



The Numerati

Stephen Baker

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"Steve Baker puts his finger on perhaps the most important cultural trend today: the explosion of data about every aspect of our world and the rise of applied math gurus who know how to use it." --Chris Anderson, Editor-in-Chief of Wired Magazine (Wired Magazine)

An urgent look at how a global math elite is predicting and altering our behavior -- at work, at the mall, and in bed.

Every day we produce loads of data about ourselves simply by living in the modern world: we click web pages, flip channels, drive through automatic toll booths, shop with credit cards, and make cell phone calls. Now, in one of the greatest undertakings of the twenty-first century, a savvy group of mathematicians and computer scientists is beginning to sift through this data to dissect us and map out our next steps. Their goal? To manipulate our behavior -- what we buy, how we vote -- without our even realizing it.

In this tour de force of original reporting and analysis, journalist Stephen Baker provides us with a fascinating guide to the world we're all entering -- and to the people controlling that world. The Numerati have infiltrated every realm of human affairs, profiling us as workers, shoppers, patients, voters, potential terrorists -- and lovers. The implications are vast. Our privacy evaporates. Our bosses can monitor and measure our every move (then reward or punish us). Politicians can find the swing voters among us, by plunking us all into new political groupings with names like "Hearth Keepers" and "Crossing Guards." It can sound scary. But the Numerati can also work on our behalf, diagnosing an illness before we're aware of the symptoms, or even helping us find our soul mate. Surprising, enlightening, and deeply relevant, The Numerati shows how a powerful new endeavor -- the mathematical modeling of humanity -- will transform every aspect of our lives.

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