



Facts are Sacred: The power of data

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Mike says

A very useful and thought provoking introduction to data journalism and analysis.

Trevor says

Strange book. The content is good, but the chapters just tend to end with little finality. The problem is that there is actually very little to read. This is two different books smushed into one: a look into info-journalism; a collection of cool info graphics.

My problem with the book is that as you read the chapters, there are accompanying graphics that are tangentially connected to the narrative. Normally, you read a chapter and you see a graphic it actually further informs the argument. You would expect that a book about info journalism would actually inform the reader, but no. Instead you have decently written content randomly book-ended by graphics that distract rather than enlighten.

Jane says

This is my first experience of a Guardian Short and I've found it a good one. I got a bit grumbly about the 4 errors I spotted (3 x spelling, 1 x fact) but other than that I found this to a well put together book with interesting content written in an engaging fashion (but I do like data!). Will probably take a look at some of the other Guardian Shorts.

Dani Arribas-bel says

The book is a short compilation of experiences encountered by The Guardian journalists in dealing with what is come to be known as "data journalism". Throughout eight chapters, several loosely related topics are exposed, from what they consider "data journalism" is to how crowdsourcing can help it.

It really is a short read, but I think it should have actually been shorter. Some of the chapters feel too forced to be in the book, almost just to fill pages. As an example, the last one is a simple compilation of facts based on different statistics that are presented to the reader with not context or framework whatsoever. I think that chapter in particular does a poor job at helping illustrate how data can create, reinforce and make stories more appealing and insightful in journalism.

On the plus side, I greatly enjoyed the first three chapters, where the concept is presented from first hand (The Guardian is indeed at the forefront of data journalism) and some experiences are shared in relation to

the work they've done, for example trying to make sense out of UK government data and bringing WikiLeaks data to the main public.

In conclusion, it is a short book worth reading and with some interesting views on how journalism is to change in the next decades, but it would probably have to be shorter.

Mike Benner says

Well written book that is stuffed with seemingly useless data until the author ties it altogether. The Guardian has always been at the forefront of data journalism and this book gives some insight to why that is. Quick read that is a must for any data junkie.

Alex G says

Meh. Mostly a collection of previously published articles. A few interesting insights into the inner workings of the Guardian data team.

Kenneth says

Short, clearly written and a genuinely interesting work on how the way data is used by the Guardian team. Not a lot of technical detail on the way that data is processed. I enjoyed it but it left me wanting more insight and to want to play with some open data for myself. Perhaps that's the point of the book?

María says

Información interesante sobre periodismo de datos, pero al final, disperso y un poco escaso.

Craig says

Beautiful book, sparse on prose and arguably light on detail, but fascinating nevertheless.

Ellen says

An interesting overview of the data journalism strategy used by The Guardian. Good descriptions of basic data analysis, and some excellent (often depressing) examples of different data sets used and made accessible by The Guardian. Implicit within it are hints for organisations making their data public, including don't use pdfs. Also highlights fact that once data is public, people will work out a way to analyse it.

