

FELIPE DE ORTEGO Y GASCA

LECTURE
SERIES
PRESENTS



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Free and open to the public

AUTHOR

Deborah Jackson Taffa

"Untying Knots in the Yucca Rope: Facing A
Complex History Together"

Thursday, October 16

J Cloyd Miller Library

2:00-3:15 p.m.

Indigenous and Chicano unity is evolving, marked by a history of shared struggles and ongoing tensions. The Chicano relationship with specific Native American tribes and other Indigenous communities continues to be impacted by differing views on sovereignty and cultural heritage. To move beyond an idealized past, we must reject racial classifications to embrace our Indigenous ancestors, even as we grapple with the history of colorism and power dynamics in our own communities. To heal our familial wounds, expand our decolonial consciousness, support the rights of immigrants who cannot be illegal in their own ancestral lands, we must come together in transnational solidarity.

Deborah Jackson Taffa is the daughter of a Chicano mother and a Native American father. An enrolled member of the Yuma Nation and Laguna Pueblo, she is the director of the MFA in Creative Writing at the Institute of American Indian Arts. Her debut book, *Whiskey Tender*, tells the story of her mixed inheritance. A poignant coming-of-age set in New Mexico, the memoir culminates in a triumphant reclamation of her Indigenous identity. A finalist for the 2024 National Book Award, *Whiskey Tender* was named a top ten book of the year by *The Atlantic*, *Time*, *The Washington Post*, *Audible*, *NPR*, and other outlets.



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