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The many line drawings are unusually beautiful, and now can be compared to a wonderful collection of photographs in *Fossils of the Burgess Shale* by Derek Briggs, one of Gould's students. Burgess Shale animals have been called "a palaeontological Rorschach test", and not every geologist by any means agrees with Gould's thesis that they represent a "road not taken" in the history of life. Gould uses this metaphor to structure his book and to teach us something about the nature of life and the role of contingency in the history of life. The Burgess Shale is a rock formation in British Columbia, Canada. *Wonderful Life* is pretty, well, wonderful. If your curiosity about the Burgess Shale or the weird and wonderful beings of the Cambrian period needs sating, this book should more than do it. It is quite dense — Gould may have been a popular science writer, but he didn't dumb it down — but it's worth the time investment. Free download or read online *Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History* pdf (ePUB) book. The first edition of this novel was published in 1989, and was written by Stephen Jay Gould.