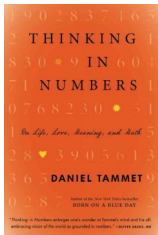


Thinking in Numbers: on Life, Love, Meaning and Math



[view in catalog](#)

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 enralls 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](#)

[Meaning and Math](#)

[Love](#)

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Monuments Men



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It's not often that a World War II film comes my way that stirs my soul. It's even rarer that what stirs my soul is not the personal story of an individual or a small group of people standing up for what is right against the Nazis or an escape from a German internment camp despite impossible odds. It's not that I don't enjoy a good war film, but most war films have the same basic features, [Read more](#)

Posted by Keith C. on December 26, 2014

[The monuments men](#)

[World War II](#)

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[Art](#)

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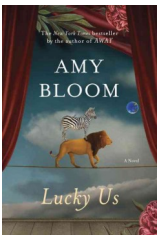
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Lucky Us



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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](#)

[Fiction](#)

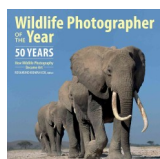
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[Wildlife Photographer of the Year: 50 Years](#)



[view in catalog](#)

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](#)

[Nonfiction](#)

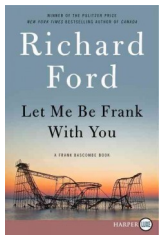
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Let Me Be Frank With You



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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

[Let Me Be Frank With You](#)

[Short Stories](#)

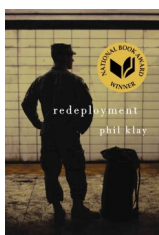
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2014 National Book Award Winners Announced



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In a year with many excellent books published, I'm sure the judges of this prestigious award had

many hard choices to make. But the winners were recently announced. They include:

Fiction: *Redeployment* by Phil Kay

This collection of stories by an ex-Marine takes us to the front lines of both the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, and in the best tradition of battle writing, the stories describe what it feels like to be on the front line. Klay also makes vivid the experience of coming home again after living through the loss of many comrades.

His inspiration to write came from reading Roald Dahl and Shil Silverstein as a child and Edgar Allen Poe and Shusaku Endo as a young adult.

Nonfiction: *Age of Ambition: Chasing Fortune, Truth, and Faith in the New China* by Evan Osnos

Osnos spent many years in China and was thunderstruck by the rapid onslaught of many changes in work, family, culture and politics. He compares it to America's Gilded Age but perhaps our Gilded Age on steroids. While writing this book, he was inspired by Katherine Boo's *Beyond the Beautiful Forever, Life, Death and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity*. He found it overwhelming to record a country's experience with such depth as Boo did with India. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on November 24, 2014

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