

**“Wind back the tape of life to the early days of the Burgess Shale; let it play again from an identical starting point and the chance becomes vanishingly small that anything like human intelligence will grace the replay.”**

**Stephen Jay Gould**

# Equifinality

....a related issue.

- Any set of observations about the past we see can be the result of any number of potential sequences of cause-and-effect.
- Deciding which *one* gave rise to the history/archaeology we do observe is confounded by this problem of equifinality.
- And unlike in physical sciences we cannot really experiment on people to see what happens.
- ...at least, not ethically.