



BILDNER CENTER

for Western Hemisphere Studies

Mexican Colloquium

MURDER IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE IN CONTEMPORARY MEXICO

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Homicide in contemporary Mexico is a serious problem. Its frequency is rising and it has come to represent a challenge to the state's ability to guarantee safety and the rule of law. A historical approach to the phenomenon reveals that throughout the twentieth century individual cases of murder had been interpreted by Mexican audiences as containing important lessons about their relationship with the state and the strength of civil society. The forms in which police news covered it and detective novel reflected upon its meaning demonstrate the power of murder to create an informed, critical public within a political regime that otherwise exercised almost complete control over public discourse.

Pablo Piccato is associate professor at the Department of History and Director of the Institute of Latin American Studies, Columbia University. He joined the faculty at Columbia in 1997, where he has taught courses on Latin America and Mexico, as well as served as Director of Undergraduate Studies at the Department of History, Associate Director of the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, and member of the University Senate, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, and the Institute of Latin American Studies. He received his B.A. from the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and his Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin. His work focuses on the social and political history of modern Mexico, with particular interest in crime, politics, and culture. His most recent publication is *True Stories of Crime in Modern Mexico* (University of New Mexico Press, 2009), with Robert Buffington.



Location:
Room 9206/9207
The Graduate Center
365 Fifth Avenue

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4:00 PM**

To reserve, send e-mail to bildner@gc.cuny.edu