Small Steps and Giant Leaps: How Apollo 11 Shaped Understandings of Earth and Beyond

a discussion with

Steven A. Hauck II, Professor and Chair, Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences

October 11, 2019 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.
Kelvin Smith Library Room LL06 11201 Euclid Ave.

"Give me a place to stand," said Archimedes, "and I will move the world." More than two millennia later, men stood on the moon and could not move the world but could see it anew.

The 50th anniversary of the first moon landing led to lots of commentary about how the moon landings, and space program more generally, changed how we (or at least some of us) thought about the world. Some themes are nearly conventional wisdoms: such as how seeing the earth in the distance, one planet surrounded by very little, should help humanity see that we live together on a fragile and special and beautiful world. Both Friends of the Earth and the Whole Earth Catalog owed their origins in part to the image of the earth as a singular whole. Some of the other effects are less-known and perhaps more certain. The lunar missions upended understandings of the earth's formation. It is easier to learn about some aspects of geology from the moon than from the earth, because the earth's geology keeps changing. Arguably a field of planetary science became possible due to the conceptual leap from comparing the earth to the moon and then, logically, to other terrestrial bodies.

On July 17, Professor Hauck was part of a panel sponsored by the U.S. National Archives and American Geophysical Society to consider what scientists and others learned from Apollo 11. Join us for further discussion.

The Friday Public Affairs Discussion Lunch is an opportunity for students, faculty, staff, emeriti and other members of our communities to learn and question each other about public policy issues at the international, national, and local levels. Faculty and other speakers share their research and experience to get beyond the headlines and repetition in the mass media, and the wild rumors of the internet. Lunch is brown bag, but cookies and some beverages are provided by the Center for Policy Studies of the College of Arts and Sciences.

http://fridaylunch.case.edu/