



FOREST HISTORY
Society

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What: Lynn W. Day Distinguished Lectureship in Forest and Conservation History

Who: Stephen Pyne, Arizona State University

Topic: The Pyrocene: How Humanity Created a Fire Age

When: Wednesday, October 28, 2020, 2 pm EDT.

Where: Online via Zoom (Register at www.foresthistory.org/lecture)

DURHAM, NC – Acclaimed fire historian and author Dr. Stephen J. Pyne will deliver the 2020 Lynn W. Day Distinguished Lectureship in Forest and Conservation History on October 28, 2020. In his talk, “The Pyrocene: How Humanity Created a Fire Age,” Pyne will be discussing how we are in a Fire Age of comparable scale to the Ice Ages of the Pleistocene, and whether our relationship with fire is a mutual assistance pact or a Faustian bargain. The presentation will be given through Zoom at 2 pm EDT. Registration is required.

Writes Dr. Pyne, “The Earth is a uniquely fire planet, humans a uniquely fire creature, and how they have interacted has been shaping our world throughout the Holocene. First through the control over ignition, and then by adding some control over living biomass, people have been reshaping biogeography and even climate. The process went on afterburners when humanity’s quest for more firepower led to the burning of fossil biomass. This pyric transition has passed over every environment that humans inhabit. It upset fire regimes in living landscapes, leading to fire crises. Its impact on the atmosphere has globalized that effect, quickening a fire epoch. We are creating a fire age I call the Pyrocene—the fire-informed equivalent to an ice age.”

Dr. Stephen Pyne is an emeritus professor at Arizona State University, where he has been on faculty since 1985. He has published 35 books, most of them dealing with fire, but others on Antarctica, the Grand Canyon, and the Voyager mission. His fire histories include surveys of America, Australia, Canada, Europe (including Russia), and the Earth. He recently completed a ten-volume survey of wildfire in the United States called “To the Last Smoke.” He’s the author of the Forest History Society’s Issues Series book *America’s Fires: A Historical Context for Policy and Practice* and a frequent contributor to its magazine *Forest History Today*.

The lecture is sponsored by the Forest History Society, Duke University’s Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke University’s Department of History. For more information, please visit www.foresthistory.org/lecture or contact the Forest History Society at (919) 682-9319.