedom of the internet. He joined “anonymous hacking collective”. The goal of the Anonymous was a complete anonymity of the internet.*
- × *Later Jake joined LulzSec. The goal of the organisation was to mock internet security. They broke into the CIA, FBI, US senate internet networks. The idea was to improve internet security by exposing flaws.*
- × *Jake claims it's easy to hack mobile phones, but what is worse they are freely accessible for monitoring by the government.*
- × *He believes that overall hacking is the force for good, because fights back against internet's militarisation*



*“Paul Elliman on the parallel history of the phone”*



Our hands are constantly fiddling without our conscious attention, same as the majority of our body processes which are performed automatically.



**Voice transmission.** The 19th century was all about searching for the way to deliver vocal messages. The first was a phonograph (by Scott de Martinville) - a device that could record voice, but couldn't play it back. Next was electromagnetic microphone (by Charles Boursein), then first vocal transmission through copper wire (by A. Meucci) and first conversation by (A. G. Bell).

**Hands.** R. Tally described hands as a physical and emotional communication tool. Hand gestures are mostly automated; they only require a small impulse from the conscious. It's in our nature to touch or handle something in our hands. A clock or a glove is replaced by a smartphone.

**Memory.** Memory works very differently between humans and electronics. Human memory is made of a web of interconnected neurons and electronics on the contrary have linear memory. First digital information was written into memory cards then replaced by hand woven memory and later by modern semiconductor memory.

**Navigation.** With the invention of GPS people's ability to navigate worsens.



# “Disnovation on shanzhai phones”

Shanzhai kultūra



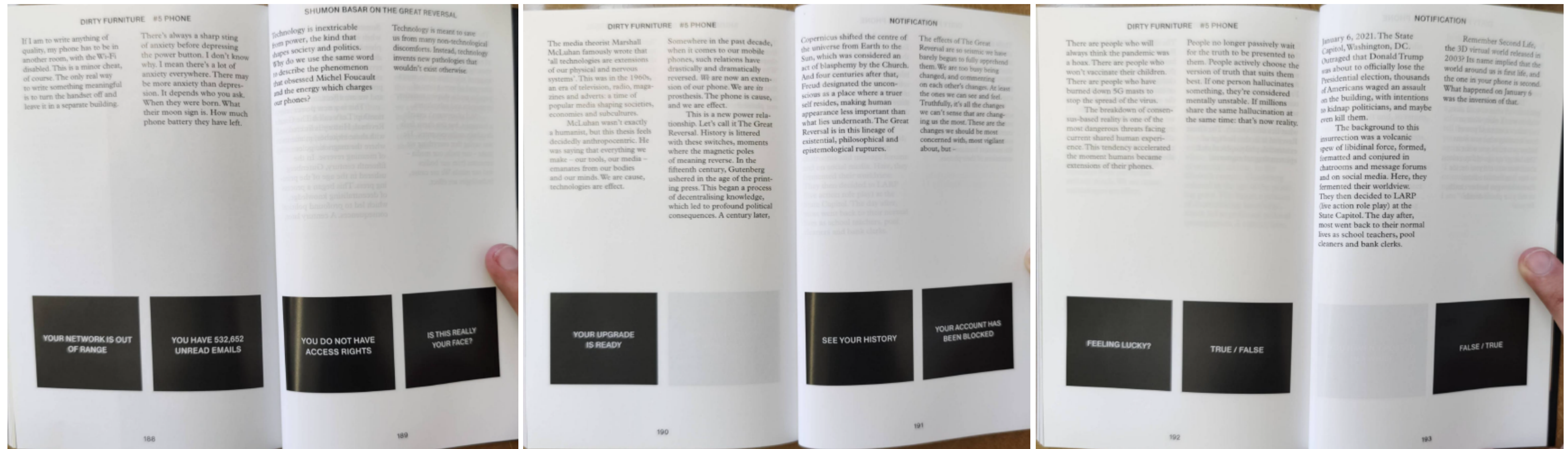
At the start of 2000s in China's Shenzhen province small manufacturers that previously were making plastic toys started manufacturing cheap, poor quality phones. Phone manufacturing was so popular, and distinct it started new "Shanzhaiji" sub-culture.



- × *Shanzhai - (in traditional Chinese meaning “mountain village”) is used to describe poor quality products.*
- × *Shanzhaiji - means “Shanzhai phones”*
- × *Shenzhen is a industrial region in China. In the beginning of 2000s small manufacturers that previously specialised in making plastic toys started buying “ready-made” cell phone modules from Taiwan and begun manufacturing their own phones.*



# “Shumon Basar on The Great Reversal”



Pop-up notifications that provoke us to click them: “Your internet is out range”, “You have 532,652 unread emails”, “You do not have access rights”, “Is this really your face”, “Your upgrade is ready”, “See your history”, “Your account has been blocked”, “Feeling lucky”, “True/false”, “If you liked that you’ll love this”, “You haven’t posted in a while”, “Are you an independent thinker?”, “Your software has expired”, “Low battery 10% remaining”, “You have no power left”



- × *Technology is created to ease physical discomforts, but in turn creates new pathologies that would exist otherwise.*
- × *Marshall McLuhan claims “all technologies are a continuation of our physical and nervous systems”, therefore we are the cause and technology is the effect. In the last decade roles have switched, now technology is the cause and we are effect.*
- × *People started choosing truth that is more convenient and consensus based truth slowly ceases to exist. If one person hallucinates he is considered unstable, if millions hallucinate it is the new reality.*
- × *Algorithms can predict what a person wants, even if he doesn't know it, therefore smartphones can influence us to make decisions. Smartphone takes over our neurological functions including decision making*