

Michelle Vasquez Ruiz, PhD

UC President's and Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow
UCLA Department of Chicana/o and Central American Studies
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Education

PhD, American Studies & Ethnicity University of Southern California	August 2024
Advisor: George Sanchez	
MA, History, California State University, Los Angeles	2017
Advisor: Priscilla Leiva	
BA, Political Science & Chicano Studies, University of California, Irvine	2014

Professional Appointments

President's and Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow (PPFP)	2024
UCLA, Department of Chicana/o and Central American Studies	
Mentor: Genevieve Carpio	

Publications

Peer Reviewed Articles

Michelle Vasquez Ruiz, et al. "Mobilities and Ethnic Studies: A Roundtable Discussion," <i>Ethnic Studies Review</i> 46, no. 3 (2023): 128-154.	2023
"Mobile Postcards: Zapotec Imagined Mobility." <i>Mobilities</i> 17, no. 2 (2022): 285-299.	2022
Leal, Jorge N., Yesenia Navarrete Hunter, Michelle Vasquez Ruiz, et. al. "Building Confianza: Collective Public History in the Time of Distance – a Joint Reflection from the Boyle Heights Museum Team." <i>History, The Journal of the Historical Association</i> , 107, no. 374 (2022): 370-391.	2022
"Solving the 'Indian Problem:' Indian Relocation to Los Angeles County in the 1950s and 1960s" <i>Perspectives a Journal of Historical Inquiry</i> 44 (2017): 1-26.	2017

Book Chapters

"The Boyle Heights Museum: Creating a Museum from the Inside Out," in <i>The Place Collaboratory Higher Education, Community Engagement, and the Public Humanities</i> , ed. Kate Griffin (Elon University: Bringing Theory to Practice, 2024), 105–9.	2024
"Undocumented Zapotec Mobilities: Sustaining Borderless Bonds through Homegrown Reunification Programs" in <i>The Anthology of Critical Latinx Indigeneities</i> , eds. Lourdes Alberto, Floridalma Boj Lopez and Luis Urrieta. (Forthcoming Duke University Press).	Forthcoming

Book Reviews and Artist Statements

"Spatial and Discursive Violence in the US Southwest." <i>Latino Studies</i> 21 (2023): 297-299.	2023
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“Algún Día Este Autobus Me Llevará a Casa / Someday This Bus Will Take Me Home,” <i>Ethnic Studies Review</i> 45, no. 1–2 (2022): 87–89	2022
“Latin American Indigeneities through Settler Colonialism, Neoliberalism, and Cyberspace.” <i>American Quarterly</i> 73, no. 2 (2021): 403–14.	2021

Fellowships

University of California President’s and Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship	2024-2025
American Dissertation Fellowship, American Association of University Women (Declined)	2023-2024
Andrew W. Mellon Humanities in a Digital World Dissertation Fellowship	2020-2022
Publicly Active Graduate Education Fellowship, Imagining America	2018
Provost Fellowship, University of Southern California	2017-2020

Grants, Awards and other Honors

USC Dornsife, Communicator of the Year, PhD Candidate	2023
USC Graduate School Summer Research and Writing Grant	2022
Spring Travel Grant, Department of American Studies and Ethnicity, University of Southern California	2022
Louise Pubols Public History Prize, Western History Association	2021
Summer Research Grant, Department of American Studies and Ethnicity, University of Southern California	2021
Western History Association Graduate Student Prize	2020
Second Place for Best Oral Presentation, Graduate Research Symposium, USC	2019
Social Emancipation Summer School Certificate of Achievement, Universidad Iberoamericana Cuidad de Mexico-Tijuana	2018
Summer Jumpstart, Davis Putter Scholarship, University of Southern California	2017
Eugene Fingerhut Award for Outstanding Graduate Student, California State University, Los Angeles	2017
William E. Lloyd Memorial Fellowship, California State University, Los Angeles, Emeriti Association	2016
Indigenous Studies Summer Program on Indigenous People’s Rights and Policy Fellowship, Columbia University	2016

Public Scholarship

Archive coordinator 2023

Mobile Indigenous Community Archives

Published archive:

Coordinadora Nacional De Mujeres Indigenas Collection
Frente Indigena Oaxaqueño Binacional, Community Collection

Curator

Boyle Heights Museum

Curated exhibits

Boyle Heights Traditions and Innovations, Exhibit 2022

Royal: A Multi-Racial Catalyst for Democracy, Exhibit 2018

Student Power Walking for Justice in 1968, Exhibit 2018

Aqui Estamos y No Nos Vamos Fighting Mexican Removal Since 2017
the 1930s, Exhibit

Community presentations

“OaxaCal Academic Professional Panel,” Invited panelist 2023
University of California Berkley
March 9, 2023

“The Language of White Supremacy” Invited Speaker 2022
Racial Justice Learning Exchange for The Office of Supervisor
Holly J. Mitchell 2nd District of Los Angeles, Los Angeles,
November 30, 2022

“Racism in the Chicano/Latino” Invited panelist 2022
Chicano Latino Caucus of the Democratic Party,
November 19, 2022.

“Politica y Cultura en Oaxacalifornia – Politics and Culture in 2022
Oaxacalifornia” Invited Panelist
Maquecos Music Academy, Los Angeles, August 2022.

“How do we ‘frame’ the history of Mexican Removal?” 2022
Workshop facilitator
Belmont High School, Los Angeles, April 2022.

“Our stories our Voices: Oral History Workshop” Workshop 2021
Facilitator, Belmont High School, Los Angeles, October 2021.

“Women of the Walkouts: Conversation with the Legacy 2018
Activistas of the 1968 Walkouts” Boyle Heights Museum, Los
Angeles California, May 2018.

“Student Power Walking Out for Justice since 1968” Boyle 2018
Heights Museum, Los Angeles California, April 2018.

Blog posts

“Being a Champion of Immigration Rights Does Not Absolve Racism: The Los Angeles City Council and Anti-Indigeneity,” The Immigration and Ethnic History Society, *Not From Here* (blog), January 9, 2023. 2023

“Public Scholarship: Strategic Lessons for Resistance Imagining America,” Imaging America Artists + Scholars in Public Life, *Publicly Active Graduate Education Blog Salon*, September 25, 2018. 2018

(Select) Academic Conference Presentations

“Plenary: Indigenous Migrations,” Latinx Studies Association, Arizona State University, April 2024 2024

“Roundtable: Sembremos Sueños y Cosechemos Esperanzas: Zapotec Memory, Indigeneity, and Placemaking” National Association of Chicana and Chicano Studies, San Francisco, April 2024 2024

“Making the Pueblo in Los Angeles: How Latinx Indigenous Communities navigate Racial landscapes” The Los Angeles History & Metro Studies, Huntington Library, San Marino, March 2024

“Transborder Sanctuaries at the intersection of illegality and anti-Indigeneity,” Organization of American Historians, Los Angeles, California, April 2023 2023

“Reuniting the Pueblo: How Zapotec Immigrants Move Borders,” Newberry Library Borderlands and Latino/a Studies Seminar, Chicago, Illinois, April 2023. 2023

“Challenging Zapotec Immobilities and Border Militarization” Indigenous Borderlands in North America Symposium, Albuquerque, New Mexico, November 2022. 2022

“Latinx Indigeneity: Navigating the Urban Landscapes of Los Angeles in the 1990s” Western Historical Association, Austin, Texas, October 2022. 2022

“Digital Mobilities and Racialized Containments: Moving Beyond Illegality” American Studies Association, San Juan, Puerto Rico October 2021. 2021

“Lighting Talks: Traversing Space, Race and Indigeneity in Los Angeles” Western Historical Association, Portland Oregon, October 2021 2021

“Virtual Archives of Containment and Possibility: Documenting Undocumented Zapotec Mobilities” Organization of American Historians, Virtual meeting, April 2021 2021

“Indigenous Cartographies and Counter-Mapping” University of California, Graphic Information System Week, Virtual meeting, November 2020. 2020

“Reuniting Families through Undocumented Indigeneity” Graduate Research Symposium, University of Southern California, February 2020.	2020
“Digital Border Crossing and the Undocumented Zapotec Archive” Western Historical Association, Virtual meeting, October 2020.	2020
“Community Reunifications: Facing the Deportation Regime as Undocumented Zapotecos” Indigeneity Across Borders: Rethinking Indigenous Belonging in the Urban Milieu Conference, Cambridge University, United Kingdom, November 2019.	2019
“El Camino a mi Pueblo: Undocumented Zapotec Mobilities” Critical Mediations Conference, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, October 2019.	2019
“Citizenship and Recognition: The Intersection of Indigenous Undocumented Immigration” Native American and Indigenous Studies Association, Hamilton, New Zealand, July 2019.	2019
“Decolonial Intimacies: Emergent Coalition Potentialities across Latinx and Asian/ American Studies.” American Studies Association Conference, Atlanta, Georgia, November 2018.	2018
“Crossroads between Indigeneity and Immigration” Imagining America Gathering at Chicago, Illinois, October 2018.	2018

Invited Talks and Lectures

“Our Memory, Our Stories: Reimagining Histories of a Multicultural Los Angeles” Invited Talk, Gerth Archives and Special Collections, California State University Dominguez Hills	2024
“Transcending Restrictive Borders through Indigenous Saberes,” Guest Lecture, Introduction to Chicanx and Latinx Studies, David Flores, Instructor of record, Department of Ethnic Studies, California State University Sacramento	2024
“Mobile Postcards: Zapotec Imagined Mobility,” Guest Lecture, Space, Place and Race seminar, Genevieve Carpio, Instructor of record, Department of Chicana/o and Central American Studies, UCLA	2023
“Zapotec Diaspora and Our Home Video Archive” Oaxaqueños in Research Panel, Grupo Estudiantil Oaxaqueño de UCLA, UCLA	2022
“Confronting Racism: Voices from Oaxacalifornia,” Community Panel Moderator University of Southern California, November 2022.	2022
“Traversing Racial Landscapes: Mapping Space, Race and Indigeneity in Los Angeles” Mapping Mobilities Workshop Series, University of Southern California, January 2021.	2021

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant
University of California, Los Angeles, Department of Chicana/o and Central American Studies

Community Histories and Archives Chicana/o & Central American Studies 2021

Digital Humanities Capstone 2020

Chicana and Chicano Studies Honors Seminar 2019

Teaching Assistant
University of Southern California, Department of American Studies and Ethnicity

Exploring Ethnicity through Film 2020

Academic Summer Institute: Graduate School Preparation Instruction, 2019

Undergraduate Research Methods 2018

Research Appointments

Project Director, Mobile Indigenous Community Archives 2019- Present

Curator and Research Lead, Boyle Heights Museum, Los Angeles 2017-2022

Research Assistant, Mapping Indigenous Los Angeles, UCLA 2017 - 2020

Research Assistant, Chavez Ravine an Unfinished Story 2017

Archival Assistant, Special Collections and Archives, California State University, Los Angeles 2016 - 2017

Participation in Research Institutes and Workshops

Voces Oral History Research Summer Institute 2021
University of Texas at Austin

“Map it out Workshop” GIS workshop Series 2020
USC Mellon Humanities and the University of the Future Program,
University of Southern California

“GIS and Spatial Humanities” Humanities in a Digital World Summer Boot Camp, University of Southern California 2020

Social Emancipation Summer School 2018
Universidad de la Tierra, Oaxaca, México

Oral History Workshop, University of California, Berkley 2018
Indigenous Studies Summer Program, Columbia University, New York 2016

Intensive Zapotec Language Program, San Diego State University, Oaxaca, Mexico 2015

Department Service

University Committee of Academic Review, American Studies and Ethnicity Committee member	2020
Hemispheric Americas: Race, Power and Space, Research Cluster, member	2020
Graduate Student Union, American Studies and Ethnicity, Representative	2019
Indigeneity and Decolonization Research Cluster, member	2019

Community Service

Historian, Raza Unida Basketball Club	Present
Historian, Indigenous Oaxacan Cooperative	2020-2022

Media Appearances and Interviews

Fox, Los Angeles, “LA City Hall Scandal: Oaxacan Angelenos Outraged.” October 19, 2022. Interview commenting on racism and corruption from city council members.	2022
Andrea Bautista “Oaxacans in LA” Greater LA-KCRW. October 13. 2022. Interview discussing the racialized experiences of Indigenous Oaxacans in Los Angeles.	2022
Telemundo, Los Angeles (KVEA 52). “Exposición muestra la vida de los residentes de Boyle Heights.” April 19, 2022. Interviewed in the TV Newscast piece discussing the Boyle Height Museum (BHM) recent exhibition, “Traditions of Innovation,” that I co-curated with the BHM team.	2022

Professional Membership

- Southwest Oral History Association
- Organization of American Historians
- Western Historical Association
- Native American & Indigenous Studies Association
- American Studies Association