

For Immediate Release — Friday, September 16, 2016

## The lessons of archaeology headline debut of popular PUBLIC Professor series

Surely the ancient Maya never predicted their downfall, nor did the Roman Empire foresee its society coming to an end and yet they both vanished into history. What can we learn from these civilizations and how can it relate to the normal we know today?

Dr. Kevin McGeough (BA '96) of the University of Lethbridge's Department of Geography will explore these topics when he presents 'I met a traveller from an antique land': The Archaeology of Progress, Decline and Collapse at the first



PUBLIC Professor series event of the fall semester. The free public talk is set for Thursday, Sept. 22 from 7 to 9 p.m. at Lethbridge City Hall.

McGeough says that the ability of archaeology to offer insight about long-term change is one of the major contributions of the discipline to society. He also sees the PUBLIC Professor series as an important vehicle to share his research work.

"It's part of what I think is our obligation as professors," he says. "We can't always make our research accessible in ways that are meaningful but we should always be trying to do so and archaeology is one of those disciplines that is evocative and garners a lot of public interest and imagination. So we need to think about that and do our best to communicate our work back to everybody."

PUBLIC Professor is beginning its third year in the current format. Born out of the great success of the Public Professor newspaper column co-edited by Drs. Dan Johnson and James Linville, the current series offers free public talks in a pub-style setting. Intended

more as open forums than lectures, PUBLIC Professor evenings provoke questions and open dialogue.

“It’s a forum that has proven to be very popular and we’re excited to have Dr. McGeough open another series of what promises to be outstanding presentations,” says Dr. Craig Cooper, Dean of the Faculty of Arts & Science. “I think that people will once again be very intrigued by the scholars we have lined up for the year and the variety of topics that will be discussed.”

McGeough is a U of L alumnus who went on to master’s and doctoral studies at Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania respectively before returning to teach at the University in 2003. He’s been in Lethbridge ever since and has conducted field work throughout the world, including extensive research in the Middle East.

His work looks at how people use archaeology to make arguments about the present, how this is both legitimate and can also be cause for concern. He has also studied archaeology and its presentation in films and media.

McGeough’s talk is the first of the six-part PUBLIC Professor series that will run through March 2017. The full schedule follows:

**Sept. 22, 2016** – Dr. Kevin McGeough (geography & archaeology) – ‘I met a traveller from an antique land’: The Archaeology of Progress, Decline and Collapse

**Oct. 20, 2016** – Dr. Roy Golsteyn (biological sciences) – Flower Power: A Scientific Search for New Medicines in Prairie Plants

**Nov. 24, 2016** – Dr. Goldie Morgentaler (English) – How Dickens Invented Christmas – and Why it Matters

**Jan. 26, 2017** – Dr. Janay Nugent (history) – Converting a Nation: Family, Religion and Calvinism in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century Scotland

**Feb. 16, 2017** – Dr. Kent Peacock (philosophy) – Alberta in the Anthropocene

**Mar. 23, 2017** – Dr. Stacey Wetmore (chemistry & biochemistry) – DNA Damage, Repair and Disease: How Computers Can Help Us Understand

Free appetizers and bar service will be available at each presentation. Seating is limited and people are urged to attend early. No RSVP is required. For more information, visit the [PUBLIC Professor series web page](#).

For more on Dr. McGeough’s work, visit this [feature story](#).

To view online: <http://www.uleth.ca/unews/article/public-professor-series-promising-another-stellar-lineup>

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