

For the Love of Reading

While you're waiting for All the Light We Cannot See...

Anthony Doerr's *All the Light You Cannot See* has been on the New York Times Bestseller List for the past 15 weeks. Set during World War II, this novel alternates between the point of view of a blind French girl, Marie-Laure, and a young, orphaned German man, Werner. I won't go into more detail as Dory has already written a fascinating review of it on the [For the Love of Reading blog](#). The wait for this book may be long, but here are some titles that are available now.



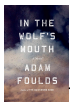
Suite Francaise by Irene Nemirovsky

Written during the Nazi occupation of France by a Jewish woman who ultimately perished in Auschwitz, *Suite Francaise*'s fictional account of the Nazi occupation depicts how the inhabitants of Paris and rural France experienced the war and had to learn to coexist with the enemy.



Stones from the River by Ursula Hegi

Set in rural Germany spanning the period immediately before, during and after World War II, dwarf Trudi becomes the town librarian. She learns many of the townspeople's secrets in her position, and uses them to get back at the people who have treated her unkindly. When Hitler comes to power, Trudi uses all the means available to her to protect those who have been kind to her-including Jewish families.



In the Wolf's Mouth by Adam Foulds

Set in North Africa and Sicily at the end of World War II, this novel tracks the Allie's attempt to chase the Germans from North Africa toward the Italian mainland. Told through the eyes of an English officer, and American soldier and an Italian shepherd, this vivid and haunting novel will leave you breathless.



Jacob's Oath by Martin Fletcher

Holocaust survivors Jacob and Sarah meet in Heidelberg after the war. Jacob is consumed with anger and won't rest until he has killed his younger brother's murderer- a SS guard nicknamed 'the Rat.' Jacob must choose between revenge and love in this heart wrenching and

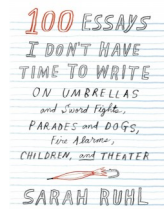
captivating novel.

Posted by Jacoba W. on January 2, 2015

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[Jacoba W.'s blog](#)[Log in to post comments](#)

100 Essays I Don't Have Time to Write



[view in catalog](#)

This collection of mostly mini-essays is a great find for anyone interested in either writing or theatre. Ruhl, a Pulitzer Prize finalist for her play *In the Next Room*, displays her skills at language, views of playwriting, and her both playful and utterly serious response to the stage. Several titles display her marvelous sense of humor: *Bad Plays and Original Sin*, *On Nakedness and Sight Lines*, and *Watching My Mother Die on Stage*. (Her mother is an actress.) Others are more philosophical: *God as Audience: A Non-syllogism*, *Is There an Ethics of Comedy*, and *Is It Bad When Comedies Make People Laugh?* *On Knowing*, and *On Lice*. Whoops, the last one isn't philosophical, but very practical.

The smallest essay is three words not including the title. I quote in full from *An Essay in Praise of Smallness*: *I admire minimalism.* [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on December 31, 2014

[parades and dogs](#)

[fire alarms](#)

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[100 Essays I Don't Have Time to Write: on umbrellas and sword fights](#)

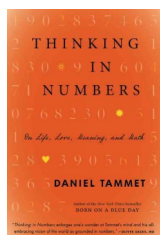
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Thinking in Numbers: on Life, Love, Meaning and Math



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It's a cliché, but people often say that if you excel at math, you'll have little talent for language and *vice versa*. Transplanted Londoner and Parisian resident, Daniel Tammet proves the

falsehood of this statement.

In 25 essays that examine life from a mathematical perspective, Tammet entralls and enlightens the reader on many things especially the beauty of mathematics. Einstein's son Hans Albert said that his father's character was more like an artist than that of a scientist because his highest praise for a theory "was not that it was correct nor that it was exact but that it was beautiful."

Tammet begins this collection with an essay describing his family and numbers theory. In fact, he attributes his first interest in math due to the fact that his neighbors' great interest in his family occurred because there were nine children. And as he explains it, there were 512 possible ways to spot him or his siblings around town in various combinations. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on December 29, 2014

[Thinking in Numbers: on Life](#)

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[Love](#)

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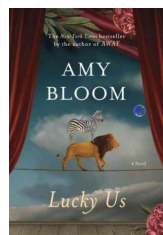
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Lucky Us



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This intriguing 1940s novel opens with a mother announcing that someone has died and they better hustle over to the house and "see what might be in it for us." The house belongs to Eva's dad and his recently deceased wife.

A week later Eva's Mom deposits her on the doorstep with a suitcase then disappears from her life. Upstairs is Eva's half-sister, Iris. Until this day, neither sister knew the other existed.

Iris, four years older and in high school, enters and wins many talent contests (elocution, dramatic readings, poetry, patriotic essays, and dance) in their small Ohio town and bergs like it within fifty miles. However, she must hide her earnings from her father, Edgar, a college professor of elocution, who has no qualms about stealing from his children.

Before long, Iris graduates from school and heads out to Hollywood. Because their dad basically abandons Eva to her own care, she soon drops out of school to join her older sister in Hollywood. They move into a rooming house and Iris shares her adventures with Eva as she holes up in their room until school is out each day.

Iris scores a few speaking roles in movies, but soon becomes involved in a gay sex scandal and gets blacklisted in Hollywood. The older more famous actress marries immediately and her career zooms on.

Soon Edgar reappears and along with a helpful make-up artist, Francisco, they decide to drive across country to find possible jobs in New York. Edgar thinks he can pass as a butler and with some training, Iris, can be a governess. As they drive through the west, Iris memories facts from *The Little Blue Books*

, and the party grills her on Shakespeare. Luckily, father and daughter land jobs with an Italian *nouveau riche* family, the Torellis.

Eva grows up to become a fortune teller. As Iris advised Eva, "It's the great thing about the war.... Anyone can be anyone." Iris adopts a son (somewhat illegally--they actually steal him from the orphanage) and falls in love with the Torellis' cook, Reenie, whom she convinces to leave her husband and move in with them.

To this crazy dysfunctional family, Bloom brings her insight as a former psychotherapist. The 40s time period is captured well and a series of letters from a dear family friend, who was thrown out of the country for being Jewish describe some of the hardships of Europe including the Dresden bombings.

In no sense is this a light, hopeful book, yet it is very well-written and captures the complex relationships and dynamics of a modern American family in the midst of a rapidly changing world. For a book about another family surviving WW II on the other side of the pond, try Amanda Hodginkson's [22 Britannia Road](#).

Posted by Dory L. on December 15, 2014

[Lucky Us](#)

[World War II](#)

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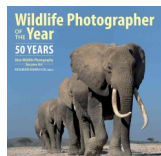
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Wildlife Photographer of the Year: 50 Years



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Have a soft spot in your heart for animals? Love unexpected and mesmerizing nature photographs? If so, this coffee table book is for you.

This book features the best of the best: a sampling of fifty years of winners from the Wildlife Photographer of the Year contest as well as an essay describing and presenting the history of the art.

It also includes some early nature photography, photographs that inspired later nature artists including Ansel Adams' 1941 photo "Snake River, the Tetons" with its magnificent play of light and shadows, curvilinear boulders and twin mountain peaks. Another great find is Eric Hosking's 1938 weirdly titled "The Tawny Owl that Robbed Me of an Eye" which turns out to a true story.

Be careful while taking pictures of owls! [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on December 10, 2014

[Wildlife Photographer of the Year: 50 Years](#)

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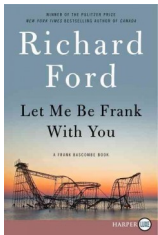
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Let Me Be Frank With You



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I'm not from Jersey, but Philly, which is a short bridge- or boat-ride away, but boy has Ford captured the Jersey *patois*, sense of alienation, and its ironic humor. Plus that reverence Jerseyites feel for what they call *The Shore*, a kind of mythical Fun Paradise with nature in the otherwise cemented-over Northeast.

Realtor and ex-sportswriter, Frank Bascombe returns in these four intertwined tales. Ford has stuck with the sensitive, observing hero from three of his novels *The Sportswriter*, *Independence Day* and *The Lay of the Land*, two of which won major awards.

Something bad, really bad, has happened to The Shore. Houses and lives have been ripped apart and most everyone is in a bad mood. Hurricane Sandy recently ripped through and most people have lost not only their homes, their finances, but also confidence in the future. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on December 3, 2014

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