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## Binational Migration Institute

### **“Racial Safeguarding and Caring Control: How Latinx Immigration Agents Negotiate Race at Work”**

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**Friday, April 22, 2022  
12:00pm (AZ)**

**(To register, please message BMI@arizona.edu)**

Hispanic/Latinx agents make up approximately half of the U.S. Border Patrol and about one third of Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Many of these immigration agents are working-class Mexican Americans for whom the job is a step up in the mobility ladder, but also a step into the racialized politics of immigration control. This talk examines how Hispanic/Latinx immigration agents reconcile competing loyalties between their ethnoracial and professional commitments. The author develops the frames of “racial safeguarding” and “caring control” to capture how these agents incorporate race into the meaning they ascribe to their work. While both of these frames have behaviors at their core (i.e. agents report engaging in certain practices), the author argues that they are ultimately legitimation strategies that pacify agents’ insecurities about the work. Racial safeguarding and caring control uphold the racial status quo in the immigration system, allowing the state to use numerical diversity to protect itself against accusations of racism, while continuing with business as usual.



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