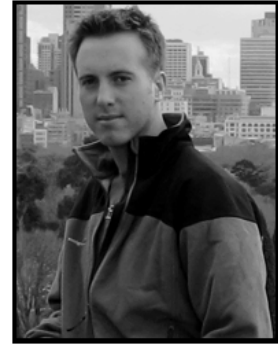


Report on the 2007 AGU Fall Meeting

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Generous financial support from the Geochemistry Group gave me the opportunity to attend the 2007 AGU Fall Meeting in San Francisco. At the conference I presented a talk entitled 'Coccolith Chemistry: A Flow-Through Analysis' during a session on biomineralisation and geochemical signatures. The talk was well received and sparked interesting discussion about the broader application of the developed techniques.

In the talk I presented for the first time accurate measurements of the trace metal composition of the calcite plates produced by the ubiquitous marine photosynthetic plankton, coccolithophores. The results were discussed in the context of other marine calcifiers, and with respect to future trace-metal proxy application. The talk was concluded by presentation of the new flow-cytometry technique I have developed through my PhD to sort sedimentary coccoliths from surrounding clay grains, and therefore 'clean' the samples ready for geochemical analysis.

This was the first time that I have attended a meeting held by the American Geophysical Union, and I was amazed by the range of science being discussed. Despite the huge variety of talks and posters, the Paleooceanography and Paleoclimatology, Biogeosciences and Ocean Science sessions provided a constant stream of exciting and extremely relevant talks and posters. For me the highlight was probably hearing about and discussing what some of the non-European groups have been doing to understand how the biomineralisation processes actually control the trace-metal signatures of plankton shells.

Beside the specific points of interest, the general high level of science and quality of datasets presented really inspired me at this crucial time, as my PhD draws to a close, to produce the very best that I can from by remaining experiments, and get the many results from the last three years published and out into the community.

Thanks again to the Geochemistry group for assisting me in visiting this exceptional conference.