

# **“Saudi Arabia: A Problematic Ally?”**

*Dr. Toby Jones*

*Rutgers University*

**March 23 (Fri), 3:30 – 5:30 PM at UNM Continuing Ed. Auditorium**

1634 University Blvd NE (at the intersection with Indian School Rd.)

**On the surface, the "Arab Spring" does not seem to have touched Saudi Arabia, but in reality the Kingdom has followed pro-democracy protests very closely and has resisted demands from its own people for genuine political reform. Saudi Arabia has sent troops to help a fellow Sunni regime in Bahrain quell anti-regime protests and suppress the Shia majority in that Island country. The presentation will focus on the nature of Saudi stability, the impact of the "Arab Spring" on the core pillars of that stability, and the critical role of Saudi oil globally. The talk will also address the special US-Saudi relationship and the impact of active Saudi resistance to genuine political reforms on this relationship and on the future of the region's largest hydrocarbon dinosaur.**

Toby Jones is a historian of the modern Middle East. Jones's scholarship focuses primarily on the political history of the Persian Gulf. Before joining the history department at Rutgers University, Jones taught at Swarthmore College. During the 2008-2009 he was a fellow at Princeton University's Oil, Energy and the Middle East project. From 2004 to early 2006 he worked as the political analyst of the Persian Gulf for the International Crisis Group where he wrote about political reform and sectarianism. Jones is author of *Desert Kingdom: How Oil and Water Forged Modern Saudi Arabia* (Harvard University Press, 2010). He is currently working on a new book project *The Long War: Oil, Insecurity, and American in the Middle East* also to be published by Harvard University Press. Jones has published articles in *The International Journal of Middle East Studies*, *Middle East Report*, the *New York Times*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *The Atlantic*, the *Arab Reform Bulletin*, *Strategic Insights*, and the *CTC Sentinel*.

***Cost/lecture: \$15/ Members, \$20/Non-Members; Students with a proper ID–free of charge. Please address the check to AIA and mail it to AIA, PO Box 92995, Albuquerque, NM 87199***

***Please mail checks by March 20th***

***Please check [www.abqinternational.org](http://www.abqinternational.org) for the full calendar of events, changes and updates.***

**Supported by New Mexico Humanities Council, Lockheed Martin & Sandia National Laboratories**