Psy 435 WI- Seminar in Comparative Psychology WRITING ASSIGNMENT Stephen J. Gould's The Structure of Evolutionary Theory

The late Stephen J. Gould was heralded by scholars as the world's most revered and eloquent interpreter of evolutionary theory and empirical data. In *The Structure of Evolutionary Theory*, a landmark 1500 page text, Gould makes his final contribution on this topic (he died soon after its publication) by discussing the history and origins of classical Darwinism, critiquing the Darwinian edifice, and proposing a synthesis for integrating classical commitments and contemporary critiques into a novel structure of evolutionary thought. Based on the pages you were asked to read from this text, reflect on these questions in writing (max- 3 typed pages for each question) and be ready to discuss in class in 1 week!

Describe the metaphors of Darwin's "framework" vs. Falconer's "foundation" of the Duomo of Milan as characterizing the structure of evolutionary theory. What position does Gould take and why?

Explain what Gould means by "Goldilock's just right position" with respect to allegiance evolutionary theory. (hint: essences)

Discuss agency, efficacy, and scope as three important features in Darwin's notion of natural selection.

Why does Gould choose to use a branch of coral as a metaphor for the structure of evolutionary theory? Label and explain what the branching parts of the coral represent.

Briefly describe two modifications in the structure of evolutionary theory that has changed Darwin's original conception of the theory. (hint: these can be empirically supported critiques in the theory that have emerged with modern advances in scientific methodology).

Describe Gould's academic background and "personal odyssey" in writing this culminating work. What advice do you think he would give scholars?