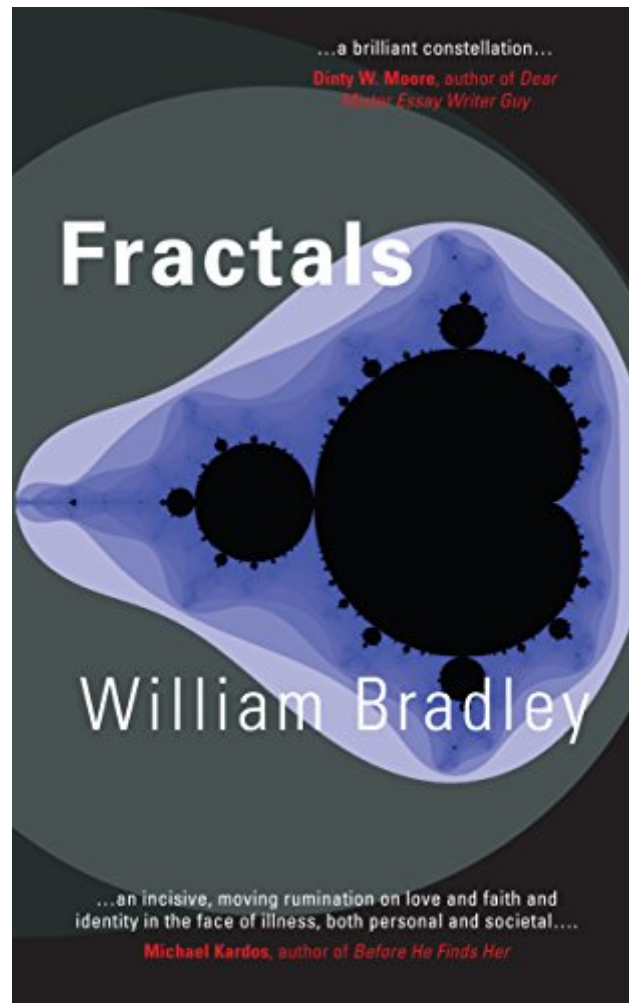




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Fractals



Synopsis

In his seminal book *The Fractal Geometry of Nature*, Benoit Mandelbrot wrote, "A cauliflower shows how an object can be made of many parts, each of which is like a whole, but smaller. Many plants are like that. A cloud is made of billows upon billows upon billows that look like clouds. As you come closer to a cloud you don't get something smooth, but irregularities at a smaller scale." In this collection of linked essays, William Bradley presents us with small glimpses of his larger consciousness, which is somewhat irregular itself. Reflecting on subjects as diverse as soap opera actors, superheroes, mortality, and marriage, these essays endeavor to reveal what we have in common, the connections we share that demonstrate that we are all fractals, in a sense "self-similar component parts of a larger whole."

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Customer Reviews

Our thoughts can surprise, excite, sadden, and even cause us to question from the place in which

they derive; however the essayist William Bradley specifically articulates the place and time from which his interesting, life stories began with such vigor in *Fractals*. I found myself jealous of his ability to write about vulnerable feelings and happenings humans experience but lack the security of putting pen to paper. You will find yourself immersed with curiosity to learn more as Bradley writes about tough subjects such as friendships, cancer, death, morals, marriage, and relationships from his perspective. For me, he turns himself inside out and exposes what most would secretly hide for a lifetime. Perhaps you'll shed a few tears on one page and quickly turn to laughter on the next as I did. A good read for keeping it real!

I wish to could do anything as well as Bill writes. A must must must read.

I love that this book is ranking among math books, and I hope the math lovers are finding joy in reading it. But it's important to establish that this is a book of personal essays, and that they're not purely or simply "personal," but they range wildly over pop culture (soap operas, comic books, horror movies), so that, in sum, they provide an intelligent and engaging look into a particular life through some of the author's trials and celebrations, notably a long but ultimately successful battle with cancer. It's a book filled with wisdom (like "I often wish that life were more like a soap opera. It's not that I need more melodrama in my life—I had quite enough during my cancer years—but their simplified worlds seem easier to live in.") as well as frivolity. I love the feel of this book, the way Bradley matches his tone to his subject, the way he's sympathetic but never pandering, as well as bold and funny and ironic, when and where those tones are warranted. This is not a book to read for research on any of its many subtopics, to learn about something or other. It's a book to read for the pleasure of occupying an interesting mind for a spell, to be moved by the art of its sentences, and to emerge newly or more deeply challenged by life's vicissitudes (the good and the bad, the fleeting and the eternal, the young and the restless).

William Bradley deftly balances the ache of knowing the difficult truths of life with charm, laugh-out-loud humor, and grace. In a single turn, he can move from wrestling with the uncertainties built from loss to celebrating the ways in which what we loved then and what we love now are the real and true things that sustain us. Within these varied and vast contemplations of time, memory, faith, fear, death, regret, and the knowledge that the past is forever lost to us, Bradley ultimately urges us to continue to seek the best version of ourselves and to hold on to "what still might be."

The essays were insightful, full of feeling, and he is crazy in love with his wife. Bradley's writing flows. Sign me up for an advance purchase of his next book of essays.

Loved it!

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