



SPRING 2015 SEMINAR SERIES

Annual Ludwick Lecture in honor of Professor Jack C. Ludwick

DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN, EARTH, AND ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES
3PM – ROOM 200 IN THE OCEANOGRAPHY/PHYSICS BUILDING
THURSDAY APRIL 14th, 2016

“CLIMATE OF THE LAST 6000 YEARS: NATURAL OR ANTHROPOGENIC?”

William F. Ruddiman

Professor Emeritus

Department of Environmental Sciences

University of Virginia

ABSTRACT

For more than a decade, scientists have argued about the warmth of the current interglaciation. Was the warmth of the pre-industrial late Holocene natural in origin, created by orbital changes that had not yet driven the system into a new glacial state? Or was it in considerable degree the result of human interference in the climate system because of gas emissions from early agriculture? In this talk, I summarize new evidence that moves this debate forward by evaluating a wide range of evidence to test the predictions of natural and anthropogenic hypotheses. By comparing Holocene responses to those that occurred during previous interglaciations, I assess whether the Holocene responses look different (and thus likely anthropogenic) or similar (and thus likely natural in origin). I also review paleoecological and archaeological syntheses that provide ground-truth evidence on the size and timing of early anthropogenic releases of greenhouse gases.

FTER THE SEMINAR, PLEASE JOIN US IN ROOM 404, THE ZANEVELD CONFERENCE ROOM, FOR COFFEE AND COOKIES, AND TO MEET WITH THE SEMINAR SPEAKER.