

The 21 Club
Social, Dinner and a Talk
Monday November 16, 2009
Joint Meeting with the
[NM Chapter of the Fulbright Association](#)

The second meeting of the Fall Semester will begin at 6:00 PM in the Banquet Room of the [Little Anita's](#) restaurant in Old Town. The meeting will consist of a social hour and dinner (with a cash bar) and an after dinner talk given by Fulbright Fellow [Les Field](#) (Abstract on Page 2).

At the restaurant you can choose a Combination Plate (cheese enchilada, tamale, guacamole, refried beans and Spanish rice) or a Chicken Enchilada Plate (chicken enchilada, refried beans and Spanish rice) or a Chicken Breast Plate (chicken breast, refried beans and Spanish rice) or a Vegetarian Combination Plate (two cheese enchiladas, chile relleno, guacamole, refried beans and Spanish rice). All dinners include tea, coffee, water and sopapillas with honey.



Mail your check (\$15 for each reservation) to:

The 21 Club
Physics and Astronomy MSC07 42201
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, NM 87131-0001

Note: to guarantee your reservation(s) your check (payable to “The 21 Club”) must be **received** by Monday, November 9, 2009.

The Gold System:
Explorations of the (Ongoing) Fate of Colombia's Pre-Columbian Gold Artifacts

Les W. Field
Professor of Anthropology
The University of New Mexico

Abstract:

Guaquería (derivative of the Quechua word for as “tomb”) is the name for illicit excavation of antiquities in Colombia, a practice that is historically deeply rooted and widespread in that country. It (along with archaeology) is perhaps, the most directly destructive force bearing upon cultural heritage in Colombia today. Arguably, the widespread use of gold and gold alloys in the material culture of pre-Columbian societies in the territory of what is now Colombia has acted as a major stimulus to guaquería, but the nature of colonial conquest and settlement in this country provided the structural context for the historical importance and incidence of illicit forms of excavating antiquities. While in recent years, the Colombian government has considered guaquería a criminal activity and the populations of guaqueros who carry out this work have become increasingly marginalized and demonized, guaquería is part of a larger system. This system, which creates an understanding of the meaning and value of antiquity, also includes officially sanctioned archaeology, the Gold Museum/Museo del Oro in Bogotá, art and antiquities dealers, private collectors, and academic anthropology. As Colombia slowly emerges from decades of violence and reconstructs social, economic, political and cultural relationships in the new century, an opportunity is opened to put cultural heritage to work in these reconstructive tasks. This presentation will describe the nature of guaqueria in Colombia's past and present and the perspectives for future stewardship of Colombia's antiquities heritage.

Les W. Field is Professor of Anthropology at the University of New Mexico. He received his Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology from Duke University in 1987. His dissertation research investigated relations between men and women in the workplace and cultural policy during the Nicaraguan Revolution. This research and later fieldwork in Nicaragua formed the basis for his book, *The Grimace of Macho Raton* (1999). After a two-year post-doc conducting fieldwork in Colombia and Ecuador, Field then conducted over fifteen years of research with indigenous peoples of California, on the basis of which he wrote *Abalone Tales*, published in 2008. Professor Field's research has been supported by the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Wenner-Gren Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation. His current research in Colombia is supported by a Fulbright Fellowship.