

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY RUFUS WOOD LEIGH LECTURE 2019

Douglas J. Kennett, Ph.D



“Climate Change and Sociopolitical Cycling in the Maya Region”

Climate scientists predict major changes in global temperature and precipitation in the next century and it is not yet known how our complex societies will respond. Interdisciplinary archaeological research provides a laboratory for exploring the inherent complexities of societal responses in the face of climate change over long periods of time with potential relevance to present and future societies. The episodic formation, consolidation and breakdown of preindustrial states occurred in multiple contexts worldwide during the last 5000 years were contingent upon interacting endogenous economic, demographic and political mechanisms. In some instances, there is support for climate change stimulating integration or inducing sociopolitical fragmentation in these complex systems. Kennett will present the results of an on-going interdisciplinary project focused on the cyclical nature of societal responses to climate change during the last 2,000 years in the Maya region.



Dr. Kennett is a Professor at University of California, Santa Barbara. His research specializes in Environmental Archaeology and Human Behavioral Ecology. He has pursued these interests in Western North America, specifically along the California coast and the Channel islands, as well as in Central America studying the Maya.

Monday, October 21, 2019 at 7:00PM
Siciliano Auditorium, Gardner Commons 1900