How to Become Famous

Cass R. Sunstein
The Byrds

• So you want to be a rock and roll star?

• Then listen now to what I say

• Just get an electric guitar

• Then take some time and learn how to play
The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong

Neither bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding, noir yet favor to men of skill;

But time and chance happeneth to them all.
Bob Dylan

- Interviewer: I find that you really have no idea as to why you are popular, no thoughts on why you are popular.

- Dylan: I just haven’t really struggled for that. It happened, you know? It happened like anything else happens. Just a happening. You don’t try to figure out happenings. You dig happenings. So I’m not going to even talk about it.
Sorry, Mr. Dylan

I’m going to talk about it.
The Can’t Miss How-to Guide

• A 10-step program
• Guaranteed!
The Story of this Project

- Shhhhh
- All very meta
Connie Converse
Her Anthem
A lady never should habituate saloons
And that is where I find myself on many afternoons
But just as I begin to blow away the foam
Someone tips his hat to me and takes me home
And

Now poker is a game a lady shouldn't play
And every floating poker game just seems to float my way
But long before I've lost a thing besides my comb
Someone tips his hand to me and takes me home
And

• Don't see why they always do it
  Can't be vanity; must be sheer humanity
  When some kind soul remarks with great urbanity
  'Lady let me take you home'

Of course there's bound to be some little aftermath
That makes a pleasant ending for the straight and narrow path
And as I go to sleep I cannot help but think
How glad I am that I was saved from cards and drink
Tales of Fame and Obscurity
Jane Austen
John Keats
Connie Converse
The Beatles
The Dave Clark Five
Hmmmm
The Fantastic Four
Taylor Swift!
The Music Lab Experiment

- Trapped in An Orange Peel
- Gnaw
- Wish Me Luck (!)
- I Am Error (!)
- Your prediction?
What Happened

And note the fiendish variation
Politics

• Nanotechnology?
Power Laws
Some Limits of Algorithms

- Fragile Families
- Revolution is in the air
- Music and books and movies
- Romance
- Puzzles
An Elephant in the Room
Thousands of Boyles, Clarks and Newtons have probably been lost to the world, and lived and died in Ignora[s] and meanness, merely for want of being placed in favourable situations, and enjoying proper advantages,

very few we know is able to beat thro all impedaments and arrive to any grat degree of superiority in understanding
A Story About CEOs

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The Black Box

- Luck
- Serendipity
A Story from HLS
On Success Stories

• False Beliefs As A Result
A List

Quality**
Quantity**
Champions**
Biography**
And more!

NUMBER OF COPIES IN CIRCULATION

ANTHOLOGY

CONTROVERSY

CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS
Okay but Beware Of Sampling On The Dependent Variable
Our Hero

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A Prophet of Noise

AND THE LIMITS OF PREDICTION

COUNTERFACTUAL WORLDS

HISTORY IS ONLY RUN ONCE
The Oprah Effect
Better Off Dead?

• Gore Vidal on Truman Capote: dying was "a wise career move."

• Data!
The Greatest of All Time
A Bicycle
Tragedies and Losses
Opportunities and Gains
On Not Getting Lost
Connie
Converse As
Metaphor
Coda: Isis

She said “Where you been?”
I said “No place special”
She said “You look different”
I said “Well... I guess”
She said “You been gone”
I said “That’s only natural”
She said “You going to stay?”
I said “If you want me to, yes"
Dylan

- I still can remember the way that you smiled
- On the fifth day of May in the drizzling rain
A True Tale of Serendipity
Drizzling Rain
Thank you!