Author Chris Wilson to lecture on "The Myth of Santa Fe"

Few places evoke an image of the Southwest better than Santa Fe, New Mexico. Settled by the Spanish in the early 1600s, Santa Fe became the seat of government and a destination for traders at the northern edge of New Spain. Visitors to the city are charmed by the way Santa Fe seems to resonate with history. Literature about the city recognizes that three cultures have shaped it over the years as Santa Fe’s streets and main plaza have echoed to the footsteps of Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Anglo Americans. After the U.S.-Mexican War of 1846-48, Santa Fe became an “American” city, but its cultural heritage remained a rich mixture of the three peoples who also traditionally define the entire region. Santa Fe’s primacy would have seemed assured in the nineteenth century, but the coming of the railroad signaled an alarming change: Bypassed by the Santa Fe Railroad’s own Chicago to Los Angeles main line—which ran instead through Albuquerque—the city of Santa Fe began to languish. In his recent book about the city’s changing identity through time, Chris Wilson notes that Santa Fe needed a miracle to survive, and found its salvation in the form of tourism.

Chris Wilson’s remarkable book — *The Myth of Santa Fe* — documents the process by which Santa Fe took on a new/old identity through the romanticizing of the past. In developing his thesis, Wilson questions whether the Southwest and Santa Fe really represent just the three cultures mentioned above; it is time, Wilson argues, to recognize a fourth, the coyote identity that reflects the fusion of peoples and styles in the region today. Since its publication by the University of New Mexico Press just a few months ago, Wilson’s beautifully-illustrated book has become required reading in several college courses on the Southwest, including UTA courses on the Geography of the Southwest and Images of the Southwest. As part of a special metroplex visit to UTA and SMU, Chris Wilson will speak on the Myth of Santa Fe at UTA on Thursday evening, February 19th. Scheduled to be held at 7:30pm in the Architecture Building, Wilson’s illustrated talk further unravels the intriguing story of how Santa Fe has become an icon for the Southwest through an elaborate process of image-building. Anyone interested in business, the arts, marketing, advertising, and the history of the Southwest will not want to miss this free lecture. For more information, contact the Center for Greater Southwestern Studies at 817/272-3997, (or by e-mail: center@library.uta.edu).
**Atlas of the New West is Innovative and Provocative**

Geographer William Riebsame of the University of Colorado conceived of this atlas to help people understand what is happening throughout the West in the late 20th century, where one’s neighbors are as likely to be retirees or computer software consultants as miners or ranchers. The New West, in Riebsame’s words, “a postmodern West in which old and new combine to create something different.” The New West, as defined in this atlas, is essentially the Intermountain and Rocky Mountain West (the populous coastal valleys of California, Oregon, and Washington are excluded) covering a huge area from extreme West Texas northward to the eastern slopes of the Montana Rockies westward to the western margins of the Great Basin. A substantial portion of the Southwest (from El Paso County, Texas, most of New Mexico, and all of Arizona, Utah, and portions of Colorado) is thus included. About half of the land here is federally owned, and Indian tribes own roughly a fifth; the remainder is in private hands. This innovative atlas features distributions of items not normally mapped: locations of western writers and their works (example: Richard Shelton, *Going Back to Bisbee*: Bisbee, Arizona), airports where private jets can be accommodated, “outback” areas more than ten miles from a paved highway, locations of corporate capital, water usage, dams, ethnicity and cultural diversity, home ownership (including second homes), retirement hot spots; “New West” “Lifestyles (art galleries, new age centers, utility vehicle sales, gourmet coffee, breweries) and “Old West” locales (dude ranches, rodeos, cowboy poetry festivals, skiing, hiking/climbing); even the “ugly West” (nuclear sites, weapons testing, super fund sites); and the “Next West” (areas with or without growth control ordinances, protected ecosystems) are included. These fascinating maps, along with many evocative color photographs by Peter Goin, and a lively text by essayists including Patricia Nelson Limerick and Charles Wilkinson, help distinguish this as an innovative atlas with an attitude that is simultaneously countercultural and futuristic. Purchasing the *Atlas of the New West* also benefits the projects of its non-profit publisher, the Center for the American West, the University of Colorado. It can be ordered from the Center for the American West, Hellem’s 373, Campus Box 234, Boulder Colorado 80309-0234 (phone 303/492-1671, or e-mail at centerwest@colorado.edu).

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**Texas Map Society to Meet in April**

Since its creation less than two years ago, the Texas Map Society has grown to more than one hundred members. Its members are now located throughout Texas and several adjoining states. Although the varied cartographic legacy of Texas is a primary interest of some TMS members, many actually have very broad geographic interests, including maps of the remainder of the Southwest, the Americas and the world. The first three TMS meetings were held at the University of Texas at Arlington, but the Spring 1998 meeting will be held at the State Capitol in Austin on Saturday, April 25th. In recognition of the rich cartographic resources in Austin, the theme of this meeting focuses on historic maps of Texas and environs, including sessions on Stephen F. Austin as cartographer, the early mapping of the Texas coast, and an introduction to map collections at the Texas State Library and the General Land Office. For more information, contact Dr. David Buisseret, c/o History Department, UTA, 202 University Hall, Box 19529, Arlington, Texas 76019, 817/272-2898.
UTA Architecture Students visit Chaco Canyon
By Richard Ferrier

Chaco Canyon is a remote desert area in Northwestern New Mexico situated in a dry wash, with sparse vegetation and extreme climate variations. It is also a canyon with hundreds of ancient archeological sites and seemingly contradictory manifestations. The density and diverse nature of ruins in the canyon raise many questions. The lack of any major source for water further complicates the consideration of life and activity at this place.

From simple camp locations to magnificent multistoried pueblos, Chaco has a long and intriguing history of prehistoric occupation. About a thousand years ago, people referred to as the Anasazi initiated an aggressive series of construction projects. Large and small pueblos were built; some complex and intricate yet others very simple and modest. Irrigation systems were utilized to support farming plots in the canyon. Ancient roads were carefully cut into the mesa surface and were bordered with rocks, connecting Chaco Canyon with distant sites and adding another dimension to the dynamics of this culture. Anasazi is a Navajo word meaning “enemy ancestors,” but in Hopi has been translated as “the ancient ones.”

Numerous Great Houses are located in the canyon and on the mesas. Pueblo Bonito is the largest, with 600 rooms and 40 kivas constructed adjacent to the north edge of Alto Mesa. A few hundred yards away is Chetro Ketl, with 500 rooms and 16 kivas. Pueblo del Arroyo, with 290 rooms and 20 kivas, is also near, built along the edge of the normally dry Chaco Wash. Pueblo Alto is on the north mesa. Tsii Kletsin and Penasco Blanco are on South Mesa areas across the Canyon.

Most Anasazi sites have kivas, which are circular structures usually built into the ground for ceremonial and communal uses. Many kivas are found in the Chaco structures. Several of the kivas are very large and required massive timbers to form the roof of the structure. The logs used were felled with stone axes and transported from Ponderosa forests at least 80 miles away. They were not rolled or dragged, as no scar marks were found. No pack animals existed, so they were likely carried as depicted in petroglyphs found along the canyon walls.

The largest kiva, Casa Rinconada, is located on the south side of the wash adjacent to rather small building sites. Masonry for Rinconada is carefully constructed and similar to that of the Great Houses on the north side. The adjacent structures utilize a simple masonry type of locally found rocks placed as found, one next to the other. Archeologists can only speculate as to why this hand-finished masonry structure is in such stark contrast and juxtaposition with the more crudely-built structures.

Artifacts discovered at Chaco contribute to the intrigue of the Anasazi culture. Pottery of numerous types is found in abundance. Many were made of clay not found in or near the canyon. Turquoise is not available in Chaco, but exquisite turquoise jewelry has been found along with areas of considerable turquoise particulate matter. Feathers from South American Mynah birds have been discovered along with shells from the Pacific Coast. What is not found in Chaco Canyon may be even more profound; there are very few burial sites.

Fajada Butte rises from the canyon floor as a natural landmark. Located along the east side near the top rim is a celestial calendar which accurately records significant solar and lunar events. Large stone slabs form narrow slots which produce slivers of light which project on the wall beyond. Two spiral petroglyphs have been carved into the wall surface where the “light daggers” mark the Summer and Winter Solstices as well as the Spring and Fall Equinox.

The Problem

Ancient architectural ruins and critical archeological evidence diminish in their capacity to inform us of the intricate society and culture we know as the Anasazi. Erosion and neglect, along with vandalism and theft are some of the factors working to mute continued discovery and understanding. Chaco Canyon must be protected as a National Monument and reconsidered in terms of use, access, and ongoing archeological investigation.

The Chaco Culture National Historical Park has many problems. Currently, one can drive into the canyon, bypass the visitor center, skip the minimal visitor fee and proceed to parking areas along a loop road which allows parking adjacent to most of the major ruins and Great Houses. How can one expect visitors to comprehend the delicate nature and future potential if they are not informed? Of course, several signs notify visitors of what they are supposed to do, but visitors should be instructed from the outset.

Access to Chaco Canyon can be difficult and impossible during heavy local rain, snow and thunder storms. One can be caught and immobilized by flood waters that can prevent one from either entering or leaving the canyon. At best, a bone jarring ride is typical and disturbing. A small visitor center is located in the canyon. It has a one room display area, a viewing area, a retail area and information desk. Potable water, toilet locations, and a pay telephone complete the list of amenities. The caretakers of Chaco suggest that the difficulty of access offers a considerable level of protection for the ruins and treasures of the canyon. However, distance is not protecting the ruins in Chaco Canyon, and a lack of controlled access is making it worse. Archeologists, careful observers, and others concerned are painfully aware of the issues that threaten this unique site.

Proposals

If one makes a list of local and regional issues as well as problems concerning Chaco Canyon, obvious solutions seem to be apparent. Native Americans in this area have few opportunities for meaningful employment, much less professional, educational, or even vocational alternatives. Ancient ruins are in jeopardy from abuse by an uninformed but potentially lucrative user group. Direct automobile access is damaging in many ways: pollution, vibration, ignorance and more. Accommodations are miles from the canyon.

For several terms, graduate architecture students in my summer design studio have been challenged to investigate the potential for appropriate development and alternatives to the management, access and related issues at Chaco Canyon. We have invested many hours discovering the magnificent ruins
and artifacts as well as making careful observations of use and abuse. From one year to the next we have photographically recorded desecration of ruins, petroglyphs and artifacts. Over the past several years, we have visited every site in the canyon open to the public observation. This includes the extended realm of Chaco and the Pueblo Pintado site several miles down the canyon accessible only via another series of dirt roads. Pinado is protected by a chain link fence with a narrow passage which restricts local cattle from direct access. Park Rangers periodically check the site, a record of visits is recorded on paper sheets in a box at the fenced entry. It resembled boxes we had seen before which contained printed trail guides. However, we questioned the practice of recording security visits in such a manner.

Public camp and RV sites are available in Chaco. We do not utilize these facilities. These sites are as disturbing as the temporary appearing housing structures utilized by the park staff and archaeologists. This housing appears to be just like the ones permanently located on the grounds of many public schools in Texas, "temporary classrooms." The Anasazi architecture in Chaco is a startling contrast. With the canyon so dense with ruins and artifacts, one must wonder, what is under the camp sites and the Visitor Center?

Abe's Motel and Fly Shop on the San Juan River is our base of operation. It is as close to Chaco as the town of Farmington and an ideal location for visiting other Anasazi sites such as Mesa Verde and Canyon de Chelly. In the immediate area, we have located a tiny Anasazi site, Christmas Tree Ruin and a Navajo tower structure in Simon Canyon. Other considerations for this base of operation include: the Sportsman Bar which serves breakfast and has satellite TV, a clear evening sky for watching meteor showers, and a world class trout stream. This location provides adjacent room with kitchens and charcoal grills outside. We plan most evening meals as a group so these hours can be utilized to stimulate group discussion and interaction. It works in unique ways. We learn to work as a group, conceptualize in very broad terms and interact in a way different from the usual student/professor and student/student relationships.

Chaco Canyon

After years of visiting Chaco Canyon, it is obvious to us that the Visitor Center, camping and all guest accommodations should be provided outside of the canyon. Personal passenger vehicles should not be allowed access to the canyon floor. Orientation sessions should precede any visitor access and guided tours at various levels of interest should be the only means of access to the canyon and mesa sites. Anticipation and planning for guided visits to the sites should be capitalized. Intriguing museum exhibits, which would require reclaiming many artifacts taken from Chaco Canyon, should be the point of entry for all visitors. Compelling videos, lectures and evening campfires should peak anticipation as well as respect and consideration for the ancient sites.

A diverse menu of site visits and visitor experiences should be developed. For casual visitors, oversight vistas might be provided at the canyon edge or from an observation tower. Mesa ruins could be a new focus, with exhibits of actual research or selected sections of a typical excavation. Electric powered vehicles could provide access to canyon ruins and ranger led tours of various lengths. Independent access to distant sites requiring long hikes might be allowed for visitors properly informed with a brief training or awareness problem. And of course, other levels of participation and access could be offered for a fee. The successful model of visitor participation at successful recreational sites should provide a base level for visitor access and personal interaction. Actual participation in supervised archaeological excavations should also be considered. With realistic visitor fees and appropriate levels of service as well as access, national sites such as the Chaco Culture National Historical Park could provide dramatic user experiences and education. Access to Chaco Canyon per vehicle is only a few dollars. This is low when compared, say, to the fee for a movie or a day pass at Six Flags Over Texas or Walt Disney World. The entertainment value is obviously high at these theme parks, but what about the level of historical and complex interaction one might anticipate at Chaco Canyon?

To properly manage, protect, and develop this unique public resource appropriate fees must be charged. Disney can continuously alter their parks for ultimate experience and investment. Chaco Canyon should never alter any aspect of its historic resources but provide for careful and meaningful scientific investigation as well as appropriate public observation.

Our architectural project proposals will consider and address a broad range of needs and opportunities. It appears to us that local problems and conditions suggest meaningful and timely solutions. The protection and guided exploration as well as restoration of ancient ruins could be a new basis of opportunity. A museum of significance is needed at Chaco. Artifact replication could prove to be lucrative as well as protective of actual artifacts. Coordinated transport into the canyon and beyond will provide new opportunities. One might even consider a small hotel adjacent to the highway, a great cafe and a theatre to provide state of the art orientation presentations about Chaco Canyon and the Anasazi. These developments could benefit the people who live in this area, respect the native American heritage of the site, and assist the National Park Service in managing a treasure of Southwestern archeology and history. The ideas resulting from the student projects are stimulating and they will be documented in a forthcoming publication based on our findings in several exciting summer field sessions at Chaco Canyon.

(Editor's note: A biographical sketch about Professor Richard Ferrier is found in "Meet the Faculty" on page six of this issue)
New Books

Ignacio M. García, Chicanismo: The Forging of a Militant Ethos.
Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997

The author, who earlier wrote United We Win: The Rise and Fall of La Raza Unida Party (1989), has now produced a stimulating analysis of the Chicano movimiento. It has many interesting insights, such as “Chicanos accepted that they were not white, but more important, they accepted that they did not want to be white” (p. 72).

García writes clearly and with the sureness of someone who was a participant in the movement. Chicanismo is well analyzed, although not as philosophically as in John Chavez’s compelling The Lost Land: The Chicano Image of the Southwest (1984). It is an exceptionally well done analysis of the stormy Chicano movement of the 1960s and 1970s. It is also written with a high level of commendable objectivity. For example, García does not accept the interpretation that Aztlán, the legendary point of origin for the Aztec people, is in the U. S. Southwest. Unlike in his first book, García effectively emphasizes the role of Mexican American women in Chicanismo.

There are only a few areas where I would disagree with García. The author goes to excessive lengths to downplay the crucial role of students, insisting that the movement’s radical nature owed itself to its working class basis. Although he claims that students did not patronize their allies in the Mexican American community, the students’ condescending attitude nevertheless appears in the narrative, particularly on pages 62, 93, and 96. Also, why is Reies López Tijerina — the principal Chicano leader from New Mexico — excluded from the author’s analysis of “the four major movement organizations” (p. 87)?

These caveats aside, Chicanismo is an excellent and much-needed work. Readers will find the conclusion particularly thoughtful as well as stimulating.

—Douglas W. Richmond, Professor of History, UTA

A Beginners Guide to The Geology of Southern New Mexico

For those who wonder how landscapes take shape and evolve, a good place to start is with the geology. This book begins with a basic introduction to understanding “how to read the rocks,” geological time, crustal deformations, and plate tectonics: It then provides a brief geological history of Southern New Mexico, including El Paso and vicinity, beginning about two billion years ago and continuing into the fairly recent geological past (about 10,000 years ago). The third part of this book consists of 22 separate field trips into various portions of Southern New Mexico and extreme West Texas. These field trips are carefully mapped and well-illustrated. They provide a fine introduction to the varied landscapes of this fascinating, and often neglected, part of the Southwest. Throughout, The Geology of Southern New Mexico is illustrated with small but especially clear drawings and photographs. These illustrations, combined with the well-written text, will help make the complex geology of this area approachable to beginners. To order, contact the University of New Mexico Press, 1720 Lomas Blvd., NE, Albuquerque, N.M. 87313-1591, Phone: 505/277-2346.
Meet the Center Faculty

As a practicing architect and interior designer, Richard B. Ferrier brings a unique perspective to the University. He joined the UTA faculty in 1968, and now serves as Professor of Architecture. His background includes a BA degree in Architecture from Texas Tech and an MA in Arts from the University of Dallas. He served as Associate Dean of UTA’s School of Architecture from 1980-1995. Richard Ferrier’s architectural projects have won numerous design awards from Texas Architect, AIA Dallas’ Design Awards and Dallas Graphic Awards. His publications include contributions to Axonometric Drawing: Architecture in Perspective; Compact Houses, and The Art of Architectural Drawing. Professor Ferrier has a long-standing interest in the architecture and environmental design of the Southwest, and his current project on Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, is discussed in this issue of Fronteras.

Center Fellows Participate in Mexican Conference

Two Center Fellows presented papers in Mexico City at the September 1997 conference on the US Mexican War of 1846-48. Professor Doug Richmond’s paper, Colaboracion entre Mexicanos y estadounidenses durante la Guerra del 47,” and Sam Haynes’ paper “Breaking the Iron Hoop: U.S. Fears of Great Britain in the War Against Mexico” were based in part on research conducted at UTA’s Special Collections. Additionally, UTA alumnus Bruce Winders presented a paper entitled “The United States military in the Age of Jackson. “

The Conference — “La Guerra Entre Mexico y Estados Unidos 1846-48, Representacion y Participantes” — was held at the Biblioteca Nacional de Mexico, and was patterned in part after the successful conference on the U.S.-Mexican War that was held at UTA in October of 1996. Several of the Mexican conference attendees had conducted research at UTA’s Special Collections in concert with last year’s conference; likewise, attending the Mexican conference provided an opportunity for the US scholars to conduct research while in Mexico.

Center Fellows: Evan Anders, Associate Professor of History; Brooks Ellwood, Professor of Geology; Bob Fairbanks, Associate Professor of History; George Green, Professor of History; Sam Haynes, Associate Professor of History; David Narrett, Associate Professor of History; Elizabeth Ordóñez, Professor of Foreign Languages; Dennis Reinhartz, Associate Professor of History; Doug Richmond, Professor of History; and Ken Roemer, Professor of English. Associate Center Fellows: David Buisseret, Endowed Chair for Southwestern Studies; Jeff Hanson, Associate Professor of Anthropology; and Jay Henry, Professor of Architecture.