

2007-2008

Artists and Scholars

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF  
CULTURE & SOCIETY

PRESENTS



Jesús Arriaga

# Amy Robinson

Monday  
September 17, 2007

12:30 p.m.

Sky Bank Room (201A)  
Bowen Thompson Student Union



"Chucho el Roto"

## "True Stories" of Mexican Banditry: The Case of Chucho el Roto

**What is the allure of banditry in Mexico and how does it change over time?  
How does a common criminal become known as a generous Robin Hood?**

This talk discusses the factual and fictional identities of Jesús Arriaga, aka "Chucho el Roto," a thief from Mexico City during the 1880s. Chucho was publicly lauded as a generous bandit who stole from the rich to give to the poor, and his celebrity was used as a tool for reflecting on social conditions for ordinary Mexicans under the authoritarian rule of Porfirio Díaz. While numerous studies make reference to Chucho's case to debate the symbolic importance of banditry in Mexico, Professor Robinson's investigation traces Chucho's cultural footprints through a series of literary texts as well as documentation of his crimes. By situating Chucho's identity in distinct historical and literary contexts, we can better understand how banditry has been used over time to mediate deep-rooted concerns about cultural belonging and political legitimacy that have characterized modern Mexico.

Amy Robinson is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Romance and Classical Studies at BGSU. Her research and teaching focus on 19th and 20th Century Spanish American literature and the Mexican Revolution, especially the representations of bandits and outlaws, as well as cultural studies, subaltern studies, and cultural history. She has published in *Colorado Review of Hispanic Studies* and contributed to the anthology *Leading Ladies: Mujeres en la Literatura Hispana y en las Artes*. Currently a fellow at ICS, she is at work on a book-length study of representations of Mexican banditry and this figure's relationship to politics and citizenship.

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For more information, call (419) 372-0585.