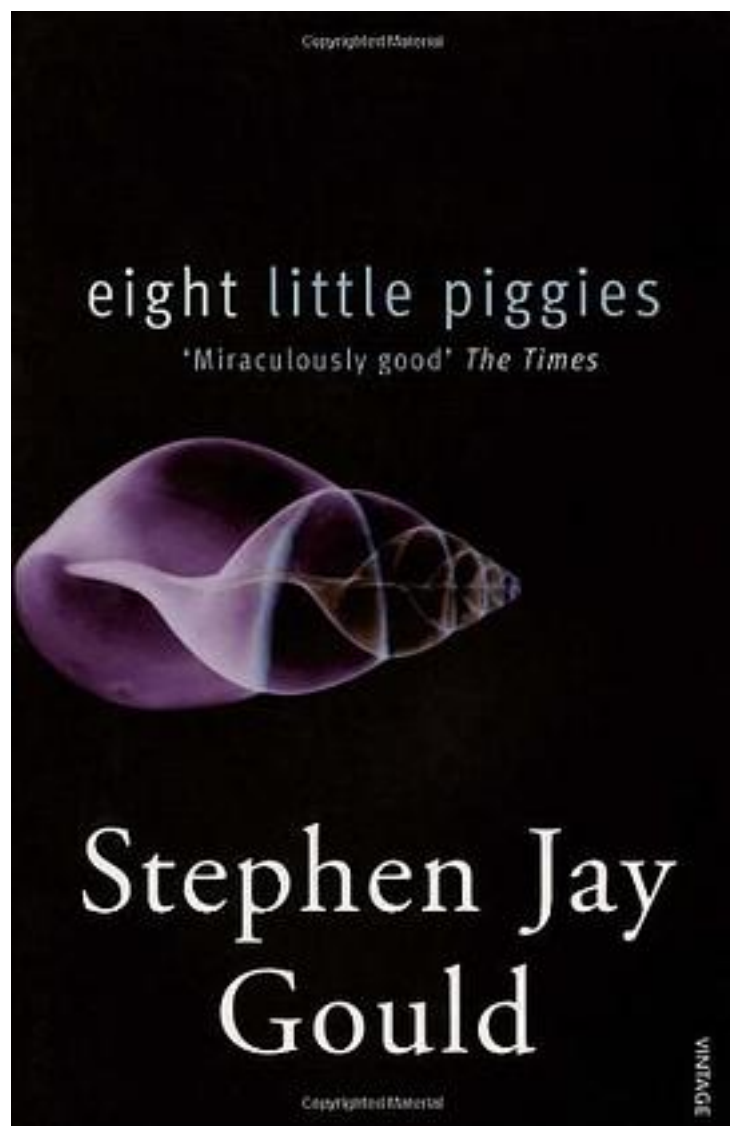


Eight Little Piggies



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著者:Stephen Jay Gould

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If Stephen Jay Gould did not exist it would hardly be possible to invent him. Who else among scientists who write reaches so far or grasps so surely the "pretty pebbles" that together make up the amplitude of life? Eight Little Piggies is the sixth volume in a series of essays, begun in 1974 in the pages of Natural History under the rubric "This View of Life." Now numbering more than 200 in an unbroken string, they comprise a unique achievement in the annals of literature. And they will continue, vows the author, until the millennium, in January 2001. So Stephen Jay Gould's readers, numbering in the millions around the world, have not only this present pleasure but also much to look forward to. Eight Little Piggies is a special book in several ways. In all of Gould's work, this is the most contemplative and personal, speaking often of the importance of unbroken connections within our own lives and to our ancestral generations, "a theme of supreme importance to evolutionists who study a world in which extinction is the ultimate fate of all and prolonged persistence the only meaningful measure of success." This personal view leads naturally to an area that has become, for Gould, of major importance - environmental deterioration and the massive extinction of species on our present earth. He chooses, typically, unusual and telling examples: the demise of the land snail Partula from Moorea (the Bali Hai of South Pacific) and why the battle that raged over the Mount Graham red squirrel of Arizona was worth fighting. There are, in addition, more than thirty of those pretty pebbles that make Gould's work unique, opening to us the mysteries of fish tails and frog calls, of the coloration of pigeons and the eye tissue of completely blind mole rats. Along the way, we learn what story lies behind the bent tail of an ichthyosaur and how hearing bones evolved and how, probably, we with our five fingers and toes (subject of the title essay) evolved from ancestors that had six

作者介绍:

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标签

自然史

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古生物

古尔德

评论

作者以前说过自己不是polymath而是个标准的tradesman..这套丛书纷繁复杂各式花样知识..高中老师课堂某个词+Tennyson+Alexander Pope各种stunning diversity都荟萃到一起写。但underlying approach大体相似的。入手点往往是something small/cute..然后onward一条线..outward一条线..从中构建出一个lateral connection..我看到第2本的时候意识到这个架子了。他在织毛衣！

good wording

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书评

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