

## MAIN SPEAKER BIOS

(alphabetical by first name)

**CAMILLA FOJAS** is Foundation Professor in the School of Social Transformation at Arizona State University. Her research explores the material and immaterial infrastructures and mediated cultures of the Americas and the Pacific through the axes of empire, surveillance, and race with a focus on the U.S.-Mexico border. She is completing a book tentatively titled *Brutal Border: Infrastructures of Cruelty* and is at work on a new project on robots and the automation of security at US borders. Her recent books include *Border Optics: Surveillance Cultures on the US-Mexico Frontier* (NYU Press, 2021), *Zombies, Migrants, and Queers: Race and Crisis Capitalism in Pop Culture* (Illinois, 2017), and *Islands of Empire: Pop Culture and U.S. Power* (UT Press, 2014).

**CATHERINE S. RAMÍREZ**, Professor of [Latin American and Latino Studies](#) at the University of California, Santa Cruz, is a scholar of Latinx literature, history, visual culture, and performance. Her expertise includes immigration and assimilation, historical memory and erasure, Mexican American women's history, zoot suits and style politics, and Latinxfuturism. She is the author of [Assimilation: An Alternative History](#) and [The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory](#). She is a co-editor of [Precarity and Belonging: Labor, Migration, and Noncitizenship](#) and [Public Books](#). And she has written for [The New York Times](#), [The Atlantic](#), [The Washington Post](#), [The San Francisco Chronicle](#), and [Zócalo Public Square](#).

In addition to being awarded UC Santa Cruz's Excellence in Teaching Award, Professor Ramírez has won fellowships and grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the [Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences](#) at Stanford University. She is a 2025-2026 [Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar](#).

From 2021 until 2025, she chaired UC Santa Cruz's Latin American and Latino Studies Department. Previously, she directed UC Santa Cruz's [Dolores Huerta Research Center for the Americas](#).

A [first-generation](#) college graduate, Professor Ramírez holds a PhD in [Ethnic Studies](#) from the University of California, Berkeley. She enjoys travel, flamenco, house music, swimming in warm oceans, and shopping in thrift stores. She is originally from Monterey Park, California

**DAVID J. VÁZQUEZ** is Professor of Critical Race, Gender, and Culture Studies and Program Director of Latina/o/x Studies at American University in Washington, DC. He is also the current President of the Latina/o Studies Association. Vázquez is the author of *Decolonial Environmentalisms: Climate Justice and Speculative Futurity in Latinx Cultural Production* (Texas, 2025) and *Triangulations: Narrative Strategies for Navigating Latino Identity*

(Minnesota, 2011). He is also co-editor of *Latinx Environmentalisms: Place, Justice, and the Decolonial* (Temple, 2019), which won the 2022 MLA Prize for an Edited Volume. His current projects include a new monograph, tentatively titled “Days of Futures Past: Latinx Science Fiction and Speculative Futurity,” a co-edited volume on “Latinx Outdoor Recreation,” a special theme of the journal *Diálogo*, and several collaboratively authored articles and book chapters. You can find out more about Dr. Vázquez and his work at <https://www.davidjvazquez.org>.

**FREDERICK LUIS ALDAMA**, aka Professor Latinx, was born in Mexico City to a Guatemalan-Irish American mamá from East LA and a Mexican papá. Raised in California, he is an award-winning author and editor of over 55 books, including the comic book *Pyroclast*, YA graphic fictions *Through Fences* and *Labyrinths Borne*, the novel *The Absolutely (Almost) True Adventures of Max Rodriguez*, and children’s books *The Adventures of Chupacabra Charlie* and *Con Papá / With Papá*. He is a National Cartoonists Society, Texas Institute of Letters, and Ohio State University’s Hall of Fame inductee. Aldama serves on the board of The Academy of American Poets and the founder/director of UT Austin’s Latinx Pop Lab as well as the yearly BIPOC PoP: Comics, Gaming, Animation & Multimedia Arts Expo & Symposium. He is Editor-in-Chief of *Latinx Pop Magazine* and FlowerSong Press. He holds the Jacob & Frances Sanger Mossiker Chair in the Humanities at the University of Texas, Austin. Learn more here: [www.frederickluisaldama.com](http://www.frederickluisaldama.com)

**DR. JESSICA HERNANDEZ** is a globally recognized Indigenous scientist, climate justice leader, and best-selling author redefining environmentalism through an Indigenous lens. Based in the Pacific Northwest, she bridges Indigenous science, traditional ecological knowledge, and Western frameworks to address today’s most pressing environmental crises. She is the founder of Earth Daughters, a transnational Indigenous-led nonprofit empowering Indigenous women and youth through transformative mutual aid and bold, community-led climate justice initiatives. Dr. Hernandez is the acclaimed author of *Fresh Banana Leaves: Healing Indigenous Landscapes through Indigenous Science*, a best-selling, award-winning book influencing global policy, academia, and activism. Her forthcoming book, *Growing Papaya Trees: Nurturing Indigenous Roots during Climate Displacement* (November 2025), explores climate migration, colonialism, and Indigenous resilience. She holds a Ph.D. in Environmental and Forest Sciences, a Master of Marine Affairs, and a Master of Science from the University of Washington. Named one of Forbes’ “100 Most Powerful and Influential Women in Central America,” Dr. Hernandez’s thought leadership continues to shape global conversations on decolonizing environmentalism and advancing Indigenous science. Her work has been featured by NPR, Vox, Teen Vogue, Latino USA, Science Friday, and UN News.

**DR. JOY SANCHEZ-TAYLOR** is a Professor of English at LaGuardia Community College (CUNY) whose research interest is science fiction and fantasy literature by authors of color. Her first book, *Diverse Futures: Science Fiction and Authors of Color* (2021), examines the contributions of late twentieth and twenty-first century U.S. and Canadian science fiction authors of color to the genre. Her newest book, *Dispelling Fantasies: Authors of Color Reimagine a Genre* (2025), explores how fantasy and fantastic works by authors of color serve as critical counternarratives

to the history of Eurocentric fantasy narratives, which often serve to reinforce Christian virtues and colonial, white supremacist structures. Dr. Sanchez-Taylor also serves as an editor for the journal *Extrapolation* and as the BIPOC Caucus Coordinator for the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts (IAFA).

**NICOLA HUNTE** is a lecturer in the Literatures in English discipline at the Cave Hill campus of the University of the West Indies. With her interest in the creative arts, she serves as the editor of *POU*, Cave Hill's journal of creative writing as well as on the Frank Collymore Literary Endowment committee for the promotion of literary arts in Barbados. She has published in the area of literary criticism on Caribbean and African American texts in the *Journal of West Indian Literature (JWIL)*. She was part of the committee responsible for the 2018 symposium on Caribbean Science/ Speculative Fiction whose papers formed the special issue of *JWIL*, November 2019 edited by Debra Providence. Her critical work has also touched on popular culture, specific to Barbadian expression on and offline. Her research focus includes the critical texts of Guyanese writer/theorist Wilson Harris and speculative fiction, particularly from the Caribbean and the African cultural diaspora. Some of her thoughts on the latter can be found in the *SFRA Review* and *Uneven Futures: Strategies for Community Survival from Speculative Fiction*.

<https://www.jwilonline.org/downloads/vol-27-no-2-fall-2019/>

**WILLIAM “MEMO” NERICCIO** is a Tejano cultural studies trickster from Laredo, Texas, whose work ricochets between literature, film, and the fever dreams of U.S. pop culture. A Latin Americanist by training—steeped in Fuentes, Castellanos, Cortázar, and García Márquez—he began his career at the University of Connecticut before finding his long-term lair at San Diego State University. There he directs the MALAS Cultural Studies MA program and runs SDSU Press, the oldest independent scholarly press in the CSU system. His books include *Talking #browntv: Latinas and Latinos on the Screen* (co-authored with Frederick Luis Aldama, Ohio State University Press) and the just-published *Snapshots: Teaching Los Bros Hernandez*, co-edited this time with Aldama as well. His signature work, *Tex[t]-Mex: Seductive Hallucinations of the “Mexican” in America* (University of Texas Press), remains a cult favorite in Chicano cultural studies. When not playing professor, Nericcio is the artist and ringmaster behind the Mextasy circus of desmadres—a mash-up of art, satire, and pop hallucination.