

ALEXANDRIA VASQUEZ, PHD

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RESEARCH

My research examines identity, labor, and material culture at the intersection of dress, embodiment, and late modern selfhood. My original theoretical contribution — sartorial labor, extending Hochschild's emotional labor framework into the domain of dress — argues that the daily work of clothing the self is reproductive labor, unequally distributed across gender, race, and class, and that identity destabilization is the structural mechanism driving compulsive fashion consumption. This work is grounded in a three-study empirical research program and sixteen years of sustained scholarly inquiry, including seven years of autoethnographic design practice.

EDUCATION

PhD, Sociology — Brandeis University, 2019

Dissertation: Misfit: The Impact of Mismatched Jobs on Creative Workers and the Organizations That Employ Them

Qualifying Areas: Medical Sociology, Work & Occupations, Organizations

MS, Sociology — Virginia Commonwealth University, 2012

Areas: Medical Sociology, Economic Sociology, Public Sociology

BA, Liberal Arts — The New School, 2009

Concentration: Democracy & Cultural Pluralism

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENT

Affiliate Faculty, Department of Sociology — University of San Francisco, 2023–present

Introduction to Sociology · Social Problems · Sociology of Health · Career Exploration & Planning

BOOK PROJECT

The Identity Gap: Clothing the Self in an Age of Manufactured Instability

Book proposal under active submission to academic press. The book introduces sartorial labor as an original theoretical framework extending Hochschild's emotional labor into the domain of dress, grounded in three original empirical studies: a wardrobe interview study (Study I, 48 participants), a wardrobe swap study (Study II), and a mirror removal study (Study III). The book argues that the gap between performed and authentic self is not a psychological condition but an engineered structural mechanism — and that consumption is downstream of identity. Full proposal and sample chapters available upon request.

PUBLICATIONS & WORK UNDER REVIEW

Under Review

Vasquez, A. and Alexandra Nugent. "Clothing the Self: Material Resources, Reflexive Identity Work, and Sartorial Labor." Under review at *Symbolic Interaction*.

Vasquez, A. "The Decline of Performative Capital." Under review at *Theory and Society*.

Vasquez, A. "How Organizations Fail by Hiring for Culture Fit: The Costs of Mismatched Labor." Under review at *Administrative Science Quarterly*.

In Development

Vasquez, A. "Who Pays to Get Dressed? Sartorial Labor, the Social Tax, and the Misassignment of Sustainability Accountability." Target venue: *Contexts* (ASA).

Vasquez, A. "A World Without Mirrors: Embodied Self-Knowledge and the Reflexive Gaze in Everyday Dress." Working draft.

Published

Sharone, O. and A. Vasquez. 2015. "Sociology as a Strategy of Support for Long-Term Unemployed Workers." *The American Sociologist*. 47(1).

Sharone, O., R. Ghayad, and A. Vasquez, et al. 2015. "Supporting Experienced Long-Term Unemployed Professionals." In *Transforming U.S. Workforce Development Policies for the 21st Century*. Federal Reserve. Washington, D.C.

Conrad, P., J. Bandini, and A. Vasquez. 2016. "Illness and the Internet: From Private to Public Experience." *Health (London)*. 20(1):22–32.

Vasquez, A. 2019. *Misfit: The Impact of Mismatched Jobs on Creative Workers and the Organizations That Employ Them*. Brandeis University ProQuest Dissertations Publishing. 22616721.

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Primary Investigator — Clothing the Self III (Study III) — San Francisco Bay Area, 2026
Embodied Dressing and Visual Self-Monitoring: A Study of Everyday Life Without Mirrors. IRB approved.

Primary Investigator — Clothing the Self II (Study II) — San Francisco Bay Area, 2026
Identity Reconstruction and Ontological Security When Primary Material Resources Are Compromised.

Primary Investigator — Clothing the Self (Study I) — San Francisco Bay Area, 2025
Material Resources, Reflexive Identity Work, and Sartorial Labor. 48 participants across qualitative interviews and survey methods.

Research Associate — Institute for Career Transitions — MIT, 2013–15
Co-investigator with Ofer Sharone on structural misattribution and identity in long-term unemployment. Research published by the Federal Reserve; covered by NBC Business News.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

American Sociological Association — New York, NY, 2026
"The Decline of Performative Capital: From Identity Politics to Ecological Futures." Culture section.
"Clothing The Self: Material Resources, Reflexive Identity Work, and Sartorial Labor." Body and Embodiment section.

Symbolic Interaction and the Qualitatives — Brock, Niagara Falls, Canada, 2026
"Clothing The Self: Material Resources, Reflexive Identity Work, and Sartorial Labor."

SF Climate Week — San Francisco, CA, 2024, 2025, 2026
Recurring speaker. Selected talks: "The Ritual of Dress" (2026); "Fashion Waste: Policy and Practice: SB707" (2024).

SF Big Brain — San Francisco, CA, 2025
"Clothing the Self: The Meaning Behind What We Wear." Sold out within 24 hours of ticket release.

SF Startup Art Fair — San Francisco, CA, 2025, 2026
Invited speaker. "The Living Archive: Herderin's Approach to Embodied Regeneration" (2026).

Fibershed — Point Reyes, CA, 2023–2026

Recurring speaker and workshop leader. Topics include regenerative design, embodied dressing, and sartorial labor.

American Sociological Association — Montreal, QC, 2024

“Building Intersectional Knowledge in Artisanal Practice.”

American Sociological Association — Philadelphia, PA, 2018

“Innovation as a Social Process: Competition, Strategic Resources, and Recombinatorial Identity Expression.”

TEACHING

University of San Francisco — 2023–2025

Introduction to Sociology · Sex & Sexualities · Sociology of Innovation · Social Problems · Career Exploration · Sociology of Health

Mills College — 2019–2020

Medical Sociology · Public Health · Introduction to Sociology

Brandeis University — Teaching Fellow & Adjunct — 2012–2018

Social Class & Social Change · Culture & Consumption · Health, Community & Society · Media and Politics

Drexel University — 2015–2017

Sociology of Aging · Social Problems · Introductory Sociology · Wealth & Power

SERVICE

Program Committee Member — Body and Embodiment Section, American Sociological Association
— 2026–present

Session theme development, cross-section partnership building, paper review, and roundtable organization.

SELECTED AFFILIATIONS & INSTITUTIONAL CONNECTIONS

Co-Founder — Institute for Career Transitions — MIT, 2013–2015

Research published by the Federal Reserve. Covered by NBC Business News.

Board Member — New Arts Foundation — 2026–present

Governance Working Group Advisor — Fibershed — 2024–present

Producer & Co-Op Member — Fibershed — 2019–present

Herderin holds Fibershed Climate Beneficial™ certification. Featured brand at Fibershed Learning Center.

Founder — Herderin — 2019–present

Regenerative clothing design studio practice. Autoethnographic research site for the book's empirical program.

SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE

Fashionista, February 2026: “Herderin: A Regenerative Fashion Brand.”

EcoCult, April 2026: “Tall Girls Deserve Natural Fibers, Too.”

Marin Magazine, March 2021: “Healing By Design: How a Sociologist Created a Clothing Brand for Emotional Comfort.”

Garmentory, April 2025: “Clothing the Self with Herderin.”

Fibershed, November 2024: “Intertwining: A Story of the Living World Through Material Form.”

Fibershed, February 2023: "Herderin Begins With the Body and Soul."

NBC Business News, January 2014: "Running Out of Money: Long-Term Unemployed Face Grim New Year."

Updated August 2026