

The Fate of Rome: Climate, Disease, and the End of an Empire

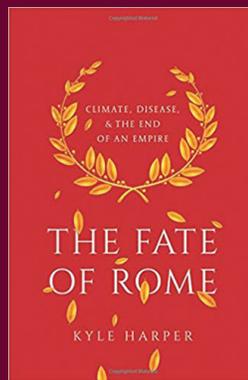
What happens when the world falls apart, and what did people do in the face of unthinkable disaster? Could they have done something about it? Can we?

Kyle Harper, Professor of Classics and Letters and Senior Vice President and Provost of the University of Oklahoma, will deliver the Fall 2018 Critical Engagements Keynote Address. His most recent book, *The Fate of Rome: Climate, Disease, and the End of an Empire*, is the first to examine the catastrophic role that climate change and infectious diseases played in the collapse of Rome's power—a story of nature's triumph over human ambition. It helps to explain the end of a world that once seemed eternal, sounding themes that echo with ominous resonance in the twenty-first century: epidemics and the environment, apocalyptic obsessions and the splintering of social and political norms.

Dr. Harper's first book, *Slavery in the Late Roman World, AD 275-425* (Cambridge University Press, 2011) was awarded the James Henry Breasted Prize by the American Historical Association and the Outstanding Publication Award from the Classical Association of the Middle West and South. His second book, *From Shame to Sin: The Christian Transformation of Sexual Morality* was published by Harvard University Press in 2013.

This presentation is sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences' Critical Engagements initiative and the Department of History.

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Thursday, October 25th

7:30 p.m.

**Central Michigan University
Powers Hall Ballroom**

Book signing to follow.

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About Critical Engagements

Critical Engagements: Questions That Matter is a collaborative project that makes the academic mission of Central Michigan University concrete by highlighting how our college and university are tackling the world's most pressing and difficult questions. Working with community partners, we identify a common annual theme or "wicked problem," recruit people and teams who work in and around the theme at CMU and beyond, and support investigations that reflect the depth and breadth of a research university committed to the highest standards of scholarship and engagement. The 2018-19 theme is "The End of the World: Crisis, Turning-Points, Renewals."