

Thelma I. Vélez

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Environmental Sociology

Climate, Environment, and Food Justice

Social Movements

Social Inequality and Justice Activism

Political Economy of Colonialism

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Environmental Social Science, The Ohio State University, 2021

Dissertation: A #JustRecovery: Agroecology and Climate Justice in Puerto Rico post-Hurricane Maria

Certificates: Course Design Institute; Inclusive Teaching

M.S. Environmental Studies, Florida International University, 2012

Focal Areas: Sustainable Food Systems; Carbon Sequestration

B.A. Sociology, Florida International University, 2010

Focal Areas: Environmental and Pro-Social Community Engagement

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Research and Education Program Manager, 2021- present

Organic Farming Research Foundation

Grant Management Research Assistant, 2020-2021

The Ohio State University

Adjunct Faculty, 2014-2015

Florida International University

Agroecology Program Co-coordinator, 2011-2012

Florida International University

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

American Sociological Association (ASA)

Sections: *Environmental Sociology; Collective Behavior and Social Movements; Latino/a Sociology*

Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP)

Sections: *Conflict, Action, and Change; Environment and Technology*

Association of American Geographers (AAG)

Sections: *Latinx Geographies; Geographies of Food and Agriculture; Scholar-Activist Working Group*

American Environmental Studies Society (AESS)

PUBLICATIONS

Peer Reviewed Work:

- Vélez, Thelma.** 2022. The Intersection of Climate Justice and Agroecology in Puerto Rico post-Hurricane Maria. *Climate Justice in the Majority World*. Eds. C. Neil and M. Mikulewicz. Routledge. Forthcoming Winter 2022.
- Arceño, M.A., Smiles, D., Bailey, E., Mazumdar, A. **Vélez, T.**, Wilson J.P., Yotebieng, K. and McSweeney, K. 2020. (Too) Great Expectations? On Fieldwork, Guidelines, And Ethics in Research. *Agitate!*
- Vélez, Thelma.** 2019. So you're 'Latina, Latina': Positionality and Reflexivity in Decolonizing Scholar Activist Praxis. *Journal of Latin American Geography*, Vol.18 (3), 215-220.
- Vélez, Thelma** and Kerry Ard. 2019. Building an Edible City: Green Spaces in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. *Cities around the World: Struggles and Solutions to Urban Life*, Ed: Jing Luo. ABC-CLIO, Vol.2 pp 169-173.
- Vélez, Thelma.** 2018. Treehugger: Sustainability Visions in Urban Agriculture. *Palgrave Handbook of Sustainability Case Studies and Practical Solutions*, Eds. Sandra Garren and Robert Brinkman, Palgrave MacMillan, Ch.22, pp 411-429.
- Ard, K., Colen, C., Becerra, M., **Vélez, T.** 2016. Two Mechanisms: The Role of Social Capital and Industrial Pollution Exposure in Explaining Racial Disparities in Self-Rated Health. *Intl. Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 13 (10), 1025-37.
- Vélez, Thelma**, Moonilall, N., Reed, S., Scinto L. J., Jayachandran, K. 2018. Impact of *Melaleuca quinquenervia* biochar on *Phaseolus vulgaris* L. growth, soil nutrients, and microbial gas flux. *Journal of Environmental Quality*, 47(6), 1487-1495.

In-Preparation or Under Review:

- Vélez, Thelma.** 2022. Puerto Rico's #JustRecovery: A Historical and Political Economic Analysis of Colonialism and Agrarian Change. *Capitalism Nature Socialism*. Submitted- Under review.
- Vélez, T.**, Usher, K., Sweeney, G., Ryan-Simkins, K. Empowering the Community and Rooting the Economy through the Linden Worker-Owned Food Hub for Citizen Re-Entry *Submission Target: *Cultivating Food Justice*, April 2023.

Book Reviews:

- Vélez, Thelma.** 2017. The changing politics of organic food in North America. Lisa F. Clark. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 34 (3), 781-782.

Technical reports:

- Synder, L., Schonbeck, M., **Vélez, T.** 2022 National Organic Research Agenda: Outcomes and Recommendations from the 2020 National Organic Survey and Listening Sessions. Organic Farming Research Foundation. <https://ofrf.org/research/nora/>
- Purchasing 40% Local and/or Sustainable Food by 2025: The Ohio State University Panel on Food Sustainability Final Report, Dec. 2018.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant

The Ohio State University, 2019-2021

RURL SOC 5540 **Population, Place, and Environment** - course on demography, socio-environmental issues, population change, migration, resource-based conflicts, and sustainable development.

ENR 3500 **Community, Environment, and Development** - course on sustainable development, community capitals framework, and place-based approaches to environmental justice issues and conflict taught through role play.

Adjunct Faculty

Florida International University, 2014-2015

EVR 1017 **Global Environment and Society** - interdisciplinary course on socio-ecological problems and solution in local and global context using active learning strategies, experiential engagement, and service-learning projects.

EVR 1001 **Environmental Sustainability** - science course covering: natural resources, ecosystem services, climate change, degradation, biodiversity loss, energy, air and water pollution, and solid waste management.

Teaching Assistant

Florida International University, 2011-2012

EVR 4272 **Agroecology** (25 students) - Facilitated and supervised field research projects for undergraduate and graduate students, created weekly inquiry-based assignments, and student-led discussions.

EVR 4274 **Sustainable Agriculture** (22 students) – Supervised adaptive-management field projects. Student progress based on innovation, demonstration of critical thinking skills, and engagement.

Guest Lecturer

The Ohio State University, 2017-2018

ENR 2300 **Society and Natural Resources**

Topic: Mobilization for the Environment

SPAN 2422 **Intro to Latino Studies**

Topic: Contesting Colonialism in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean

COMM 2596 **Health, Risk, and Science Communication**

Topic: Communicating Climate Change

Florida International University, 2011-2012

BSC 5935 **Plant Conservation Biology**

Topic: Invasive Species Management at the FIU Nature Preserve.

EVR 1017 **Global Environment and Society**

Topic: Natural Resource Management and Global Food Production

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 2019 Course Design Institute, *Ohio State University*
- 2019 Inclusive Teacher Training Workshop, *Ohio State University*
- 2018 Community-Based Participatory-Action Research, *Society for Study of Social Problems*
- 2018 Professional Development Certificate, *American Sociological Association*
- 2017 Center for Advancement of Teaching Training, *Ohio State University*
- 2015 Advancing Global Learning Foundations, *Florida International University*

GRANTS AND FUNDING

Collaborative Grants

- 2019 **InFACT Connect and Collaborate \$58,060**
One Linden Cooperative Community-University Partnership for Justice, Local Food, and Community Economic Development. Team: K. Usher (PI), K. Levine, J. Karetny, P. Williams, **T. Vélez**, K. Ryan-Simkins, G. Sweeney, L. Ferguson, A. Latham.
- 2018 **Stinner Summit Award \$12,800 ***
Community Engagement and Listening Sessions: Linden Worker-Owned Business for Citizen Re-entry. Team: **T. Vélez**, K. Usher, K. Ryan-Simkins, J. Karetny, A. Latham.

Individual Grants and Fellowships

- | | | |
|------|---|-----------------|
| 2019 | *Racial/Ethnic Minority Graduate Student Fellowship
<i>Society for the Study of Social Problems</i> | \$15,000 |
| 2019 | Diversity and Inclusion Career Development Grant
<i>Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Ohio State University</i> | \$1,000 |
| 2019 | Edward J. Ray Travel Grant
<i>Council of Graduate Students, Ohio State University</i> | \$1,000 |
| 2018 | Conference Travel Funding
<i>School of Environment and Natural Resources, Ohio State University</i> | \$1,000 |
| 2018 | Edward J. Ray Travel Award
<i>Council of Graduate Students, Ohio State University</i> | \$1,000 |
| 2018 | Energy and Environment Grant
<i>Sustainability Institute, Ohio State University</i> | \$500 |
| 2018 | Longaberger Scholarship
<i>Special Scholarships Program, Ohio State University</i> | \$1,500 |
| 2017 | Diversity and Inclusion Career Development Grant
<i>Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Ohio State University</i> | \$500 |
| 2017 | Longaberger Scholarship
<i>Special Scholarships Program, Ohio State University</i> | \$1,500 |

GRANTS AND FUNDING continued

2017	Conference Travel Funding <i>School of Environment and Natural Resources, Ohio State</i>	\$1,000
2016	*NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program <i>National Science Foundation</i>	\$142,000
2015	Graduate Enrichment Fellowship <i>The Graduate School, Ohio State University</i>	\$20,800
2014	*Caminos Fellowship <i>Texas A&M</i>	\$1,800
2012	Graduate Study Grant <i>Earth and Environment, Florida International University</i>	\$5,000
2011	Graduate Research Fellowship <i>Agroecology Program, Florida International University</i>	\$42,000
2011	International Travel Grant <i>Agroecology Program, Florida International University</i>	\$3500
2010	International Science Education Grant <i>Earth and Environment, Florida International University</i>	\$3,500
2010	Undergraduate Research Grant <i>Earth and Environment, Florida International University</i>	\$1,000
2008	*Florida Bright Futures Scholarship <i>State of Florida</i>	\$8,700
	* <i>External Funding</i>	Total Funding \$327,160

COMMITTEES AND SERVICE**Departmental**

- 2018- pres. Graduate Studies Committee, *Voting member, OSU*
- 2017 Faculty Search Committee, *Voting member, OSU*

University

- 2017- 2018 Food Sustainability Panel, *Voting Member, OSU*
- 2016-2017 Sustainability and Environment Committee, *Representative, OSU*
- 2016-2017 Council of Graduate Students, *Department Delegate, OSU*
- 2011-2012 University Sustainability Committee, *Student Member, FIU*

Academic

- 2022 Higher Education Challenge Grant Panel Reviewer, NIFA
- 2018- 2020. Session Organizer and Presider, *Society for the Study of Social Problems*
- 2017- pres. Reviewer, *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*
- 2012-2014 Reviewer, *North American Colleges and Teachers in Agriculture Journal*

SELECT PRESENTATIONS & SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Organizer/Presider

- 2019 **Vélez, Thelma** and Marko Salvaggio. Organizer and Presider. Indigeneity and Environmentalism. Society for the Study of Social Problems. New York, NY.
- 2019 Salvaggio, Marko and **Thelma Vélez**. Organizer. Environmental Activism. Society for the Study of Social Problems. New York, NY.
- 2019 **Thelma Vélez**. Presider. Repertoires and Tactics, Collective Behavior and Social Movements. American Sociological Association Annual Meeting 2019. New York, NY.

Presentations

- 2022 **Vélez, Thelma**. The Role of Climate Research in Supporting Agricultural Resiliency. Testimony to U.S. Congress, June 15, 2022.
- 2020 **Vélez, Thelma**. Agroecology Mobilization in Puerto Rico: Intersection of Research, Scholar Activism, and Identity. University of South Dakota.
- 2019 **Vélez, Thelma**. Political Opportunities and Social Movements Puerto Rico. Association of American Geographers. Washington, D.C.
- 2019 **Vélez, Thelma**. A Disaster as Catalyst for Mobilization: The Convergence of Climate Justice, Environmental Justice, and Agroecology. American Sociological Association Annual Meeting 2019. New York, NY.
- 2018 **Vélez, Thelma**. Climate and Food Justice in Puerto Rico: Counter-Hegemonic Mobilization. University of New Mexico- Latin American and Iberian Institute, Social Transformation in Latin America's Changing Climate. Albuquerque, NM.
- 2018 **Vélez, Thelma**. Puerto Rico's Plight: Framing Collective Action for a Sustainable and Just Recovery. American Sociological Association Annual Meeting 2018. Philadelphia, PA.
- 2018 **Vélez, Thelma**. The Convergence of Climate, Environment, and Food Movements: Grassroots Mobilization of Frontline Communities post-Hurricane Maria. Society for the Study of Social Problems 2018 Meeting. Philadelphia, PA.
- 2018 **Vélez, Thelma**. Growing Food Sovereignty. Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society Meeting 2018. Madison, WI.
- 2018 **Vélez, Thelma**. Grassroots Mobilization on the Frontlines. American Environmental Studies Society 2018 Meeting. Washington D.C.
- 2017 **Vélez, Thelma**. The Wall: Not Another Brick in Our Food System. Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society Meeting 2017. Pasadena, CA.
- 2017 **Vélez, Thelma**. Getting Sustainable and Just Food on Campus. Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society Meeting 2017. Pasadena, CA

INVITED DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION ENGAGEMENTS

- 2021 **Vélez, Thelma.** Moderator. Racial Reckoning in the Environment and Food System. Center for Ethics and Human Values, Ohio State University.
- 2019 Penn-Nabrit, Paula, Nabrit, Charles, and **Thelma Vélez.** Workshop Organizer and Facilitator. Cross-Pollination Isn't Just for Plants: Diversity and Inclusion in Food Systems. Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association Conference. Dayton, OH.
- 2018 **Vélez, Thelma.** Panel Moderator. Office of Diversity and Inclusion Undergraduate and Graduate Student Recruitment Initiative. Columbus, OH.
- 2018 **Vélez, Thelma.** Delegate for the Ohio Working Group. National Food Systems Resilience and Equity Workshop. Stanford University, CA.
- 2017 **Vélez, Thelma.** Presenter. *Mobilization, People, and the Environment.* Symposium on Ecologically Informed Theological Education. Delaware, OH.

ACCOLADES AND MERIT

- 2021 Invitation to Provide Congressional Testimony on Climate Resilience
U.S. Congress House of Representatives
- 2019 Racial and Ethnic Minority Graduate Student Fellowship Awardee
Society for the Study of Social Problems
- 2016 Graduate Research Fellowship Program Awardee
National Science Foundation
- 2015 Graduate Enrichment Fellowship Awardee
Ohio State University, The Graduate School
- 2014 Career Prep Institute Graduate Fellow
Texas A&M and U.S. Department of Agriculture
- 2013 Outstanding Academic Achievement
Florida International University, College of Arts and Sciences
- 2012 Outstanding Mentorship and Service
Upward Bound, South Florida
- 2011 Outstanding Leadership and Service
Florida International University, Agroecology Program
- 2011 Outstanding Academic Achievement FIU, Arts and Sciences
Florida International University, College of Arts and Sciences

REFERENCE LIST

Dr. Kendra McSweeney

Professor, Ohio State University
Geography Department/Center for Latin American Studies
Email: McSweeney.14@osu.edu

Dr. Kerry J. Ard

Associate Professor, Ohio State University
School of Environment and Natural Resources
Email: Ard.7@osu.edu

Dr. Marisol Becerra

Bridge to Faculty Researcher Associate, University of Illinois, Chicago
Public Administration and Policy
Email: mbecer2@uic.edu