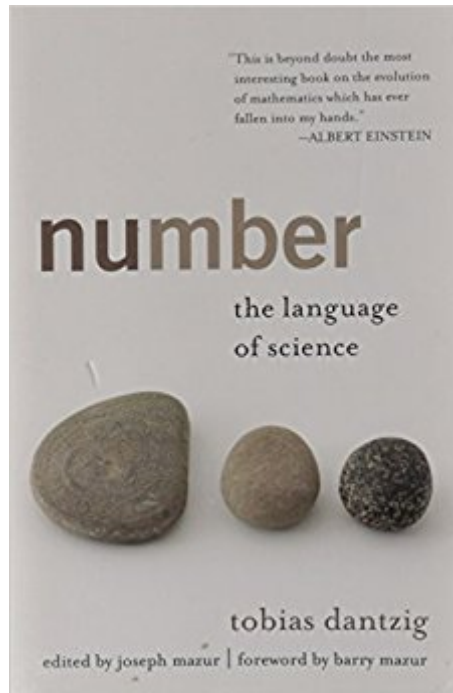


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Number: The Language Of Science



Synopsis

"Beyond doubt the most interesting book on the evolution of mathematics which has ever fallen into my hands." — Albert Einstein
Number is an eloquent, accessible tour de force that reveals how the concept of number evolved from prehistoric times through the twentieth century. Tobias Dantzig shows that the development of math — from the invention of counting to the discovery of infinity — is a profoundly human story that progressed by "trying and erring, by groping and stumbling." He shows how commerce, war, and religion led to advances in math, and he recounts the stories of individuals whose breakthroughs expanded the concept of number and created the mathematics that we know today.

Book Information

Paperback: 416 pages

Publisher: Plume (January 30, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0452288118

ISBN-13: 978-0452288119

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.8 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 34 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #243,301 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #30 in Books > Science & Math > Mathematics > Number Systems #57 in Books > Science & Math > Mathematics > Pure Mathematics > Number Theory #223 in Books > Science & Math > Mathematics > History

Customer Reviews

"Beyond doubt the most interesting book on the evolution of mathematics which has ever fallen into my hands." — Albert Einstein
"Anyone interested in the history of numbers and mathematics should read this book." — Mario Livio, author of The Golden Ratio
"A classic . . . it deserves a place on the bookshelf of anyone interested in the history of thought." — Charles Seife, author of Zero and Decoding the Universe

"It is the aim of this book to...present the evolution of number as the profoundly human story which it is." — Tobias Dantzig
"This is beyond doubt the most interesting book on the evolution of mathematics which has ever fallen into my hands. If people know how to treasure the truly good, this book will attain a lasting place in the literature of the world. The evolution of mathematical

thought from the earliest times to the latest constructions is presented here with admirable consistency and originality and in a wonderfully lively style." — Albert Einstein

Tobias Dantzig's *Number: The Language of Science* is one of the truly great classics of mathematical exposition, perhaps the most lucid history of the number concept ever written. Its republication should be a cause for celebration by every scientifically minded person, regardless of his or her mathematical background.

— Eli Maor, author of *e: The Story of a Number and To Infinity and Beyond*

Tobias Dantzig's *Number* is a classic. A fascinating account of the evolution of mathematics, it deserves a place on the bookshelf of anyone who is interested in the history of thought.

— Charles Seife, author of *Zero and Alpha and Omega*

A classic! Anyone interested in the history of numbers and mathematics should read this book.

— Mario Livio, author of *The Golden Ratio*

From the rudimentary mathematical abilities of prehistoric man to the counterintuitive and bizarre ideas at the edges of modern math, this masterpiece of science writing tells the story of mathematics through the history of its most central concept: number. Dantzig succeeds in his aim to reveal a human story, and in making that story accessible to the non-expert. In his friendly and welcoming style, he shows how math developed from basic faculties present in us all, beginning with our "number sense" — the ability to discern that an object has been added to or removed from a small collection of objects without counting. The subsequent evolution of the concept of number is inextricably linked with the history of human culture, as Dantzig demonstrates. He shows how advances in math were spurred by the demands of growing commerce in the ancient world; how the pure speculation of philosophers and religious mystics contributed to our understanding of numbers; how the exchange of ideas between cultures in times of war and imperial conquest fueled advances in knowledge; and, ultimately, how the forces of history combine with human intuition to trigger revolutions in thought. Sweeping in scope, *Number* is an open doorway into the world of math. Dantzig explains the foundations of mathematics with ease, and eloquently explores deeper philosophical questions that arise along the way. He describes the properties of all kinds of numbers — integers, primes, irrationals, transcendentals, and more. He explains the significance of zero, and shows that its invention had revolutionary consequences for arithmetic. He shows how the invention of symbols for use in algebra — a radical departure from tradition at the time — ushered in a new era of math; how arithmetic and geometry reflect each other; and how calculus uses infinity to model the continuity of space and time. With a new afterword, notes section, and bibliography written by math professor and author Joseph Mazur, and a new foreword by mathematician Barry Mazur, the Masterpiece Science edition of *Number* — which was first published in 1930 — is the first update of Dantzig's

classic work in over fifty years. It is a story that ranges from the dawn of man to the genius of history's greatest mathematicians, vividly revealing how the pursuit of knowledge transcends the rise and fall of civilizations. © Copyright Pearson Education. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I first read this book as a junior in high school and I'm not sure why I even picked it up. My sophomore year I barely squeaked by with a D in Algebra 2 my first semester and a C the next. But when I began this book, so many things started to click. This book, for me, started the process of unlearning. I took copious notes, I started asking questions in my Trig class-- this book was instrumental in my education. Dantzig told me how I thought, and why math was special. Because of this book, I started reading other math books, and by the time I left my high school I had read every single math book in the library. Because of this book, I got a BS in mathematics-- a guy with a D in Algebra 2!! I reread this book just recently and heck, I'm learning all sorts of stuff from it again! Somehow, and I don't know how he does it, Dantzig eloquently explains the history, the culture, and the minds behind the most interesting concepts and the most pervasive subject in the world. And he does it in a way that taught me as a D high school math student, and has taught me again now-- things that my undergraduate degree in math never could. Buy this book and fall in love with it.

Who could have thought a college text would be so interesting? This book provided hours of entertainment as I was studying, not to mention the paper and binding is also amazing. It is written in a way that makes math and its complex ideas clearly and with adequate depth of understanding.

This is an amazing study into the origins of Mathematics. The book was recommended to me by a former professor believing because I was going for BS in mathematics I would enjoy it. He was not wrong. I have not been able to put it down. If you enjoy mathematics as a hobby or as professional, give the book a try.

I learned a lot from reading this book, especially the gaps I left in the fundamentals in mathematics from my study of engineering. It is just a great book.

This book is every bit as good, entertaining and satisfying as Einstein said it was. It is packed with information and insights. Top tier book in every way.

my boys love to read this

Life-changing.

I'm sending this book to my daughter, the doctor, who has expressed a desire to know something about the intellectual history of mathematics. I can't believe there is only one review! I have read this book three times; I may read it yet again before I die. Rather than list all its attributes, I suggest to the reader that s/he think of an attribute, and assume I gave I praise it to the limit of my ability!

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