

**AAPG Annual Meeting
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Houston, Texas**

Simon Winchester¹ (1) N/A, N/A, NY

The Making of "The Map that Changed the World"

Simon Winchester, who studied geology at Oxford thirty years ago, will discuss the making of his best-selling study of William "Strata" Smith, the father of British geology and creator, in 1815, of the world's first true national geological map. As well as being a heroic tale of genius and obsessive determination and the single-handed creation of a brand-new science, 'The Map that Changed the World' is also a poignant human saga - since, thanks to Smith's lowly social status, envious rival geologists plagiarized his work and drove him to bankruptcy, debtors' prison and homelessness: it was decades before his brilliance was recognized and rewarded. Simon Winchester, who will recall how his own childhood interest in geology was inspired by the making of discoveries that turned out to be curiously similar to Smith's own, tells both a forgotten story of an unsung giant of science, and the tale of how a book such as this is made - from the first glimmerings of an idea to the finished product in the bookstore and on the library shelves.