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A Numerate Life, A (Paperback)

By John Allen Paulos

Prometheus Books, United States, 2015. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. Employing intuitive ideas from mathematics, this quirky meta-memoir raises questions about our lives that most of us don't think to ask, but arguably should: What part of memory is reliable fact, what part creative embellishment? Which favorite presuppositions are unfounded, which statistically biased? By conjoining two opposing mindsets--the suspension of disbelief required in storytelling and the skepticism inherent in the scientific method--bestselling mathematician John Allen Paulos has created an unusual hybrid, a composite of personal memories and mathematical approaches to re-evaluating them. Entertaining vignettes from Paulos's biography abound--ranging from a bullying math teacher and a fabulous collection of baseball cards to romantic crushes, a grandmother's petty larceny, and his quite unintended role in getting George Bush elected president in 2000. These vignettes serve as springboards to many telling perspectives: simple arithmetic puts life-long habits in a dubious new light; higher dimensional geometry helps us see that we're all rather peculiar; nonlinear dynamics explains the narcissism of small differences cascading into very different siblings; logarithms and exponentials yield insight on why we tend to become bored and jaded as we age; and there...



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