

Monday 6 February 2012:

Read the assigned essays (twice). Think about the following topics/questions and be prepared to discuss them in class.

- **Essay #8, Male Nipples and Clitoral Ripples:**
 - As always ... identify the thesis and/or main point(s) of this essay and be ready to read specific quotations that exemplify it/them.
 - For many of us (myself included), talking about human genitalia, their function and use is an embarrassing topic. Why is this so? Be prepared to participate in discussion in some fashion when we treat this essay on Monday. Some of our discussion will take place in small groups. No one will be expected to discuss his or her own sexual experience or sexuality. We will focus on Gould's ideas and arguments. If you are not familiar with the anatomical items (particularly the female clitoris) that are the focus of this essay, then you should educate yourself before class. A quick read of the appropriate Wikipedia article and/or a brief exploration of the information provided on the [Planned Parenthood](#) website should suffice.
 - What are "homologous structures?"
 - What is "functionalism" vs. "structuralism?"
 - Why, in Gould's view, do men have nipples?
 - Why, in Gould's view, do women experience orgasms?
 - What are some of the "just so" stories that have been proposed to explain the female orgasm?
 - Compare the thesis of this essay and the targets of Gould's criticism to those in essay #9 (*Not Necessarily a Wing*).
- **Essay #3, The Creation Myths of Cooperstown:**
 - Identify the thesis and/or main point(s) of this essay and be ready to read specific quotations that exemplify it/them.
 - The opening paragraph of this essay caught my attention. Does it catch yours? Do you understand all of the aphorisms and cultural references? What is the voice in which it is cast?
 - What, if anything, does this essay have to do with biological evolution?
 - What criticism does Gould level at some of those in the antiabortion/pro-life movement?
 - Can you think of other examples of creation stories?
- **Essay #31, The Streak of Streaks:**
 - In a parenthetical statement on p. 465, Gould says "The fact that we find these conclusions so surprising is the key to appreciating DiMaggio's achievement, the point of this article, and the gateway to an important insight about the human mind." Unpack this sentence. What are the conclusions that we find so

surprising? Why does this help us better appreciate Joltin' Joe's streak? And, what important insight do we gain about the operation of the human mind?

- Are there any connections in this essay to our discussions of Milgram's experiments?
- Does Gould ever connect the points of this essay to evolution and biology?