

# Thelma I. Vélez

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## PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

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**Adjunct Faculty**, Department of Earth and Environment  
Florida International University, Miami, FL  
August 2014-May 2015

## EDUCATION

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**Ph.D. Environmental Sociology**-ABD Expected May 2020

The Ohio State University

Focal Areas: Social Movements; Climate and Food Justice;  
Colonial Legacies in the Caribbean; Decolonizing Research

Dissertation: Mobilization for Puerto Rico's Recovery: Convergence of  
Climate Justice, Agroecology, and Environmental Justice

Certificate(s): Inclusive Teaching; Course Design Institute

**M.S. Environmental Studies**, 2012

Florida International University

Concentration: Climate Change Mitigation; Carbon Sequestration;  
Plant and Soil Science; Biochar from Invasive Species

**B.A. Sociology/Anthropology**, 2010

Florida International University

Capstone: Civic Engagement in Environment and Conservation

## PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

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**American Sociological Association (ASA)**

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

**Association of American Geographers (AAG)**

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

**Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP)**

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

**American Environmental Studies Society (AESS)**

## PUBLICATIONS

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### Manuscripts Under-Review:

- Vélez, Thelma.** 2019. Puerto Rico's #JustRecovery: A Historical and Political Economic Analysis of Colonialism and Agrarian Change. *Capitalism Nature Socialism*. Under Review.
- Arceno, M.A., Smiles, D., Smiles, Yotebieng, K., **Vélez, T.**, Wilson J.P., Mazumdar, A., McSweeney, K. 2018. Great Expectations: Ethics and Fieldwork in Human Geography. *Professional Geographer*. Revise Resubmit.

### Peer-Reviewed Articles:

- 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**, 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.
- 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.

### In-preparation:

- Vélez, Thelma.** Converging after the Storm: Collective Action Frames for Puerto Rico's #JustRecovery. \* Submission Target: *Social Problems*, Mar. 2019.
- Vélez, T.**, Usher, K., Sweeney, G., Ryan-Simkins, K. Empowering the Community and Rooting the Economy through the Linden Worker-Owned Food Hub Project. \*Submission Target: *Cultivating Food Justice*, April 2020.
- Vélez, Thelma.** Motivations for Pro-Environmental and Pro-Social Activism: Does Shared Identity Matter? \* Submission Target: *Mobilization*, August. 2020.

### Book Chapters:

- 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 Farm: 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.

### 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:

- Purchasing 40% Local and/or Sustainable Food by 2025: The Ohio State University Panel on Food Sustainability Final Report, Dec. 2018.
- Purchase of Local and Sustainable Food by 2025: The Ohio State University Panel on Food Sustainability Progress Report, May 2017.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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### Teaching Assistant

*The Ohio State University, 2019-2020*

RURL SOC 5540 **Population, Place, and Environment** course on demographic issues and related environmental issues, emphasizing population change and migration in the context of conflicts, disaster, and resource based development.

ENR 3500 **Community, Environment, and Development** (64 students) - course on sustainable development exploring place-based approaches to environmental justice issues and conflict through role play.

### Adjunct Faculty

*Florida International University, 2014-2015*

EVR 1017 **Global Environment and Society** (44 students) – interdisciplinary course on socio-environmental problems and solutions in local and global context.  
*Fulfills Global Learning Foundations requirement.*

EVR 1001 **Environmental Science and Sustainability** (86 students) – science course covering: natural resources, ecosystem services, climate change, degradation, biodiversity loss, energy, air and water pollution, and solid waste management.  
*Fulfills physical science requirement for non-science majors.*

### 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*

SPAN 2422 **Intro to Latino Studies**

Topic: Contesting Colonialism: Puerto Rico and the Caribbean

ENR 2300 **Society and Natural Resources**

Topic: Mobilization for the Environment

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

Topic: Communicating Climate Change

*Florida International University, 2011-2012*

BSC 5935 **Advanced Plant Conservation Biology**

Topic: Local Flora and Invasive Species Management at the FIU Nature Preserve.

EVR 1017 **Global Environment and Society**

Topic: Natural Resource Management and Global Food Production

GRANTS AND FUNDING

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**Collaborative Grants**2019 **InFACT Connect and Collaborate \$58,060**

One Linden Cooperative Community-University Partnership for Social 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. Team: **T. Vélez**, K. Usher, K. Ryan-Simkins, J. Karetny, A. Latham.

**Individual Grants and Fellowships**

2019	<b>*Racial/Ethnic Minority Graduate Student Fellowship</b> <i>Society for the Study of Social Problems</i>	<b>\$15,000</b>
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
2017	Conference Travel Funding <i>School of Environment and Natural Resources, Ohio State</i>	\$1,000
2016	Coca-Cola Critical Difference for Women Scholarship <i>Special Scholarships Program, Ohio State University</i>	\$4,000
2016	<b>*NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program</b> <i>National Science Foundation</i>	<b>\$142,000</b>
2015	Graduate Enrichment Fellowship <i>The Graduate School, Ohio State University</i>	\$20,800
2014	<b>*Camino Fellowship</b> <i>Texas A&amp;M and U.S. Department of Agriculture</i>	<b>\$1,800</b>

GRANTS AND FUNDING continued

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**Individual Grants and Fellowships**

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	<b>*Florida Bright Futures Scholarship</b> <b>State of Florida</b>	<b>\$8,700</b>
	* <i>External Funding</i>	<b>Total Funding \$327,160</b>

CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

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**Organizer/Presider**

- 2019 **Vélez, Thelma** and Marko Salvaggio. Organizer and Presider. Intersection of 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**

- 2019 **Vélez, Thelma**. Toward Agroecological Transformation: Understanding Political Opportunities and Social Movements in Puerto Rico. Association of American Geographers. Washington, D.C.
- 2019 **Vélez, Thelma**. A Disaster as Catalyst for Mobilization: The Convergence of Climate Justice and Agroecology. American Sociological Association Annual Meeting 2019. New York, NY.
- 2018 **Vélez, Thelma**. Climate Justice and Agroecology in Puerto Rico as 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.

## CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS continued

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### Presentations

- 2018 **Vélez, Thelma.** Treehugger Organic Farm: Visions for a Sustainable Food System. Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society Meeting 2018. Madison, WI.
- 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
- 2016 **Vélez, Thelma** and Kerry Ard. Revitalizing Communities with Gardens: is it always rosy? 76th Rural Sociological Society Annual Meeting. Toronto, Canada.
- 2012 **Vélez, T.,** Reed, S., and Jayachandran K.. Measuring the Impact of *Melaleuca quinquenervia* Biochar Application on Soil Quality, Microbial Gas Flux, and Plant Growth. Soil Science Society of America Annual Meeting. Cincinnati, OH,
- 2012 Bhat, M. G., S. Alvarez-Ventura, A. Jungman, **T. Vélez,** A. Zangari, K. Jayachandran and B. Gowda. Sustainable Bioenergy: Moving Beyond the Food-Fuel Controversy. Intl. Society of Ecological Economics, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- 2012 Alvarez-Ventura, S., Bhat, M., Jayachandran, K., **Vélez, T.** Life Cycle Analysis of Biodiesels in India. 99th National Indian Science Congress, Bhuvanesar, India.
- 2011 **Vélez, Thelma.** Emerging Topics in Biofuels. International Conference on Biofuels, Miami, FL.
- 2011 **Vélez, Thelma.** The Biofuels Push: Land Management Strategies for Sustainable Community Development. FIU Agroecology Symposium, Miami, FL
- 2011 **Vélez, Thelma.** The Role of Co-Curricular Education in Enhancing Science Programs in Urban Universities. North American Colleges and Teachers in Agriculture, Alberta, CAN

### INVITED ENGAGEMENTS

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- 2019 Penn-Nabrit, Paula, Nabrit, Charles, and **Thelma Vélez.** Workshop Organizer and Facilitator. *Cross-Pollination Isn't Just for Plants: Diversity and Inclusion in Organic Food Systems.* Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association 2019 Conference. Dayton, OH.
- 2018 **Vélez, Thelma.** Moderator. Office of Diversity and Inclusion Undergraduate and Graduate Student Recruitment Initiative. Columbus, OH.
- 2018 **Vélez, Thelma.** Delegate for Ohio Workgroup. National Food Systems Resilience and Equity Workshop. Stanford University, CA.

## INVITED ENGAGEMENTS continued

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- 2017 **Vélez, Thelma.** Presenter. *Mobilization, People, and the Environment*. Symposium on Ecologically Informed Theological Education. Delaware, OH.
- 2011 **Vélez, Thelma.** Speaker. *Sustainability: Local Food Systems and the Role of Community Gardens*. Miami Dietetics Association Annual Meeting. Miami, FL.

## COMMITTEES AND SERVICE

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### 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

- 2018- pres. 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*

## ACCOLADES AND MERIT

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- 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*

## PROFESSIONAL AND RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS

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- 2018- pres. **One-Linden Cooperative Project**- a community-based project geared toward developing a cooperative, worker-owned business in a marginalized community in Columbus, Ohio, specifically for formerly incarcerated citizens. We seek to establish an alternative economic model and encourage sustainable and equitable community transformation. <https://onelindencooperative.weebly.com>
- 2018- pres. **Agroecology Research-Action Collective**- a collective of scholar-activists working on issues of farm justice, food justice, food sovereignty, and agroecology in North America. We strive to make research and science accessible to the general public and be a bridge between academic and non-academic organizations. <https://agroecologyresearchaction.org>
- 2017-2019 **Ohio Delegation on Food System Resilience and Equity**- a group of academics and community-based practitioners transforming the regional food-system to be more inclusive and equitable. Our most recent project entailed organizing a theme of justice and diversity within the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association Annual Meeting. We collaborate on projects, regionally, to advance our goals.
- 2016-2018 **Institutional Procurement of Sustainable Food** - Ohio State University seeks to source 40% local and sustainable food by 2025. Our team, comprised of administration, faculty, staff, and two students, has been integral in defining local and sustainable, identifying logistics and current allocation, as well as identifying how to engage the community and regional producers. <https://osu.edu/ohio-state-food-sustainability-panel>
- 2010-2012 **2nd Generation Biofuels: Transportation and Transformation in India** - this project was a collaboration between Florida International University-based researchers and University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore extension which resulted in community-engaged research, policies for sustainable development, and the signing of an MOU between the two universities.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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- 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*

REFERENCE LIST

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**Dr. Kerry J. Ard**

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School of Environment and Natural Resources  
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Phone: 614-292-2265

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**Dr. Casey Hoy**

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Faculty Director, Initiative for Food and AgriCultural Transformation  
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