ARTICLE SUMMARY BY ISABELLE

***AUTHOR OF MAIN ARTICLE: RENE VAN SLOOTEN
MAIN IDEA OF ARTICLE: POE’S LOVE FOR CRYPTOGRAPHY***

***NAME OF ARTICLE: EDGAR ALLAN POE AND CRYPTOGRAPHY: ARE THERE HIDDEN MESSAGES IN ‘EUREKA’?***

Edgar loved cryptography, and he certainly wasn’t the only one, for in his time, cryptography played an important role in society. There were no phones and there was no internet, and letters sent by mail could be dangerous if read by someone else (if they weren’t encrypted). They also used announcements in newspapers, because a cipher in the paper ads is an ideal way of communication between people. The encrypter, sender, and receiver(s) are unknown, except to themselves.

Mysteries and secrets always appealed to him, and his interest in all of this was probably further enhanced during his years in the Us army, where cryptography and ciphers were a part of military routine (it was no surprise that he used that knowledge and inclination when he joined the magazine career). His most famous accomplishment in work was his story ‘The Gold Bug’ (1843), in which the plot actually revolves around a cipher that contains info about a buried treasure. Modern universities actually (to this day), use this story for their cryptography classes!

In Poe’s work, ‘Eureka’, he first talked about Champollion (who deciphered the Egyptian hieroglyphs), and then states that he himself has ‘stolen a golden secret from the Egyptians.’

Most probably, there are more hints to be found upon a closer examination of other stories as well. In the case of ‘Eureka’, there are a few other indications for hidden messages. In the first place the often bad style and sometimes weird construction of paragraphs and sentences. The fact that Poe left notes for many corrections in a second edition, but these notes show that he did not change a sentence or even a word of the original text, although ‘Eureka’ is his second longest work.

My opinion about this article: I think that the author did a very nice job, but could’ve spent a little more time talking about hidden messages (Which he did quite well and often), and less time talking about his greatest works (Like ‘The Golden Bug’, which did have some sort of role in cryptography). I also think that Edgar Allan Poe DID, in fact, use cryptography in ‘Eureka’ as well as many other stories of his. He was a grim author, but that does NOT mean that he couldn’t have used cryptography in it! Well, anyways… my general opinion about this article was that it was very fascinating learning about an author and his love for cryptography.

<http://baltimorepostexaminer.com/edgar-allan-poe-and-cryptography-are-there-hidden-messages-in-eureka/2013/04/27>