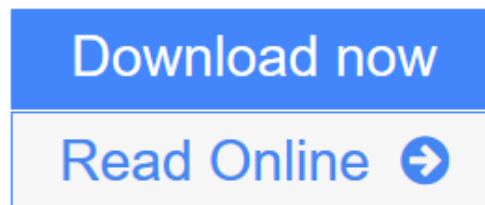




Storytelling: La machine à fabriquer des histoires et à formater les esprits

Christian Salmon , Γλῶσσης Καυκιῆς (Translator) , Συλβῆ Ρηγοποῦλου (Editor)



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Depuis qu'elle existe, l'humanité a su cultiver l'art de raconter des histoires, un art partout au coeur du lien social. Mais depuis les années 1990, aux États-Unis puis en Europe, il a été investi par les logiques de la communication et du capitalisme triomphant, sous l'appellation anodine de « storytelling ». Derrière les campagnes publicitaires, mais aussi dans l'ombre des campagnes électorales victorieuses, de Bush à Sarkozy, se cachent les techniciens sophistiqués du storytelling management ou du digital storytelling, pour mieux formater les esprits des consommateurs et des citoyens.

C'est cet incroyable hold-up sur l'imagination des humains que révèle Christian Salmon dans ce livre, au terme d'une longue enquête consacrée aux applications toujours plus nombreuses du storytelling : le marketing s'appuie plus sur l'histoire des marques que sur leur image, les managers doivent raconter des histoires pour motiver les salariés, les militaires en Irak s'entraînent sur des jeux vidéos conçus à Hollywood et les spins doctor construisent la vie politique comme un récit... Christian Salmon dévoile ici les rouages d'une « machine à raconter » qui remplace le raisonnement rationnel, bien plus efficace que toutes les imageries orwelliennes de la société totalitaire.

Storytelling: La machine à fabriquer des histoires et à formater les esprits Details

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From Reader Review Storytelling: La machine à fabriquer des histoires et à formater les esprits for online ebook

Terry Clague says

A very interesting, well-written (and/or translated) critical analysis of the growth of "storytelling".

The book scares reader by exposing the "storytelling technicians" behind victorious election campaigns (of Obama, Bush, Reagan and Sarkozy), brands and management speak (nicely citing several Routledge authors in the process of the latter). A good example of this is offered in an exposition of how a US supreme court judge cited the case of a fictional TV series as a justification for torture: "The fact that an eminent judge sitting in the Supreme Court - the institution which, in theory, guarantees that the laws and actions of the executive are constitutional - can claim to use a TV series as an argument to justify the validity of acts of torture that are illegal under international law... demonstrates how far political life has degenerated".

Another anecdote portrays a senior aide to the last US president write off a piece of investigative journalism as having originated in the "reality-based community".

Highly recommended.

Stacy-Ann says

This book I find very interesting to goes on by talking about what is storytelling and how it has been used and to project the mind. One of the lines I got from it is Storytelling has been able to emerge as a technology of communication, control, and power. I think this book is really worth reading because it shows how powerful storytelling can be.

Giuseppe Lombardo says

Più che un testo divulgativo sullo Storytelling, l'opera di Christian Salmon è un compendio sull'evoluzione della narratologia sino ad oggi. Dal marketing commerciale a quello politico passando per la comunicazione istituzionale, il libro si dimostra un utile spunto di riflessione, un bignami di concetti rudimentali mai realmente approfonditi. Buona la casistica citata, dalla Nike agli spot elettorali, soprattutto per ciò che concerne il primo e l'ultimo capitolo. In mezzo molta fuffa. Voto 2.

Szymon Pytlik says

Miejscami dobra, zw?aszczu ko?cowe rozdzia?y, ale do po?owy nuda i sporo oczywisto?ci (by? mo?e nieoczywistych prawie 10 lat temu jak by?a pisana, ale dzi? ju? banalnych) o tym, ?e w kapitalizmie i polityce liczby si? story bardziej ni? fakty czy produkt.

Diana Damas says

Aunque solo fuera por su repercusión mediática, cualquier profesional del storytelling debería leer este libro, porque va a encontrar múltiples referencias a él en las publicaciones especializadas.

Pero además es interesante, y cita una buena cantidad de anécdotas acerca del uso del storytelling en diversos entornos más allá del clásico en marketing. Es su mejor cualidad, en mi opinión, y solo por ella ya merece la pena su lectura.

SINOPSIS

Christian Salmon presenta una visión pesimista del storytelling describiendo su empleo como instrumento de manipulación política, comercial, empresarial e incluso militar. En cada capítulo se concentra en describir el perverso empleo de la disciplina en estas y otras áreas, con el evidente fin de alertar a los lectores sobre el modo en que un buen relato puede manipular sus emociones hasta el punto de alterar su percepción de la realidad.

A FAVOR:

- Los casos de storytelling torticeramente empleado son fascinantes. A la cabeza de todos ellos, "el abrazo" de Bush a la hija de una de las víctimas del 11S ("Ashley's story"), y cómo aquel hecho puntual se convirtió en el centro de su campaña presidencial. En mi opinión, le siguen muy de cerca en interés las experiencias de integración de los videojuegos en el entrenamiento militar de las tropas estadounidenses y, en menor medida por ser más conocidas, las estrategias de marca.

- La llamada de atención sobre cómo el énfasis en las historias desactiva el discurso racional en quienes las reciben y el peligro que esto supone en la toma de decisiones, tanto políticas como de consumo.

EN CONTRA:

- Salvo que se posean conocimientos previos sobre storytelling, la lectura de este libro puede resultar un tanto confusa, ya que no hay una definición clara de qué es (más allá de las narraciones "obvias" como novelas e historias de ficción, que es el significado que la mayoría de las personas asocian a la narrativa) ni explicaciones acerca de los mecanismos por los que resulta eficaz a la hora de convencer a la audiencia. Se concentra más en la descripción de casos que en el análisis global. Un poco más de síntesis, aunque solo hubiera ocupado un epílogo, no hubiera estado mal.

- El análisis del fenómeno es claramente sesgado, en más de un sentido. Por una parte, ignora todas las aplicaciones positivas que el storytelling tiene en terrenos como la educación o la motivación de los seres humanos para comportarse decentemente. Salvo que se me haya pasado por alto, no hay una sola mención a las aplicaciones que el relato tiene en los procesos de aprendizaje en escuelas, universidades e institutos y su potencial para hacer relevantes para el alumnado las materias que se pretenden transmitir. Tampoco aparecen sus significativas aplicaciones para la recaudación de fondos en favor de las ONGs, por ejemplo, y cómo permiten a los ciudadanos más favorecidos del Primer Mundo tomar conciencia de que las víctimas de guerras, catástrofes e injusticias sociales no son simples estadísticas, sino seres humanos con sufrimientos reales, capacidad de trabajo y derecho a la misma dignidad y bienestar que cualquiera.

Por otra, y este probablemente sea el fallo más grave, sitúa el origen del fenómeno y sus usos poco éticos en los años 80. Al leerlo, me viene a la cabeza inevitablemente la imagen de Claude Rains ataviado con uniforme de gendarme y exclamando con voz indignada "¡Qué escándalo! ¡Acabo de saber que en este local se juega!". (Si la referencia no te dice nada, cierra esta ventana del navegador y consigue cuanto antes una copia de Casablanca.)

El storytelling, para bien y para mal, ha sido empleado desde el principio de los tiempos para inclinar las balanzas emocionales de la sociedad en una u otra dirección. Las Cruzadas, los pogroms, la abolición de la

esclavitud, el voto femenino, las luchas obreras en los siglos XIX y XX o la creciente conciencia medioambiental de las poblaciones, solo pueden entenderse plenamente a través del análisis del relato y cómo este configura la identidad y valores de los grupos humanos.

Lo que sí ha cambiado, probablemente, es la escala del fenómeno, tanto por el tamaño de dichos grupos como por su capacidad de generar cambios sociales. Por supuesto, el desarrollo de los medios de comunicación y la aparición de "asesores expertos" en política y empresa es un elemento diferencial en los últimos 50 años.

Pero vaya, que nuevo, lo que se dice nuevo, no es.

CONCLUSIÓN:

Recomendable, pero lo aprovecharás mucho más si tienes conocimientos previos sobre el tema. Si no, al menos te servirá para horrorizarte un rato y tener una actitud un poco más defensiva ante quienes pretendan colarte un gol mediante una bonita historia sin ningún argumento racional detrás.

Dmitry Boichenko says

It is a very comprehensive, extremely focused, and reliable book of what a story can do. It never reaches the classic status but it never really tries to.

Al Bità says

This scholarly, but generally quite readable, examination of the concept of storytelling as it has developed over the past 25 years or so, to dominate the social, economic and political landscape of the Western world. Sandwiched between an Introduction and an Afterword we find seven chapters, progressing historically, each dealing with specific aspects of the increasing domination and control of the appeal of narrative to humanity, in order to control it.

It begins, basically, with marketing, as developed in the 1980s and 1990s, moving from product to brand names and logos, people (customers) became consumers, then audiences, and traditional advertising extended to advertising campaigns, which in turn became "narrative sequences"...

The methods thus learned and refined started to become applied to management generally; corporations were inveigled into accepting the marketing approach as beneficial to themselves, and they began to sell images of themselves as if they, too, were a "product" which can be "sold" through the use of beneficent narratives and feel-good stories, regardless as to whether some or all of the actual products did harm or not — indeed, the stories generated actually helped to cover up any number of problems.

The technique then spread successfully to political campaigns, where positive stories of one side of politics could be further inversely enhanced by pushing deliberately "feel-bad" stories about opponents, clouding the issues by promoting suspicion and innuendo rather than facts, fear rather than ideals, and sometimes even downright lies rather than truths. At the moment the process has now taken over the governments themselves, with stories and counter-stories overlapping, contradicting themselves and adding, not only to the confusion, but also to increasing distrust and cynicism in all marketing, management, companies, corporations, political parties, and governments themselves...

At the end of the Introduction, Salmon writes:

“The art of narrative — which, ever since it emerged, has recounted humanity’s experience by shedding light on it —has become, like storytelling, an instrument that allows the state to lie and control public opinion. Behind the brands and the TV series, and in the shadows of victorious election campaigns from Bush to Sarkozy, as well as in those of military campaigns in Iraq and elsewhere, there are dedicated storytelling technicians. The empire has confiscated narrative. This book tells the incredible story of how it has hijacked the imaginary.”

This book sets out these developments, as selected by Salmon, in a way which smacks of intelligent objectivity. Whether any one of us can do anything about it is another matter altogether. After reading this book, one can certainly not claim ignorance.

????????? ??????? says

I have read first 100 pages, but it didn't fill out my expectations. (I need to point out that I'm a person that reads until the last page). I work in the (digital) marketing industry and I was looking for practical tips and tricks, examples, inspiration etc. The book gives a lot of literature sources which is good for all who want to read (research) more.

Courtney says

I'll be honest, most of *Storytelling: Bewitching the Modern Mind* was a 2.5. But then the last chapter and afterword happened, and I had no choice but to bump up my rating. While the book itself is very uneven, Salmon does offer some excellent observations about the role of narrative in different spheres of power: corporate culture, advertising, military training, and politics, to be specific. Basically, Salmon's argument is that storytelling and narrative sequences have infiltrated these facets of the public sphere. As a consequence, public opinion and behavior have become much more emotion-driven. Rather than appealing to logos, the stories we are inundated with attempt to manipulate us by exploiting our collective attraction to stories and anecdotes.

There are two issues that, I feel, undermine *Storytelling's* overall quality. First of all, this book was originally written in French (why are the French so much smarter than us?!), making this a translation. A translation that feels like it was rushed. That does account for some typos and the occasional clunkiness. The other culprit is structural, however. Each chapter allows Salmon to direct his critical gaze towards a different instance of narrative/storytelling. That's all fine and good, but he doesn't make any attempt to tie the chapters to one another. They feel very isolated, which is a problem when you're trying to offer them up as component pieces of an overarching analysis. I guess Salmon's own story doesn't have very useful segues.

Because the title includes the word "bewitching," I was also expecting *Storytelling* to talk about how the proliferation of stories might actually make up more resistant to narrative power (over time). I mean, is there a breaking point? A moment in which we become disenchanted with narrative and begin to reject it? Salmon doesn't make any attempt to address how the widespread use of storytelling could actually contribute to a narrative backlash. It's an issue worth considering, however. So, I guess what I'm saying is MORE MAX WEBER!!

I am glad I read this book. Among other things, it introduced me to a lot of unfamiliar writers and theorists

who will probably pop up in my own future bibliographies. Storytelling also introduced me to the discipline of narratology, which really is really the perfect revelation for someone with degrees in both English lit. and performance studies. :)

Annabelle says

Tellement à la mode que ça en devient navrant. Récurrent chez F. Taddéi notamment.

Il aurait été intéressant que les journalistes fassent la propre auto-critique de leurs pratiques d'écriture à partir de cet argumentaire qui vise à prouver la nouvelle toute-puissance d'un processus narratif basé sur la multiplication de "séquences" (CF Henri G., conseiller spécial) et d'anecdotes.

L'argumentation marche mieux dans le monde de l'entreprise que dans la politique, à mon avis.

Lorenzo says

Saggio che ho praticamente divorato e studiato in una settimana. La panoramica di Salmon sull'utilizzo delle tecniche storytelling nell'industria, come nella politica e nell'addestramento militare è pressoché esauriente sotto molti punti di vista. Per quanto a volte confusionario nei continui spostamenti da un argomento o da un esempio all'altro - scelta forse forzata dalla vastità del tema - la lettura rimane scorrevole nella sua totalità, grazie anche ad un lessico semplice e ad una terminologia tecnica usata con parsimonia. Un libro consultabile da tutti, anche dai più distanti dagli studi della comunicazione. I capitoli legati all'espansione delle "stories" nella politica americana (vedi Nixon, Reagan, Bush Jr.), nella relativa propaganda e conseguente manipolazione dei media, come l'esempio di Fox News, sono, a mio avviso, i più interessanti in assoluto di tutto il libro.

Un must have per tutti coloro che vogliono esplorare queste moderne applicazioni della narrazione, sempre più presenti nelle nostre vite.

Vishal Misra says

"Storytelling" is a great little polemic. Though, again, it doesn't say much new, it presents its argument cogently, effectively and concisely. The downside is that the work isn't overly original. There are plenty of works on the rise of fiction in our society. Perhaps this explains the enduring existence of magic realism. Plenty of people recognise we live in a fake world.

That said, "Storytelling" is still powerful. Salmon takes as his start point the brand and companies. Marketing and management theories have all ensured that brands no longer market products, they market narratives. Those narratives are only loosely connected to reality, but they have had significant economic effects. They have lionised a fictitious capitalism, and pushed for greater "efficiency" as brands operate behind the smokescreen of the stories they tell us. This was something that Foucault and Barthes predicted, and Salmon credits his debt to these thinkers.

Moving to politics, Salmon shows how "post-truth" politics started with Reagan, and his all-American narrative. There may not have been much substance, but the power of stories to sway politics and therefore people is deeply important. Gone is rhetoric based in fact, and enlightenment principles are replaced with

ensuring that emotions are prioritised and heart-strings tugged. A move mastered by Bush Jr, with his now notorious hug of a girl who lost her mother in 9/11. This narrative sent the fee-good vibes that portrayed him as believable.

Salmon also examines the military. Its use of video game simulation technology is controversial enough. However, the helpers in creating such tech, are Hollywood. They pushed to the military the importance of narrative quality to get trainees to suspend disbelief and treat simulations as more than merely games. This has terrible consequences in the sense that we are creating military personnel devoid of empathy to save money in immersive training.

Finally, Salmon looks at propaganda. The rise of 24-hour news, and infotainment. This captures the importance of presenting a cracking and sensational yarn devoid of all analysis. This is the formula cracked by Fox News and demonstrates how easy it is to creat fake news, long before Trump's appropriation of the phrase and the creation of "alternative facts". This also shows how the contempt for the mainstream media came about.

In all, this is a great book, only slightly let down by its naïveté in its veneration of Barack Obama, who sold hope and delivered precious little change. That said, it still analyses effectively what Obama had mastered in the art of telling a political story. This makes a short book worth the read. Salmon is relentless in showing that narrative, narration and fiction govern our lives in almost every sphere, and it is the job of critical thinkers to be aware of this.

Marta says

Great book!

It was recommended to me.

Simon says

Thanks to Terry for recommending this one. A short but interesting – indeed, consciousness-raising – discussion of the rise of narrative in business, politics and the military. A couple of things I found particularly interesting. Firstly, the stuff about neo-marketing and the ideology of change - basically the story that businesses tell themselves and the markets about being light, flexible and adaptable - and how that ideology can percolate right the way through an organisation as an internal narrative (think of departments in the organisation where you work that are constantly moving people around, to the massive irritation of everybody). Secondly, the astonishing phrase ‘the reality-based community’ used as an insult by a Bush advisor (probably Karl Rove) to columnist Ron Suskind in 2002, which I entirely missed first time around. The more you think about that phrase the more it makes your head spin, defining the utter absurdity of the Bush White House.

One major gripe with the book is that we don’t get much of an attempt to define the terms ‘story’ or ‘narrative’ until about page 50 (of a book that’s only 159pp long), or get much discussion of the structural elements of those concepts that give them their explanatory power. If you’re going to build an entire argument (and book) around a concept then the courteous thing to do for your reader is to define that concept at the beginning, and not just assume that the way a thing, or series of things, relates to another is self-evident.

But overall, very interesting indeed. Terry's right, this stuff does absolutely explain the emergence and ubiquity of the word 'journey', popping up in every corner of our cultural and social lives, much to my recent irritation. (Hypocritically, though, I'll admit to absolutely loving the perfume ads that you get on TV at this time of year – tiny, 10-second stories, a little splash of music, some beautiful images, and people, all thrown together by the kind of neo-marketing tosspots that I suspect the author of this book probably despises).

Lisa Orki says

Nous nous savions manipulés par les médias. Ce livre met en exergue la différence entre narration et information. Il relate comment le storytelling, méthode de marketin, a envahi d'autres pan de notre société, notamment la politique. Les méthodes de communication ne sont plus basées sur des faits mais sur des histoires, mises en scène avec soin. Inquiétant, la relation entre Hollywood, le Pentagone et la Maison-Blanche. Mais aussi, chez nous, les campagnes visuelles de l'UDC ou les interventions lors de débats publics visant à manipuler l'électorat pour l'amener dans son propre camp. La stabilité, la sécurité n'est nullement souhaitée car certainement, ce parti perdrait son électorat. Un très très bon livre pour prendre du recul.
