

Killing Giants (笔记版)

来源: <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/13/books/review/malcolm-gladwells-david-and-goliath.html>

[1] To judge by “David and Goliath,” Malcolm Gladwell’s favorite word is “we.” In fact, **it’s been his favorite word since his first book, “The Tipping Point,” launched his enormously successful career writing about how the world doesn’t necessarily work the way “we” think it does.**

launch 开展(活动、计划等)

例: They should launch their career and become financially independent.

他们必须开始自己的事业，做到经济上自我独立。

[2] His book “Outliers” was about (among other things) how success requires ingredients that are different from ones “we” normally assume — to wit, talent **counts for** far less than hard work, luck and background. Before that, “Blink” proposed that one’s first impression turns out to be right surprisingly often — contrary to the belief many of “us” hold. And “David and Goliath”? It’s about the advantages of disadvantages — and the disadvantages of **seeming** advantages. Or, **as Gladwell puts it: “We have a definition in our heads of what an advantage is — and the definition isn’t right.** And what happens as a result? It means that we make mistakes. It means that we **misread** battles between **underdogs** and **giants**. It means that we **underestimate** how much freedom there can be in what looks like a disadvantage.”

count for 有价值

例: It was an age when the actor and the producer counted for more than the playwright. 在那个时代，演员和制片人远比剧作家重要。

seeming 表面上的; 貌似

例: Its seeming complexity has prompted decades of study.

它表面看来的复杂性引发了数十年的研究。

misread 误解

例：The administration largely misread the mood of the electorate.

该政府大大地误解了选民的情绪。

underdog 处于劣势者

例：America is a society that gives the underdog a chance to rise to the top.

美国是一个能给失败者提供崛起机会的社会。

giant 巨大的，重大的，巨人

例：Newton was an intellectual giant.

牛顿是一个智力巨人。

underestimate 低估

例：None of us should ever underestimate the degree of difficulty women face in career advancement.

我们谁都不应低估妇女在职业发展中所面临的困难程度。

[3] The “we” of course does not include Gladwell. That’s the whole point of a Malcolm Gladwell book. He has **delved into** the literature; he has interviewed lots of people — scientists, economists, deep thinkers and others who **wind up** in the book — and he has **divined** meaning and found **counterintuitive** connections that would otherwise **elude** the rest of us.

delved into 探索，钻研

例：We delved into the newspaper files to find out the facts.

我们钻研报纸合订本以查明事实。

wind up 牵扯到，涉及到

例：The U.S. could easily wind up in a crisis over the same lack of credibility.

由于公信力的缺失，美国也同样容易陷入危机。

divine 识破，发现

例：At last I divined the truth.

最后我发现了事情的真相。

counterintuitive 反直觉的

例：It may seem counterintuitive, but experts believe that skipping breakfast actually encourages obesity.

它可能似乎违反直觉，但专家认为，不吃早餐实际上会引起肥胖。

elude 使困惑；把...难倒

例：Her name eludes me.

她的名字我记不起来了。

[4] Those connections can be quite **dizzying**. In “David and Goliath,” Gladwell links people who are **dyslexic** with a hero of the civil rights movement and the citizens of London during the **blitz**. According to him, they all managed to turn disadvantages into advantages. On the flip side — those whose advantages aren’t so advantageous after all — include students who are not at the top of their Ivy League classes, teachers of extremely small classes and very wealthy parents.

dizzy 眩晕的

例：Her head still hurt, and she felt slightly dizzy and disoriented.

她的头还在痛，感觉有些眩晕，分不清方向。

dyslexic 阅读障碍

blitz 空袭

例：In the autumn of 1940 London was blitzed by an average of two hundred aircraft a night.

1940年秋，伦敦平均每晚被两百架飞机空袭。

[5] **As always, Gladwell’s sweep is breathtaking, and thought-provoking. What it is not, however, is entirely convincing.**

breathtaking 令人惊叹的

例：The house has breathtaking views from every room.

这房子从各个房间都能看到令人惊叹的风景。

provoke 引发，唤起

例：When people read my books I provoke some things.

人们阅读我的书籍的时候，我激起了一些事情。

[6] You don't have to be a **knee-jerk contrarian** to realize that there is **a good deal of common sense** in Gladwell's thesis. It's just that it's not always as counterintuitive as he makes it out to be. When he writes about the actual example of David and Goliath, he makes the point that David — quick and accurate with the slingshot — was in fact the one with the advantage over Goliath, who was “too big and slow and blurry-eyed to comprehend the way the tables had been turned.” “All these years,” he adds, “we've been telling these kinds of stories wrong.” But have we really? **It strikes me that many Americans already understand the advantages of the seeming underdog, thanks in part to an example that Gladwell does not include**: the way America's **immense** military power could not win the Vietnam War, or **tame** Iraq and Afghanistan.

knee-jerk 下意识的

contrarian 背道而驰者

例：He is by nature a contrarian.

他本质上就是个叛逆的人。

a good deal of 大量的

例：They spent a good deal of money.

他们花了大量的钱。

common sense 常识

例：I judge it by common sense.

我靠常识判断。

immense 巨大的，广大的

例：There is still an immense amount of work to be done.

还有非常多的工作没有做。

tame 驯化

例：Lions can never be completely tamed.

狮子永远不能被完全驯化。

[7] Similarly, **Gladwell devotes a chapter to people with dyslexia, making the point that the skills they nurture to compensate for their condition can sometimes lead to a life of extraordinary accomplishment.** He cites a study — and Gladwell always seems to find the perfect study — by a researcher at City University London that **purports** to show that “somewhere around a third” of all successful entrepreneurs are dyslexic. (One of Gladwell’s prime examples is David Boies, the well-known lawyer; my wife works for his firm.) But this insight about those with dyslexia also strikes me as fairly common knowledge, documented at least anecdotally in recent years.

devote to 把...用于

例：She has devoted all her time to helping the sick.

她把所有时间用于照顾病人。

nurture 培养

例：She had always nurtured great ambitions for her son.

她一直在培养她儿子的雄心壮志。

compensate 弥补，补偿

例：Nothing can compensate for the loss of one’s health.

失去健康是无法补偿的。

lead to 导致；通向

例：Eating too much sugar can lead to health problems.

吃过多的糖会引起健康问题。

purport 声称

例：a letter that purports to express public opinion.

一封声称是表达了公众意见的信。

[8] On the other hand, one of the most **unconventional** theories in “David and Goliath” is that for certain people, losing a parent early in life can be an advantage. He cites the work of Marvin Eisenstadt, a psychologist who did a study showing that “of the 573 **eminent** people for whom Eisenstadt could find reliable biographical information, a quarter had lost at least one parent before the age of 10” — and 45 percent had lost a parent before the age of 20. **The central figure Gladwell leans on to make this case is a doctor named Emil J. Freireich, who made extraordinary advances against childhood leukemia.** The section about Freireich is where Gladwell really starts making the kinds of connections he is famous for. It also illustrates the book’s primary shortcomings.

unconventional 非传统的

例：He was known for his unconventional behaviour.

他曾因另类行为而出名。

eminent 卓越的; 有名望的

例：an eminent scientist.

一位卓越的科学家。

figure 人物

例：a leading figure in the music industry.

音乐界一位主要人物。

lean on 依靠 (支持和鼓励)

例：She leaned on him to help her to solve her problems.

她依靠他帮忙解决问题。

leukemia 白血病

be famous for 以...出名

Beijing is famous for its history.

北京以它的历史而闻名。

[9] The chapter starts with Freireich's childhood, which was marked by his father's presumed suicide. Then it cuts to the blitz — the eight months of German bombing raids on London during World War II — to **alight** on a curious fact: up to 40,000 people were killed and 50,000 injured in the attacks, but to the surprise of the British government, people didn't panic; many, in fact, simply **went about** their lives. For Gladwell's purposes, this puzzle is best explained by J. T. MacCurdy, a Canadian psychiatrist who **posited** that because most people did not experience a bomb going off very close to them, they weren't traumatized; instead they experienced "excitement with a flavor of invulnerability." MacCurdy called this group "remote misses."

alight 意外遇见，偶然碰见

例：to alight on an old photograph

偶然发现一张旧照片

go about 从事(常规活动)

例：I must go about my business.

我必须忙我自己的事。

posit 假定; 假设

例：Most religions posit the existence of life after death.

大多数宗教都假定人死后生命仍存在。

go off (炸弹) 爆炸; (枪) 开击

例：A few minutes later the bomb went off, destroying the vehicle.

几分钟后炸弹爆炸了，摧毁了那辆车。

[10] And what do remote misses have to do with Freireich's extraordinary achievements? Although it **takes a while** to get there — with further crosscutting into dyslexia, the life of the civil rights activist Fred L.

Shuttlesworth and the work Freireich did on children who had leukemia, putting them through hell to find ways

to save them — the answer appears to be that sometimes people who lose a parent early in life can be categorized as remote misses. **Their difficult childhoods ultimately give them strengths that many of us lack.** On the other hand, Gladwell also acknowledges that many others who lose a parent early on “are **crushed** by what they have been through.”

take a while 需要一段时间

例：Seeking for good editors and writers takes a while.

要找好的编辑和作者要花好些功夫呢。

crush 使精神崩溃

例：Listen to criticism but don't be crushed by it.

听批评意见，但不要被它击垮。

[11] But isn't that like saying, "Whatever doesn't kill us makes us stronger"? Some people overcome difficulties. Others don't. Gladwell can't really say why Dr. Freireich is in the former category and not the latter. The best he can do is say that "we as a society need people who have emerged from some kind of trauma," like Freireich, even though that means that many others who have experienced trauma will not recover the way he did. To which the reader is likely to respond, "And ... ?"

[12] **I've long admired Gladwell's work in The New Yorker, which employs many of the same literary techniques but is more persuasive, perhaps, because it is more contained and less ambitious.** "David and Goliath," on the other hand, is at once deeply repetitive and a **bewildering sprawl.** There are chapters, especially toward the end, whose relation to the rest of the book are hard to ascertain, even with his constant guidance.

contained 克制的，有节制的

ambitious 有雄心的

例：They were very ambitious for their children.

他们望子成龙心切。

bewildering 令人迷惑的

例：There is a bewildering variety of software available.

各种可供挑选的软件使人目不暇接。

[13] Maybe what “David and Goliath” really illustrates is that it’s time for Malcolm Gladwell to find a new

shtick.

shtick 妙语，独特风格

单词

launch 开展(活动、计划等)

seeming 表面上的; 貌似

misread 误解

underdog 处于劣势者

giant 巨大的, 重大的, 巨人

underestimate 低估

divine 识破, 发现

counterintuitive 反直觉的

elude 使困惑; 把...难倒

dizzy 眩晕的

dyslexic 阅读障碍

blitz 空袭

brehtaking 令人惊叹的

provoke 引发, 唤起

contrarian 背道而驰者

immense 巨大的, 广大的

tame 驯化

nurture 培养

compensate 弥补, 补偿

purport 声称

unconventional 非传统的

eminent 卓越的; 有名望的

figure 人物

leukemia 白血病

alight 意外遇见, 偶然碰见

posit 假定; 假设

crush 使精神崩溃

contained 克制的, 有节制的

ambitious 有雄心的

bewildering 令人迷惑的

shtick 妙语, 独特风格

词组

count for 有价值

delved into 探索, 钻研

wind up 牵扯到, 涉及到

knee-jerk 下意识的

a good deal of 大量的

common sense 常识

devote to 把...用于

lead to 导致; 通向

lean on 依靠(支持和鼓励)

be famous for 以...出名

go about 从事(常规活动)

go off (炸弹) 爆炸; (枪) 开击

take a while 需要一段时间

句子

1. it's been his favorite word since his first book, "The Tipping Point," launched his enormously successful career writing about how the world doesn't necessarily work the way "we" think it does.

从他的第一本书《引爆点》出版以来，这就是他最喜欢的词（“我们”）。《引爆点》成为了他事业取得巨大成功的开端，而他写作的主题则是这个世界“并非”按照我们所想的那样运转。

2. as Gladwell puts it: "We have a definition in our heads of what an advantage is — and the definition isn't right.

正如格拉德威尔谈到的那样：“我们脑子里有关于‘优势’的定义，但是那种定义并不正确”。

3. As always, Gladwell's sweep is breathtaking, and thought-provoking. What it is not, however, is entirely convincing.

一如既往，格拉德威尔的涉猎让人惊奇，并且引人深思。但是同时存在的问题是，它并没有那么强的说服力。

4. It strikes me that many Americans already understand the advantages of the seeming underdog, thanks in part to an example that Gladwell does not include

令我吃惊的是，很多美国人已经理解了那些看上去“处于劣势的人或物”，其实是抱有自己的优势的。这也部分归功于一个格拉德威尔没有收入的例子（美军没那么强大）。

5. Gladwell devotes a chapter to people with dyslexia, making the point that the skills they nurture to compensate for their condition can sometimes lead to a life of extraordinary accomplishment.

格拉德威尔专门用了一章的篇幅来写有阅读障碍的人，并借此阐述这样的观点：这些人为了弥补自身缺陷而锻炼出来的技能，有时可以让他们取得人生中了不起的成就。

6. The central figure Gladwell leans on to make this case is a doctor named Emil J. Freireich, who made extraordinary advances against childhood leukemia.

为了阐述这种情况，格拉德威尔选取的代表任务是以为名叫 Emil J. Freireich 的医生。这位医生就克服了几时的比白血病，并取得不俗的进步。

7. Their difficult childhoods ultimately give them strengths that many of us lack.

艰辛的童年最终给了他们一些优势，而这些优势是我们很多人所不具备的。

8. I've long admired Gladwell's work in The New Yorker, which employs many of the same literary techniques but is more persuasive, perhaps, because it is more contained and less ambitious.

我一直很喜欢格拉德威尔在“纽约客”的作品。他的作品虽然中有很多文字技巧，但却有更强的说服力，可能是因为他写得有节制，并且没那么矫揉造作。