

# Full House



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著者:Stephen Jay Gould

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Few would question the truism that humankind is the crowning achievement of evolution; that the defining thrust of life's history yields progress over time from the primitive and simple to the more advanced and complex; that the disappearance of .400 hitting in baseball is a fact to be bemoaned; or that identifying an existing trend can be helpful in making important life decisions. Few, that is, except Stephen Jay Gould who, in his new book Full House: The Spread of Excellence from Plato to Darwin, proves that all of these intuitive truths are, in fact, wrong.

"All of these mistaken beliefs arise out of the same analytical flaw in our reasoning, our Platonic tendency to reduce a broad spectrum to a single, pinpointed essence," says Gould. "This way of thinking allows us to confirm our most ingrained biases that

humans are the supreme being on this planet; that all things are inherently driven to become more complex; and that almost any subject can be expressed and understood in terms of an average."

In *Full House*, Gould shows why a more accurate way of understanding our world (and the history of life) is to look at a given subject within its own context, to see it as a part of a spectrum of variation rather than as an isolated "thing" and then to reconceptualize trends as expansion or contraction of this "full house" of variation, and not as the progress or degeneration of an average value, or single thing. When approached in such a way, the disappearance of .400 hitting becomes a cause for celebration, signaling not a decline in greatness but instead an improvement in the overall level of play in baseball; trends become subject to suspicion, and too often, only a tool of those seeking to advance a particular agenda; and the "Age of Man" (a claim rooted in hubris, not in fact) more accurately becomes the "Age of Bacteria."

"The traditional mode of thinking has led us to draw many conclusions that don't make satisfying sense," says Gould. "It tells us that .400 hitting has disappeared because batters have gotten worse, but how can that be true when record performances have improved in almost any athletic activity?" In a personal eureka!, Gould realized that we were looking at the picture backward, and that a simple conceptual inversion would resolve a number of the paradoxes of the conventional view.

While *Full House* deftly reveals the shortcomings of the popular reasoning we apply to everyday life situations, Gould also explores his beloved realm of natural history as well. Whether debunking the myth of the successful evolution of the horse (he grants that the story still deserves distinction, but as the icon of evolutionary failure); presenting evidence that the vaunted "progress of life" is really random motion away from simple beginnings, not directed impetus toward complexity; or relegating the kingdoms of Animalia and Plantae to their proper positions on the genealogical chart for all of life (as mere twigs on one of the three bushes), *Full House* asks nothing less than that we reconceptualize our view of life in a fundamental way.

From the Hardcover edition.

作者介绍:

斯蒂芬·杰·古尔德 (Stephen Jay Gould)，当今世界上著名的进化论者，古生物学家、科学史学家和科学散文作家。1945年生于纽约，在安蒂奥克学院，哥伦比亚大学研读古生物并获博士学位。现任教于哈佛大学，并从事研究工作。主要著作有《自达尔文以来》、《熊猫的拇指》、《汉斯的牙与马的蹄》、《八头小猪》等。

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标签

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Full\_House

英文原版

科学

文化

评论

evolution不是一个完全正面的概念。气场非常强的论说。

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斯人已逝——您的签名还留在扉页上。

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书评

生物学发展到今天，从技术上讲，微观上刚完成了对人类全部基因组的测序工作，而宏观上则可以运用计算机的辅助计算统计，用数字描绘出一个波澜壮阔的生命史。斯蒂芬·杰·古尔德就是这么一位热衷于用数字说话，用图形说理的生物学家。他的著作《生命的壮阔》则清楚地反映了...

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There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms m...

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数量级翻译成“规模次序”，也真有想象力……

至于连居维叶都不认识之类的错误就不说了。

和《万物简史》的译者犯同样的错误。自己对该领域丝毫不懂，态度又不认真，学术名词滥译已然不能忍了，连好些非学术的普通句子都没读明白，真是糟蹋掉一本好书。古尔德一定会很伤心。

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科学把支撑人类自大的巨柱逐一推翻。哥白尼、伽利略否定了地心说；达尔文把我们贬成“动物出身的”，弗洛伊德的心理学研究说人类“无意识”。（P11）

自负的人类总以为自己是高高在上的。习惯的说法是，生命从简单的单细胞逐渐“进化”到最高级的物种——人类。这本书告诉我们...

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读完此书，心理特别激动，思路有豁然开朗的感觉，人类在规范统一的金字塔里带的太久，忘了原来差异才是世界主要的事实，忘了世界上还有细菌微生物的存在，（换言之，细菌在地球上，可能不只是在重量方面居于统治地位；可能还是宇宙之间惟一生命模式的代表P156）忘了随机性的强...

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古尔德的这本书虽然不长，但开篇提出的观点就振聋发聩。虽然翻译到后来越来越不知所云，但依然无法掩盖作者一夫当关挑战学术界传统观点的非凡气度。首先作者开宗明义，怒怼学界大牛和行业大咖，气势恢宏。他认为，进化不是进步的代名词，进化完全不是我们想象的从低级到高级的...

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Gould所谓的full house应该不是说打扑克的术语，而是说全体出席的意思，译成“一对三同（花）”错了（最后几章貌似换了译者，改成了“全家福”，最后一章又回到“一对三同”）。Pinker在Nature via Nurture中多次引用这个Gould（不是那个Gould），果然看这个Gould头脑清醒思路...

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有能力的还是看原文，任何翻译必然损失不少表意，尤其是一些隐喻的表达。优秀的翻译应该以注释的方式说明隐喻的来历涵义，宁多勿少，给读者尽量多的理解原材料。这个翻译的做法就是反面典型。书名是 Full house: the spread of excellence from plato to darwin。Full house在...

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我看书看到一半了，前半部确实糟糕，他要打破普遍认为“人是万物之灵”的心理优越，人总以自己的观念归纳总结研究自然，但是他批评的太刻薄了，第一部分对于目前的人应该不是问题了吧，至少我绝不是那么为作为人而“自大”。第二部分，还算有点意思，只是需要啰嗦这么多吗？对...

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还是看《伊甸园之河》就听说了古尔德和他的“激进进化论”，看完全书，不得不佩服他的敏锐视角和深刻洞察。全书就我看来主要是对地球生命史的另一种解释，这种解释不同于传统的主流“生命是从低级到高级、简单到复杂”生命进化论，而是认为“高等”生物的出现不过是物种的随...

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在《开卷八分钟》里听说的这本书，借来看，看起来自然不会像读小说一样迅速而流畅，但其收获值得我花那些时间。惊异于思维的多元性，发觉到自己思维的不开阔。原来有些事是可以这么考虑的。我们，不过是生物演化过程中的意外，我们更不是什么世界的主宰。用一颗谦虚的态度

来...

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正如书后评论所说：

“曾经学过进化论并且坚信不移而又仍然保有年轻开放心灵的读者，应该看看这本书”

。“生物从简单到复杂、从低级到高级的变化并不是自然界普遍的铁律，把“进化”说成趋势是人类中心主义演绎出来的神话。”

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最成功的“进化”属于人类吗？但“进化”与“趋势”本身只是人自身的概念限定。大自然，未必会这么听人类的话。如此看来，或许细菌更适合被称为是地球的“主人”？不过书中太多关于棒球0.400命中率的论述与讲解，对于大陆这些棒球相对不怎么普及的读者来说，理解起来是有点隔...

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一点评论，不一定准确，欢迎指正。 -----

看完了《生命的壮阔》，后面部分看得比较快。书主旨还不错，内容表述得比较枯燥。其实作者要表达的就是“进化是随机事件，既没有明显的‘进步’特点，也没有明显的退化特征。因为‘左墙’的存在，进化曲线右倾，即生命早...

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