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## The End of Big: How the Internet Makes David the New Goliath

*Nicco Mele*

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NICCO MELE

WITH A NEW AFTERWORD

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# THE END OF BIG

HOW THE  
DIGITAL  
REVOLUTION  
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**Nicco Mele : The End of Big: How the Internet Makes David the New Goliath** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The End of Big: How the Internet Makes David the New Goliath:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. The Future Is Here By Mark Chadbourn This is an important book. We're going through the fastest period of change in human history and one that's accelerating - everything we're used to is going to alter in some way, and if you want to survive with your job, finances, health and sanity intact, you have to be prepared for what's coming. The End of Big is your road map. Nicco Mele, who sits on the faculty of Harvard's Kennedy School, examines the changes that are rushing through different sectors: business, the news media, the

entertainment industry, politics and government, universities and education, the army and warfare, while touching on other sectors too. As he says: "We're at the beginning of an epochal change in human history. Scan the headlines every morning - through your Facebook and Twitter feeds - and you can feel history shifting under your feet. Every day I find more and more evidence that we are in the twilight of our own age, and that we can't quite grasp it, even if we sense something is terribly amiss." As the title suggests, the author's evidence shows that 'big' cannot survive - whether that's big political parties or big companies. We're not only moving from serving the general to serving the specific, but economies of scale have less impact with the technology that's emerging. For book lovers, Mele shows, for instance, why the big publishing companies have little hope of continuing in their current form. Don't get the impression that this is all negative. The author indicates that there are a great many opportunities coming up fast. If you're a creator, or have particular skills, you'll thrive. Small businesses and independent retailers are well-placed for success. (The subtitle is: How The Internet Makes David The New Goliath.) Don't be deterred by what may seem heavy reading matter; it's really not, and Nicco Mele writes with a very engaging, popular style. Because of the scope, this is necessarily a broad-brush approach so you aren't going to get bogged down in the detail of a sector that doesn't interest you. I have minor doubts about a couple of the author's conclusions, but that's exactly how it should be. The book tells you exactly what \*is\* happening, right now, and what's coming up in the near-future, and then lets you answer your own questions about whether those changes are good or bad. The pace of change is so great that The End of Big is going to be out of date very quickly. All the more reason to buy it now, so you're fully prepared for those changes and can plan your own future effectively in these turbulent times. Highly recommended. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great Weekend Read on the Pressure to Go Small By Mike Dowling

The End of Big: How the Internet Makes David the New Goliath by Nicco Mele examines the pressure that radical connectivity is applying to big institutions that are the bulwarks of modern society. A friend of mine and I were discussing local school issues and he suggested the book to me. So I ordered it and received my copy on a Friday. I cracked it open and finished over the course of the weekend. It's short but covers a series of big things that are falling victim to pressure of small. Some are positive developments, others it's less clear. The author's insight into the process of radical smallness as well as the ramifications are interesting but sometimes a stretch. While I have witnessed first hand the demise of traditional big news through hyper local pressure, other areas he applies his lens to are more of a stretch. For example business. He asserts that the ability of anyone to open a business and begin selling online is altering the landscape and transitioning it from big to small. This is an interesting idea but is clearly not a pressure to the ongoing business behemoths. The same with big government. There are great examples of internet connectivity spurring grassroots effort to change politics, but the leviathan that is the Federal government remains. It was a good read and I enjoyed my time with the book because I see many of the instruments of this phenomenon first hand everyday. Mele does a great job of positioning the phenomenon and then laying it against examples, I just think it gets a little thin in some of his applications of the concept. It did pique my interest in the possibilities that radical connectivity presents to us everyday and in many ways does indeed empower the individual against the giants. Everything is a bubble. Expanding until the edges can no longer stand up to the pressure and it only takes one little pin prick to burst it. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Really great book, best I've read in a while, summarizes the key issues of the Social Networking/Internet revolution By Mark D. Schaeffer

This book really clarifies many of the issues I think most of us have in the back of our heads about what Social Networking and the Web is doing to our society/world. This reminds of a quote that is something like, "The Founders of our Country were afraid of the 2 M's - The Monarchy and The Mob". I might even have read that in the book. For example many of us didn't trust the old Network News Organizations to tell an accurate story and not be influenced by corporate and government power (i.e. the "Monarchy"), but now there is so much noise, it might actually be worse (i.e. the "Mob"), so perhaps the old News organization are about as good as you can get. Same with record companies - they would only promote commercial acts, but there was enough competition so the best would tend to rise to the top, now there is no AR budget and awesome bands and artists are now LESS likely to get "picked up", because there is budget for them - and the same music garbage is all over the place, it might even be worse. He goes on to discuss other institutions like education, government, etc. This stimulates thinking, like the key thing I'm wondering if the old institutions that created a filter (despite their inefficiency and abuse of power), will be replaced by evolving web-based / distribution institutions and if these will be more effective than the institutions of the past. Hopefully, like most evolutionary changes (e.g. Airline deregulation in the 80's), where at first there is a lot of disruption and noise, and eventually the old big organizations are replaced with new ones which are more efficient - this will happen here. I hope he's not preaching to the choir (i.e. people who don't already think this will read the book), because it seems that people need to seriously think about how they "vote" - voting for president and Congresspeople is MUCH less important than voting by viewing articles, blogs, artists, etc. I'm amazed how many people post stupid blog postings to indicate how stupid people are, when in fact they are voting thumbs UP by spreading gossip, because people like to complain. Most people don't understand the broad implications of behavior that has been ingrained in them.

How seemingly innocuous technologies are unsettling the balance of power by putting it in the hands of the masses -

and what a world without "big" will mean for all of us. In *The End of Big*, social media pioneer, political and business strategist, and Harvard Kennedy School faculty member Nicco Mele offers a fascinating, sometimes frightening look at how our ability to stay connected - constantly, instantly, and globally - is dramatically changing our world. Governments are being upended by individuals relying only on social media. Major political parties are seeing their power eroded by grassroots forces through online fund-raising. Universities are scrambling to preserve their student populations in the face of less expensive, more accessible online courses. Print and broadcast news outlets are struggling to compete with citizen journalists and bloggers. Our traditional institutions are being disrupted in revolutionary ways, some for the better. But, as Nicco Mele argues, the benefits of new technology come with unintended consequences. In *The End of Big*, Mele examines:- How fringe political forces enter the mainstream and gain traction using everyday technology - with the enormous potential to undermine central power- What happens when investigative journalism is replaced by ad hoc bloggers, mobile video, and instantaneous tweets...and whether they challenge or simply enable power- Why Web-based micro-businesses are outcompeting major corporations, and what innovations will alter the way we work, own things, and pay for goods and services- The collapse of traditional party politics, and the rise of a new kind of democracy, one which could produce dynamic and effective leaders...or demagogues- How citizen initiatives can replace local and state government functions, such as safety regulations, tax collection, and garbage pickup, and do so cheaper, faster, and better. Mele argues that unless we exercise caution in our use of these new technologies, we risk a dark and wildly unstable future, one in which our freedoms and basic human values could be destroyed rather than enhanced. Both hopeful and alarming, *The End of Big* is a thought-provoking, passionately argued book that offers genuine insight into the ways we are using technology, and how it is radically changing our world in ways we are only now beginning to understand.