WE FEEL FINE
An Almanac of Human Emotion
By Sep Kamvar and Jonathan Harris

In 2005, Sep Kamvar and Jonathan Harris created the award-winning website www.wefeelfine.org, an exploration of human emotion that harvests human feelings from all over the internet. And so of course WE FEEL FINE: An Almanac of Human Emotion (Scribner; December 2009; $30.00) is no ordinary book—with thousands of authors from all over the world sharing their uncensored emotions, it is a radical experiment in mass authorship, merging the online and offline worlds to create an indispensable handbook for anyone interested in what it’s like to be human.

Both the web site and the accompanying book are dazzling explorations of contemporary human feelings. Kamvar and Harris use their computer programs to peer into the inner lives of millions, constructing a vast and deep portrait of our collective emotional landscape. Armed with custom software that scours the world's new Internet blog posts every minute, hunting down the phrases "I feel" and "I am feeling," the authors have collected over 12 million feelings since 2005, amassing an ever-growing database of human emotion that adds more than 10,000 new feelings a day.

Drawing from this massive real-world stockpile of found sentiment, WE FEEL FINE presents the best of the best—the euphoria, the despair, the passion, the dreams, and the desires that make us human. At turns touching and thought-provoking, humorous and heartbreaking, WE FEEL FINE combines the words and pictures of total strangers to explore every corner of the human experience. Packed with personal photos, scientific observations, statistical infographics, and countless candid vignettes from ordinary people, WE FEEL FINE is a visual, fiercely intelligent, endlessly engrossing crash course in the secrets of human emotion.

Are men or women happier? Does rainy weather affect how we feel? Is beauty the bridge between happiness and negativity? How do our emotions change as we age? What causes depression? What's sexy? What's normal? What's human? WE FEEL FINE finally provides a way to answer these questions that is both quantitative and anecdotal, putting individual stories into a larger context and showing the stories behind the statistics—or as the authors like to say, “brining life to statistics and statistics to life.” Equal parts pop culture and psychology, computer science and conceptual art, sociology and storytelling, WE FEEL FINE boasts lush,
colorful spreads devoted to 50 feelings, 13 cities, 10 topics, 6 holidays, 5 age groups, 4 weather conditions, and 2 genders; and explores our emotions from every angle, providing insights into and examples of each. The result is a book that reflects what’s on our blogs, in our hearts, and in our minds. It makes the world seem smaller and reminds us that there is indeed beauty in the everyday ups and downs of life.

About the Authors

Sep Kamvar is a consulting professor of Computational Mathematics at Stanford University, whose research focuses on data mining and information retrieval. From 2003-2007 he was the engineering lead of personalization at Google. He founded Kaltix, a search engine technology company that was acquired by Google in 2003. His artwork is in the permanent collections of the MoMA in New York and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston.

Jonathan Harris designs systems to explore and explain the human world that combine elements of computer science, anthropology, visual art and storytelling. He studied computer science at Princeton University and was awarded the 2004 Fabrica fellowship. The winner of two 2005 Webby Awards, Harris’ work has also been recognized by AIGA, Ars Electronica, ID Magazine, and the State of Vermont. His work has been featured by CNN, BBC, Reuters, NPR, USA Today, Metropolis and Wired and has been exhibited at Le Centre Pompidou and The Museum of Modern Art. Originally from Shelburne, Vermont, he currently lives in Brooklyn.

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