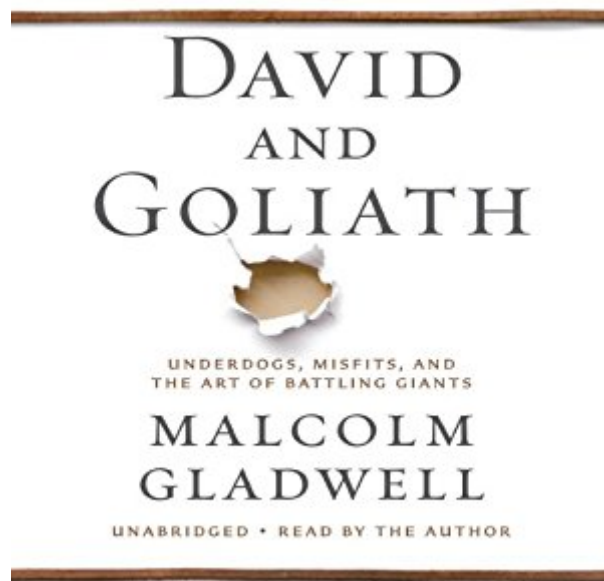




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# **David And Goliath: Underdogs, Misfits, And The Art Of Battling Giants**



## Synopsis

Audie Award Winner, Non-Fiction, 2014 Malcolm Gladwell, the number-one best-selling author of *The Tipping Point*, *Blink*, *Outliers*, and *What the Dog Saw*, offers his most provocative - and dazzling - book yet. Three thousand years ago, on a battlefield in ancient Palestine, a shepherd boy felled a mighty warrior with nothing more than a stone and a sling, and ever since then the names of David and Goliath have stood for battles between underdogs and giants. David's victory was improbable and miraculous. He shouldn't have won. Or should he have? In *David and Goliath*, Malcolm Gladwell challenges how we think about obstacles and disadvantages, offering a new interpretation of what it means to be discriminated against, or cope with a disability, or lose a parent, or attend a mediocre school, or suffer from any number of other apparent setbacks. Gladwell begins with the real story of what happened between the giant and the shepherd boy those many years ago. From there, *David and Goliath* examines Northern Ireland's Troubles, the minds of cancer researchers and civil rights leaders, murder and the high costs of revenge, and the dynamics of successful and unsuccessful classrooms - all to demonstrate how much of what is beautiful and important in the world arises from what looks like suffering and adversity. In the tradition of Gladwell's previous best sellers, *David and Goliath* draws upon history, psychology, and powerful storytelling to reshape the way we think about the world around us.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 7 hours

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Hachette Audio

Audible.com Release Date: October 1, 2013

Language: English

ASIN: B00EKQKMG2

Best Sellers Rank: #12 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Personality](#) #12 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Applied Psychology](#) #20 in [Books > Medical Books > Psychology > Social Psychology & Interactions](#)

## Customer Reviews

Gladwell is to me like a gifted comedian, he take life and looks at it differently from normal people, a great comedian sees reality and makes us laugh and makes us think differently when the same

thing happens to us. Gladwell takes historic events and turn them upside down. The powerful are not as powerful as they seem and the weak are not as weak as they seem. All of his books are great, my favorite was the tipping point but this one made me think. My favorite was the story of Caroline Sacks- who would have thought that going to an Ivy League school would be a disadvantage. And my second favorite story is about the all girl basketball team. Breakdown the rules, use your strength and minimize your weakness, and win the games. The bad part of finishing Gladwell book is that I will have to wait another year before his next one.

I've always been a huge fan of Malcolm Gladwell books. How he finds seemingly disconnected topics and expands and juxtaposes them to find a common theme and learning without inserting himself too much into the middle. Sure, I've heard the criticism over the years about his surface treatments ... getting into the topic just enough but perhaps not as deeply as it deserved. You see quite a few of those criticisms for this book. This time around I kind of agree with some of that criticism. "David & Goliath" still follows that same pattern but somehow it's all a bit too formulaic. The underdog topic that's kicked off in the beginning is guaranteed to catch the readers' interest and to sell more books, but it really doesn't carry through into the rest of the book. Who wouldn't root for David to carry the day. But then the shocker in that story--which is carried through the rest of the book ... Goliath really didn't stand a chance like the proverbial fool who brings a knife (or in this case a spear) to a gunfight (or in this case a 135 mile per hour pebble launched from a sling). From there we see that a wide variety of seemingly disconnected topics about underdogs or assumptions about power and advantage follow that same premise. That things we see as advantages or disadvantages really aren't ... like smaller class sizes, going to Ivy League schools, having dyslexia, being militarily weak, having a bad childhood, losing a parent when young. All of these serve to make later achievers stronger, more creative and--most of all--disagreeable, which turns them into household names. Gladwell continues to do the deal with these stories by making them interesting and compelling, but it all gets a bit tedious as he continually lists them side by side to repeatedly make the same points. As inspirational as these stories are, there are certainly legions of achievers who didn't suffer those disadvantages and still accomplished great things in their lives. So the message and readership for this book should perhaps be focused on people whose prospects appear diminished so they they don't give up in the face of adversity. For the rest, the stories and life lessons are so negative that the book fails to elevate us to bigger and better things. As other reviewers pointed out too, it felt like the third part of the book that focuses on how authority fails when seen as illegitimate seemed a big jump from what Gladwell seemed to be targeting in the first

two parts. It was almost like his editor or publisher had to encourage him to add more. And in so doing he failed to drive home the more important points he had established up front. And so the book just ends. I don't feel elevated as I did when I completed "The Tipping Point," "Blink" or "Outliers." I just felt depressed that the world is such a nasty place and it presumably requires a poor childhood to rise above it all.

Ok, let's be generous and give Malcolm 3.5 stars on this one. Obviously it's written in classic Gladwell Style but this book just did not prod me to keep turning the pages as I've done with about everything else he's written. He makes the point of how an underdog can in fact be the 'winner', superior in ways most of us would not at first blush grasp, but overall I just did not come away feeling like something 'great' was revealed - maybe it was that some of the subject matter/examples he used to make his points were of little interest to me?

One of the Gladwell books I like the most, together with Blink. I am not much into pep talk or self-help books but once I was starved for material to read while on a trip and I found Blink on a shelf in an office so I read it through the night. Malcolm Gladwell has an uncanny talent for showing you what you think you know in a slightly different light and make it look completely alien to you - be it tough anti-crime policy, mythologic events or simply what it means to be happy. I highly recommend as these books are riveting and uplifting while still passing the "no way!?!!" test.

I did like the book, but it was the 2nd Gladwell book that I did not finish after having tore through his first three releases, basically unable to put them down. There is a lot to grasp here for readers and perhaps it was too cute at times. Perhaps I've caught up to Gladwell's formula, but regardless he remains my favorite modern author. His mixture of storytelling and statistics remains compelling. It's just that I liked His books Outliers, The Tipping Point, and Blink even more!

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