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April 11, 1996

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IWU Student Research Conference Slated for April 12-13; Harvard's Stephen J. Gould, Noted Evolution Theorist, To Deliver Keynote Address

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--Fifty-five Illinois Wesleyan University undergraduates will showcase research projects spanning psychology, economics, political science, biology, mathematics, chemistry, and other fields at the 7th Annual John Wesley Powell Research Conference tomorrow (Friday, April 12) and Saturday, April 13.

The conference will kickoff with an address by Stephen Jay Gould, the renowned Harvard University evolutionary biologist and best-selling author. His 7 p.m. address, Friday, April 12, will be in the Main Lounge of IWU's Memorial Student Center, 104 E. University St., Bloomington. There is no admission fee for Gould's speech, which is open to the public.

Gould is credited with proposing a key modification to Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, which was first published in 1859 in the book, "On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favored Species in the Struggle for Life." Gould is a proponent of the theory of "punctuated equilibria," which says new species occasionally appear more quickly than the slow, steady, gradual evolution process described by Darwin. In effect, Gould says, evolutionary change can take place in spurts, followed by long, stable periods. Gould's theory is based, in part, on studies he conducted of land snails in Bermuda.

The conference is named for explorer-geologist John Wesley Powell, a one-armed Civil War veteran and a founder of the National Geographic Society, who joined IWU's faculty in 1865. He was the first U.S. professor to use field work to teach science. In 1867, Powell took IWU students to Colorado's mountains--the first expedition of its kind in the history of U.S. higher education. Later, he was the first director of the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of Ethnology.

Research Conference

The research conference schedule for Saturday, April 13, is:

¥ 9 a.m.--A poster session describing student projects, Commons, Center for Natural Science Learning and Research, 201 E. Beecher St., Bloomington.

¥ 10:30 p.m.--Concurrent Oral Presentations by students explaining their projects, Anderson and Beckman Auditoriums, First Floor, Center for Natural Science Learning and Research.

¥ 1:30 p.m.--A poster session describing student projects, Commons, Center for Natural

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Science Learning and Research.

¥ 2:30 p.m.--Presentations by IWU alumni involved in research and certificate presentations to student researchers, Anderson Auditorium, First Floor, Center for Natural Science Learning and Research.

Research projects include studies of Alzheimer's Disease, the memory-robbing ailment affecting four million Americans; the probability of divorce among young married women; the effects of personal information on jurors' verdicts and perceptions of defendants; synthesis of new possible fingerprint detection agents; an efficient method of detecting cocaine metabolites in urine; the influence of exchange rate changes on international trade in Africa; political and economic aspects of the U.S. sugar subsidy program; market research study for IWU's Bookstore; synthesis of chemicals; and coronary artery disease.

Gould's Background

Gould, who won *Discover* magazine's 1982 Scientist of the Year award, was in the first group awarded the prestigious MacArthur Foundation Fellowship, sometimes popularly called "genius" grants. The MacArthur awards, underwritten by Chicago's John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, give financial support to some of the nation's most creative thinkers.

Gould, a frequent contributor to *Discover* magazine, is the author of more than 200 consecutive essays for his *Natural History* magazine column, "This View of Life." These essays tackle biology in ways that are understandable and enjoyable to the general public.

He is the author of several books, including: "Ever Since Darwin," "Dinosaur in a Haystack: Reflections in Natural History," "Bully for Brontosaurus," and "The Panda's Thumb," for which he won the 1981 American Book Award. He won the National Book Critic's Circle Award for his book, "The Mismeasure of Man."

Gould, a Harvard faculty member since 1967, is a professor of geology and curator of Invertebrate Paleontology, Museum of Comparative Zoology. He teaches courses in geology, biology, and the history of science. His interests as an evolutionary biologist surround mathematical problems of growth and form.

Among his many awards are the Silver National Medal of the Zoological Society of London and the Edinburgh Medal from the city of Edinburgh, Scotland. He won the National Magazine Award for Essays and Criticism in 1980. He was honored with the 1990 Phi Beta Kappa Award for Science in 1990 and the 1992 Paleontological Society Golden Trilobite Award.

Gould is known for his eclectic interests, ranging from Bach to baseball.

He was born in New York City in 1941. His interest in biology and evolution, according to some sources, was sparked at age 5 by a visit to New York's American Museum of Natural History, where the

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sight of a Tyrannosaurus Rex, a dinosaur, launched his interest in paleontology.

As an undergraduate student at Antioch College, he integrated courses in geology, history, and philosophy. He received a bachelor of arts degree from Antioch in 1963 and a doctorate from Columbia University in 1967, where his thesis topic was on the fossil land snails of Bermuda.

Conference organizing committee members are: Jeff Frick, assistant professor of chemistry; Pam Lowry, assistant professor of economics; and Johnna Shipiro, assistant professor of psychology.

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 1,850 students in a College of Liberal Arts, College of Fine Arts, and a four-year professional School of Nursing. A \$15 million athletics and recreation center opened in the fall of 1994; and a \$25 million science building opened in the fall of 1995. The Carnegie Commission for the Advancement of Teaching promoted Illinois Wesleyan to a "Baccalaureate I" institution in 1994, a classification that places it among 161 highly selective National Liberal Arts Colleges in the annual *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges*, another respected college guide, rated IWU "highly competitive (+)" in its latest edition.