



# The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human

*Jonathan Gottschall*

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**The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human** Jonathan Gottschall  
**A New York Times Editor's Choice**

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"A jaunty, insightful new book . . . [that] draws from disparate corners of history and science to celebrate our compulsion to storify everything around us."

--*New York Times*

Humans live in landscapes of make-believe. We spin fantasies. We devour novels, films, and plays. Even sporting events and criminal trials unfold as narratives. Yet the world of story has long remained an undiscovered and unmapped country. Now Jonathan Gottschall offers the first unified theory of storytelling. He argues that stories help us navigate life's complex social problems--just as flight simulators prepare pilots for difficult situations. Storytelling has evolved, like other behaviors, to ensure our survival. Drawing on the latest research in neuroscience, psychology, and evolutionary biology, Gottschall tells us what it means to be a storytelling animal and explains how stories can change the world for the better. We know we are master shapers of story. *The Storytelling Animal* finally reveals how stories shape us.

"This is a quite wonderful book. It grips the reader with both stories and stories about the telling of stories, then pulls it all together to explain why storytelling is a fundamental human instinct."

--Edward O. Wilson

"Charms with anecdotes and examples . . . we have not left nor should we ever leave Neverland."--*Cleveland Plain Dealer*

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