

The Study of Animal Languages

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"An exuberant, wise, and darkly funny novel from an essential new voice in fiction." --Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney, author of *The Nest*

This astonishing first novel tells the story of a married couple - both experts in language and communication - who nevertheless cannot seem to communicate with each other.

Ivan is a tightly wound philosophy professor whose reverence for logic and order governs not only his academic interests, but also his closest relationships. His wife, Prue, is quite the opposite: a pioneer in the emerging field of biolinguistics, she is bold and vibrant, full of life and feeling. Thus far, they have managed to weather their differences. But lately, an odd distance has settled in between them. Might it have something to do with the arrival of the college's dashing but insufferable new writer-in-residence, whose novel Prue always seems to be reading?

Into this delicate moment barrels Ivan's unstable father-in-law, Frank, in town to hear Prue deliver a lecture on birdsong that is set to cement her tenure application. But the talk doesn't go as planned, unleashing a series of crises that force Ivan to finally confront the problems in his marriage, and to begin to fight - at last - for what he holds dear.

A dazzlingly insightful and entertaining novel about the limitations of language, the fragility of love, and the ways we misunderstand each other and ourselves, *The Study of Animal Languages* marks the debut of a brilliant new voice in fiction.

The Study of Animal Languages Details

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Author : Lindsay Stern

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Genre : Fiction, Contemporary, Literary Fiction

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From Reader Review *The Study of Animal Languages* for online ebook

Amanda says

A scholarly and academic novel that ultimately touches on very human conditions and behaviors: mental health, marriage, ambition, communication, misunderstanding, mid-life maybe? I found it ironic; a little funny and a little sad. Sometimes profound.

I think for the right audience, it accomplishes something, it has that special ingredient that makes literary fiction beautiful in the eye of the literary-fiction-loving beholder.

Admittedly, I'm not always a fan of literary novels that are often prize winning pieces works, and so I probably wasn't the ideal reader for this ARC. That said, the fact that I have given it 3 stars meaning "I liked it" says a lot! It is one that I will probably remember over time.

My thanks to Goodreads and Viking for the Advance Reader Copy I received.

Jennifer says

4.5/5 Stars

I won an ARC for *The Study of Animal Languages* by @lindsayostern from a #goodreadsgiveaway (my first win from them ever). I wasn't sure what to expect - a debut work by an unknown author that I had never heard of before entering the giveaway could be many things, but let me say: I was pleasantly surprised and very impressed by this novel.

This is the story of two married professors: a philosopher of knowledge and an ornithologist that studies bird communication who, despite their expertise, have never quite learned how to talk to each other.

First, the writing is beautiful. I could tell Ms. Stern put a lot of work into the prose. The character development was very good and she does a great job putting in enough plot to keep me engaged enough to finish this novel in less than 24 hours. At times humorous and at others just plain sad, I do recommend this novel, especially to anyone that enjoys reading about academia and marriage.

My one tiny critique is that I felt this novel could have used maybe another 50 pages to more fully illustrate the relationship at the heart of the novel. All said, though, this was a great debut and I look forward to whatever Ms. Stern does next.

James Beggarly says

Wonderfully amusing first novel about a married couple who study language in different ways as university professors, but have completely forgotten how to talk to each other. Over a frantic few days the couple finally has to examine who they are and ask why are they together. Really smart and filled with fun insights and moves at a wonderful pace.

Jessica Gronau says

This book is about Ivan and Prue two married college professors. They forget how to talk/communicate with each other though. Prue's father comes to town for a speech she is giving and things just start to go crazy. They both have to figure out what is true and really important to them in their marriage. The book started out a little slow for me but I definitely enjoyed it more and more as the story went on. Thank you goodreads and Viking for the ARC I won.

Michell says

Good Reads Winner

Sylvia says

Didn't care for this one. I'm not a fan of either philosophy or ornithology, the study subjects of the two main characters, and found the academic details very dull. Hated the bipolar father-in-law, in fact found no empathy with any of the characters. Opaque, much ado about nothing

Linda Stephenson says

Well written but depressing.

Bianca says

A quick read. About intellectuals and a scientist studying animal languages who have a hard time communicating themselves. Easy to read and a good human story.
