

# SPRING 2023 CHARLAS CON CAFÉ

## Horror and Death: Rethinking Coco's Border Politics

*with Dr. Orquidea Morales*

On May 1, 2013 the Walt Disney Company applied to trademark "Día de muertos" or "Day of the Dead" as they prepared to launch a Day of the Dead themed movie. Almost immediately after this became public Disney faced such a strong backlash that they withdrew their petition. Fast forward to October of 2017 and the release of the Disney/Pixar coming of age cartoon *Coco*. The film has received praise from Latin America and the Latina/o communities. I analyze advertising material produced in support of the films, television shows, graphic novels, and art exhibits to show how *Coco* exemplifies the role of the nation-state in constructing and maintaining state sanctioned discourses (or genres) of death. This dichotomy is tied to histories of national identity, land, gender, and race on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. It is at the core of border horror in that the dichotomy forestalls a discussion about the systemic factors that contribute to those deaths by shifting the focus onto questions of what deaths are worth thinking about and which are forgettable.

**Dr. Orquidea Morales** is an assistant professor in the School of Theatre, Film, and Television at the University of Arizona. Her work on border violence, Latinx media, and horror has been published in journals such as *Film Quarterly* and *Flow*. Her work looks at the intersection of Latinx Studies and Horror Studies. Morales also hosts a podcast with Brenda Salguero. In *Monstras*, they discuss Latinx and Latin American folklore, legends, true crime, and all things spooky.



**Friday, March 17, 1 - 2pm**  
**Coffee and Snacks at 12:30 pm**  
**Marshall Building, Suite 280**

**Register to join via  
Zoom**



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