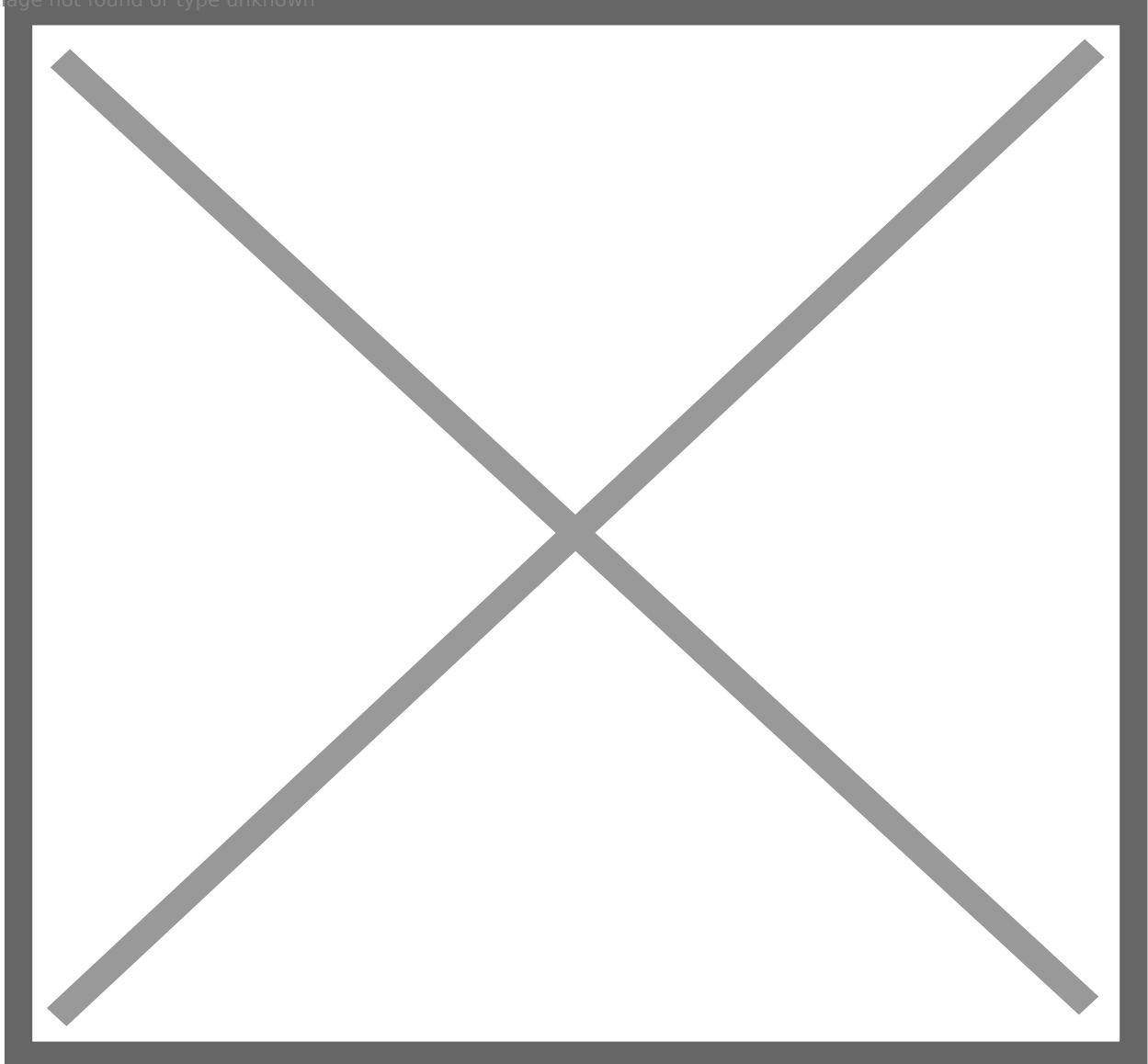


# Frank Rose and Narrative Thinking

Post by "Don" of September 17, 2021 at 6:15 AM

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## [The Sea We Swim In: How Stories Work in a Data-Driven World](#)

Columbia University's Frank Rose shares 5 key insights from his new book, *The Sea We Swim In: How Stories Work in a Data-Driven World*.  
nextbigideaclub.com

Never heard of Frank Rose before, but this caught my eye. I'd be curious to read what anyone thinks if they've read any of his books:

2. Stories, not reason, are our default mode of thought.

For decades, psychologists didn't deign to study stories—they were considered frivolous, unworthy of serious study. But Jerome Bruner was different. "There are two modes of cognitive functioning, two modes of thought," he wrote in 1986, "each providing distinctive ways of ordering experience, of constructing reality." One mode is reason, which philosophers have been studying for centuries. The other is what we now call "narrative thinking."

Narrative thinking is our default mode—it's what we engage in all the time. It's gossip. It's television. It's the movies. It has little to do with reason and everything to do with emotion. As a species, we humans have an enormous investment in the idea that we are rational creatures, that we're far too smart to be persuaded by something so emotional as a story. Unfortunately, our attachment to this idea is much more emotional than it is rational.