**Gould Burgess Shale Writing Assignment Five**

**Chapter V. Possible Worlds: The Power of “Just History” pp 292-323.**

This assignment consists of a take-home half a typed page (one inch margins, 12 point font; 250 words) based on information presented in Chapter V of “Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History”.

In chapter five, Gould tries to make us comprehend what the fauna of the Burgess Shale can tell us about the evolutionary history of metazoans. In his discussion, he makes a number of arguments, however among those, two are very important and they include: (1) If we could replay life’s tape we might not get the same outcome, and (2) If you wish to ask the question of the ages—why do humans exist?—a major part of the answer must be because *Pikaia* survived the Burgess decimation. What is Gould trying to say about how we should interpreter the evolutionary history of life on earth based on the fossil record?