

4 Field Colloquium:

Olmec Archaeology in the Arroyo Pesquero Region

Speaker: Carl J. Wendt

Host Department: Anthropology

Date: 09/18/2015

Time: 3:00 pm

Location: 411 West Hall

Description:

Studies on the Olmec frequently focus on the ostentatious nature of the society such as large centers and monumental works of art, often ignoring the important role of smaller sites in regional hierarchies. In order to remedy this bias, we initiated the Proyecto Arqueológico Arroyo Pesquero, which is investigating sites in the Eastern Olmec Heartland. This project is unique in Olmec studies in that it takes a bottom-up approach to the study of the Middle Formative Olmec by collecting household-level data from a range of domestic and ritual contexts to address questions and test hypotheses on Olmec domestic organization, subsistence patterning, ritual, and regional resource control. This research builds on the body of theory and method on domestic activities (e.g., production), ritual, and subsistence organization. Through this research we are beginning to generate a clearer picture of Middle Formative Olmec daily life, exchange networks and procurement systems, the organization domestic craft production, and how people adapted to and modified their tropical lowland environment. In this presentation, I present the findings from the last ten years of our field investigations.