

## Stockton's Jessie Finch, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Co-Edits Book on Migrant Deaths

***For Immediate Release; Finch photo, book cover below***

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**Galloway, N.J.** - Jessie K. Finch, assistant professor of Sociology at Stockton University, has co-edited a new peer-reviewed volume, "Migrant Deaths in the Arizona Desert: La vida no vale nada." Published by the University of Arizona Press, the volume contains 15 entries, two of which are co-authored by Finch.

The contributors consist of a multidisciplinary group who are dedicated to the thousands of men, women, and children who have lost their lives while crossing the desert in search of a better life. Each chapter in this important new volume seeks answers to migrant deaths, speaking to the complexity of this tragedy via a range of community and scholarly approaches.

"The substantive chapter I co-authored focus on the tragedy of migrant deaths as expressed in song," Finch explained. "As someone who teaches about both immigration and popular culture, I think music can be a powerful way to humanize the thousands of people who are dying as a direct result of government policy."

Her co-author, Celestino Fernández, has written his own original songs on the topic of migrant death in the form of corridos, or Mexican folk ballads. The subtitle of the book, which translates as "Life has no worth," comes from the song "Camino De Guanajuato" by Mexican composer José Alfredo Jiménez (1926–1973). Finch studied in Guanajuato during her undergraduate degree where she completed her Spanish minor.

"This has been an incredibly educational process, especially going from being a contributor to an editor," says Finch. Having studied issues surrounding immigration for the entirety of her scholarly career, Finch was excited to move to a co-editing position for this volume and utilize her broad knowledge of immigration in the context of the American Southwest.

The activists, artists, and scholars included in this volume confront migrant deaths and disappearances in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands as they reflect on the startling realities of death,  
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migration, and public policy, Finch said. Chapters touch on immigration and how it is studied, community responses to crisis, government policy, definitions of citizenship, and the role of the arts and human expression in response to state violence.

Despite numerous changes in the migration processes and growing attention to the problem, many people who attempt border crossings continue to disappear and die. This book offers a timely exploration of the ways that residents, scholars, activists, and artists are responding to this humanitarian crisis on their doorstep.

“Having grown up in Arizona and New Mexico, this area of interest is near and dear to my heart. I am very pleased we are able to present a multi-disciplinary view of the issue because there is so much at stake for migrants,” said Finch.

Finch will be presenting on the contents of the volume as well as signing copies on **Tuesday, Nov. 29** at 4:30 p.m. in the Campus Center bookstore. Proceeds from book sales will benefit the Binational Migration Institute at the University of Arizona. More information on the volume can be found at the [University of Arizona Press website](http://www.uapress.arizona.edu/Books/bid2628.htm) (<http://www.uapress.arizona.edu/Books/bid2628.htm>).

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**Jessie K. Finch**

