Carbon from Crust to Core: A History of Deep Carbon Science

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As a historian of science, I specialise in the history of planetary science and astronomy since the beginning of the twentieth century. My current project is directed toward a greater understanding of the history of the steps on the road to discovering the internal dynamics of our planet. Within a framework that describes the historical background to the new field of Earth System Science, I will elaborate the first history of the interdispciplinary field of deep carbon science. This project will identify and document the key discoveries of deep carbon science, and assess the impact of this new knowledge on geochemistry, geodynamics, and geobiology.

The project will lead to publication, in book form in 2019, of an illuminating narrative that will highlight the engaging human stories of many remarkable scientists and natural philosophers from whom we have learned about the complexity of Earth's internal world. On this journey of discovery we will encounter not just the pioneering researchers of deep carbon science, but also their institutions, their instrumental inventiveness, and their passion for exploration. The book will be organised thematically with respect to the four communities of the Deep Carbon Observatory: Deep Life, Extreme Physics and Chemistry, Reservoirs and Fluxes, and Deep Energy.

This presentation includes a gallery and a provisional list of Deep Carbon Pioneers. As a historian and biographer, I am keenly searching for people who may have been overlooked in the standard accounts of the historical development of geology, geodynamics, and the study of subsurface life. Which pioneers would you choose? Can you nominate a colleague, or even add a selfie? Do you have a standout story or personal recollection to enrich my chronicle? I am equipped to do personal oral history interviews: so, what's your story?