

# “The Pleasure of Ruins”

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Brian Fagan took us on an illustrated journey through the exciting world of the past and posed a question: “What is the great fascination of ruins?” Why is cultural and archaeological tourism the fastest growing segment of the adventure travel business? He examined some of the controversies and issues surrounding archaeological tourism—the damage wrought by ever-growing crowds, the rights of stakeholders, and the cultural and social implications of archaeological travel. He also took us behind the façade of archaeological tourism to look at the critical importance of archaeology for understanding climate change, global warming—and ourselves.

Brian Fagan is Emeritus Professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and one of the world's leading archaeological writers. His many books include widely used college texts, *The Adventure of Archaeology*, *The Rape of the Nile*, *The Little Ice Age* and *The Long Summer*, and, most recently, *The Great Warming*, the story of the Medieval Warm Period.