

Sarah Kurnick

Department of Anthropology
University of Colorado Boulder
Hale Science 350, 1350 Pleasant Street
Boulder, CO 80309
Sarah.Kurnick@Colorado.edu

– Updated August 2022 –

Education:

- 2013 Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, Department of Anthropology
Dissertation: *Negotiating the Contradictions of Political Authority: An Archaeological Case Study from Callar Creek, Belize*
- 2006 B.A., Haverford College, Department of Anthropology
Thesis: *The Dead are Fed with Fragrance: A Study of Maya Censers from the Guatemala Highlands*

Professional Appointments:

- 2017– Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of Colorado Boulder,
Department of Anthropology
- 2015–17 Chancellor’s Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Colorado Boulder, Department of
Anthropology
- 2015 Postdoctoral Research Scholar, Gerda Henkel Foundation
- 2014– Consulting Scholar, University of Pennsylvania, Penn Cultural Heritage Center
- 2014–15 Adjunct Professor, Lehigh University, Department of Sociology & Anthropology
- 2013 Lecturer, University of Pennsylvania, Department of Anthropology

Peer Reviewed Publications:

Edited Books

Kurnick, Sarah and Joanne Baron, eds.

2016. *Political Strategies in Pre-Columbian Mesoamerica*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado.

Journal Articles and Book Chapters

Kurnick, Sarah

2022. Photographic Insights from Engaged Archaeology: Yucatan and Beyond.
Cambridge Archaeological Journal. doi:10.1017/S0959774322000166

Davis, Kaitlyn, Pascale Meehan, Carla Klehm, Sarah Kurnick, and Catherine Cameron.
2021. Improving Field Safety and Wellbeing on Student-Directed Archaeological Field Projects: Recommendations for Graduate Students, Advisors, and Departments. *Advances in Archaeological Practice* 9(1): 74-80.

Kurnick, Sarah and David Rogoff.
2020. Maya Cartographies: Two Maps of Punta Laguna, Yucatan, Mexico. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 20(2): 119-143.

Kurnick, Sarah.
2020. The Contradictions of Engaged Archaeology at Punta Laguna, Yucatan, Mexico. *Heritage* 3(3): 682-698.

Kurnick, Sarah
2019. Creating Nature in the Yucatan Peninsula: Social Inequality and the Production of Eco-Archaeological Parks. *American Anthropologist* 121(2): 376-389.

Kurnick, Sarah
2019. Navigating the Past in the Aftermath of Dramatic Social Transformations: Postclassic Engagement with the Classic Period Past in the Northeast Yucatan Peninsula. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 53: 51-65.

Kurnick, Sarah
2016. Competition and Conflict in the Upper Belize River Valley: Insights from the Ancient Maya Minor Center of Callar Creek, Belize. *Journal of Field Archaeology* 41(3): 297-311.

Kurnick, Sarah
2016. Paradoxical Politics: Negotiating the Contradictions of Political Authority. In *Political Strategies in Pre-Columbian Mesoamerica*. Sarah Kurnick and Joanne Baron, eds., Pg. 3-36. Boulder: University Press of Colorado.

Kurnick, Sarah
2015. The Origins of Extreme Economic Inequality: An Archaeologist's Take on a Contemporary Controversy. *Archaeologies: Journal of the World Archaeological Congress* 11(3): 400-416.

Kurnick, Sarah
2013. The Importance of the Past to the Ancient Maya Political Present: Recent Investigations at Callar Creek, Belize. *Research Reports in Belizean Archaeology* 10: 105-114.

Yaeger, Jason, Sarah Kurnick, Christina Dykstra, and Meaghan Peuramaki-Brown
2012. Charting the Histories of Hinterland Settlements around Buenavista del Cayo. *Research Reports in Belizean Archaeology* 9: 15-28.

Yaeger, Jason, Meaghan Peuramaki-Brown, Christina L. Dykstra, Sarah Kurnick, and Sebastian Salgado-Flores.

2011. Political Dynamics in the Mopan River Valley: Recent Research in the Buenavista del Cayo Hinterlands. *Research Reports in Belizean Archaeology* 8: 31-44.

Kurnick, Sarah

2009. Crossing Boundaries: Maya Censers from the Guatemala Highlands. *Expedition: The Magazine of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology* 51(1): 25-32.

Under Review

Kurnick, Sarah, David Rogoff, and Iliana Ancona Aragón. A Preliminary Revised Life History of Punta Laguna, Yucatan, Mexico: A Persistent Place. Submitted to *Ancient Mesoamerica*.

Book Reviews:

Kurnick, Sarah

2017. *Review of Classic Maya Polities of the Southern Lowlands: Integration, Interaction, Dissolution*, by Damien B. Marken and James L. Fitzsimmons, eds. *American Anthropologist* 119(14): 771-772.

Kurnick, Sarah

2012. *Review of Natives, Europeans, and Africans in Colonial Campeche: History and Archaeology*, by Vera Tiesler, Pilar Zabala, and Andrea Cucina, eds. *Hispanic American Historical Review* 92(1): 178-179.

Kurnick, Sarah

2012. Bringing Maya Sculpture to Life: *Review of The Copan Sculpture Museum: Ancient Maya Artistry in Stucco & Stone*, by Barbara W. Fash. *Expedition: The Magazine of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology* 54(1): 52.

Popular Publications:

Kurnick, Sarah

2022. What does the past mean to people today? Futurum Careers (a free online resource and magazine aimed at encouraging 14-19-year-olds worldwide to pursue careers in STEM and SHAPE fields). <https://doi.org/10.33424/FUTURUM229>

Kurnick, Sarah

2020. Ancient cancel cultures: The defacement of statues in America replicates a tradition going back millennia. The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/ancient-cancel-cultures-the-defacement-of-statues-in-america-replicates-a-tradition-going-back-millennia-142029>

Grants and Fellowships:

- 2017–22 National Science Foundation Senior Archaeological Research Grant: “Strategies which Foster Long Term Social Stability” (\$111,921)
- 2015 National Geographic Society Committee for Research and Exploration Grant: “In the Aftermath of Collapse: Documenting the Postclassic Maya Site of Punta Laguna, Mexico” (\$11,450)
- 2015 American Philosophical Society Franklin Grant: “In the Aftermath of Collapse: Political Authority at the Postclassic Maya Site of Punta Laguna, Mexico” (\$6,000)
- 2014 Gerda Henkel Foundation Research Grant: “In the Wake of Collapse: Political Authority at the Postclassic Maya Site of Punta Laguna, Mexico” (\$5,500)
- 2012-13 National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant: “The Exercise of Political Authority at Callar Creek, Belize” (\$19,977)
- 2011 American Philosophical Society Lewis and Clark Field Scholar Grant: “Political Authority among the Ancient Maya: A Case Study from Callar Creek, Belize” (\$4,100)
- 2011-13 Dissertation Research Fellowship, School of Arts and Sciences, University of Pennsylvania (\$5,000)
- 2011-13 Junior Fellow, Louis J. Kolb Foundation (Tuition and Stipend)
- 2006-11 Benjamin Franklin and William Fontaine Fellowships, University of Pennsylvania (Tuition and Stipend)
- 2010 Dissertation Research Fellowship, School of Arts and Sciences, University of Pennsylvania (\$5,000)
- 2010 Summer Research Grant, Penn Museum (\$1,500)
- 2009 Departmental Field Funds, Department of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania (\$2,500)
- 2009 Sorenson Student Fieldwork Fellowship, Penn Museum (\$2,250)
- 2008 Departmental Field Funds, Department of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania (\$1,500)

Fieldwork:

- 2014 – Co-Director, Punta Laguna Archaeology Project, Yucatan, Mexico

- 2010-12 Excavation Director, Callar Creek Site Core, Mopan Valley Archaeology Project, Cayo District, Belize, directed by Jason Yaeger, University of Texas at San Antonio
- 2009 Survey Crew Director, Mopan Valley Archaeology Project, Cayo District, Belize, directed by Jason Yaeger, University of Texas at San Antonio
- 2008 Excavation Supervisor, La Blanca Archaeological Project, La Blanca, Guatemala, directed by Michael Love, California State University, Northridge
- 2007 Excavation Supervisor, Proyecto Arqueológico Xuenkal, Yucatan, Mexico, directed by Traci Ardren, University of Miami, and T. Kam Manahan, Kent State University
- 2006 Project Member, South Jersey Archaeological Field Project, Vineland, NJ, directed by Robert Schuyler, University of Pennsylvania
- 2004 Project Member, Alexandria Archaeology, Excavation of a Freedmen's Cemetery, Alexandria, VA

Courses Developed and Taught:

Theoretical Issues in Community and Public Archaeology: Fall 2019

Space and Power: Spring 2022, Spring 2018

Exploring a Non-Western Culture: The Maya: Fall 2022, Fall 2021, Fall 2020, Spring 2020, Fall 2017

The Archaeology of Inequality: Fall 2022, Spring 2021, Fall 2017, Spring 2016, Spring 2014

Landscape Archaeology: Fall 2021, Spring 2019, Fall 2014

Ancient Aliens and Contemporary Archaeology: Fall 2015, Spring 2014, Fall 2013

Four Field Introduction to Anthropology: Fall 2015

Mesoamerican Archaeology: Fall 2014

The Development of Anthropological Theory: Fall 2013

Symposia Organized:

- 2023 Sarah Kurnick and Samantha Fladd, organizers. "Beyond Leaky Pipelines: Exploring Gender Inequalities in Archaeological Practice." To be held at the 88th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology.

- 2020 Sarah Kurnick and Chelsea Fisher, organizers. “Archaeologists Speak: Our Most Critical Insights.” Session was to be held at the 85th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. *Canceled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic*
- 2016 Sarah Kurnick and David Rogoff, organizers. “Combating Inequality: Archaeology and the Production of Capital in the 21st Century.” Session organized at the 81st Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Orlando, April 7
- 2013 Kurnick, Sarah, Joanne Baron, and Christa Cesario, organizers. 3rd Yucatan in Pennsylvania Roundtable, Penn Museum, Philadelphia, March 1
- 2012 Kurnick, Sarah and Joanne Baron, organizers. “Political Strategies in Pre-Columbian Mesoamerica.” Session organized at the 77th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Memphis, April 19

Academic Presentations:

- 2022 Community Archaeology Meets Settlement Pattern Studies: Reassessing the Relationship between Punta Laguna and Cobá (with David Rogoff). Presented at the 87th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Chicago, April 1.
- 2022 Increasing Diversity is not an End Goal: The intellectual value of engaged archaeology at Punta Laguna, Yucatan, Mexico. Presented at the 2022 Admitted Graduate Student Open House and Research Symposium, Department of Anthropology, University of Colorado, Boulder, February 18.
- 2021 Photography, Archaeology, and Maya Peoples. Presented at the 6th Annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Association Research Colloquium: Current Research in the Ancient Americas, Denver, September 25.
- 2021 Nicholas Puente and Sarah Kurnick. The Rhizomatic Road to Social Relations: An analysis of a sacbe at the archaeological site of Punta Laguna. Presented at the 6th Annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Association Research Colloquium: Current Research in the Ancient Americas, Denver, September 25.
- 2021 Photographing the Ancient Maya. Presented at the 86th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Online, April 17.
- 2020 How Marginalized Voices are Rewriting History. Was to be presented at the 85th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Austin, April 23.
Canceled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic
- 2019 Malerized Maps and Cartographic Histories: Two Maps of Punta Laguna, Yucatan, Mexico. Presented at the 5th Annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Association Research Colloquium, Denver, October 26.

- 2019 Community Archaeology and the Production of Space at Punta Laguna, Yucatan, Mexico. Presented at the 84th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Albuquerque, April 14.
- 2018 Space, Inequality, and Community Archaeology: Defying Spatial Commodification at Punta Laguna, Yucatan, Mexico. Presented at the 4th Annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Association Research Colloquium, Denver, October 13.
- 2018 Political Authority and the Creation of Wilderness: American National Parks and Mexican Eco-Archaeological Parks. Presented at the 83rd Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Washington, D.C., April 12.
- 2017 Creating Wilderness: Yosemite National Park and Xcaret Eco-Archaeological Park. Presented at the 3rd Annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Association Research Colloquium, Denver, September 30.
- 2017 Navigating Social Memories and Reshaping Built Environments: An Analysis of Postclassic Reoccupation in the Eastern Yucatan Peninsula. Presented at the 82nd Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Vancouver, March 31.
- 2016 Patterns of Postclassic Reoccupation in the Eastern Yucatan Peninsula. Presented at the 2nd Annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Association Research Colloquium, Denver, September 24.
- 2016 Archaeology and the Mitigation of Inequality. Presented at the Theoretical Archaeology Group (TAG) Conference, Boulder, April 24.
- 2016 Archaeology and the Production of Capital in the 21st Century. Presented at the 81st Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Orlando, April 7
- 2015 Regeneration and Revitalization at Postclassic and Contemporary Punta Laguna, Mexico. Presented as part of the CU Boulder Archaeology Graduate Student Speaker Series, Boulder, November 13
- 2015 The Creation of Maya Political Landscapes in Postclassic Yucatan. Presented at the 1st Annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Association Research Colloquium, Denver, September 26
- 2015 Discordant Relationships: Household and Community at Callar Creek, Belize. Presented at the 80th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology as part of “From Households to Communities: Bridging Scales in Search of Conflict, Coalescence, and Communitas,” organized by Cameron Wesson and Adam King, San Francisco, April 18

- 2014 Contradictions, Inconsistencies, and Incongruities: The Paradoxes of Ancient Maya Political Authority. Presented at the 2014 University of Chicago Society of Fellows Weissbourd conference, Chicago, May 10
- 2014 The End of Political Authority at Callar Creek, Belize. Presented at the 79th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Austin, April 26
- 2013 A Different Vision of Ancient Maya Politics: A Look at Political Strategies at the “Minor Center” of Callar Creek, Belize. Presented at the 78th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Honolulu, April 5
- 2013 The Politicization of the Past: An Ancient Maya Case Study. Presented at the 3rd Yucatan in Pennsylvania Roundtable, Philadelphia, March 1
- 2012 The Importance of the Past to the Ancient Maya Political Present: Recent Investigations at Callar Creek, Belize. Presented at the 10th Annual Belize Archaeology Symposium, San Ignacio, Belize, June 27
- 2012 How Rulers Rule: Negotiating the Contradictions of Political Authority. Presented at the 77th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Memphis, April 19
- 2011 Political Authority among the Ancient Maya: 2010 Excavations at Callar Creek, Belize. Presented at the Penn Museum Scholars Lecture Series, Philadelphia, April 6
- 2011 Political Authority among Ancient Maya Mid-Level Elites: 2010 Excavations at Callar Creek, Belize. Presented at the 76th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Sacramento, March 31
- 2011 Power and Authority among the Ancient Maya: A View from the Middle. Presented at the 2nd Yucatan in Pennsylvania Roundtable, State College, February 24
- 2010 Women in Stone: Understanding the Classic Period Maya Female Ajaws. Presented at the 75th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, St. Louis, April 15
- 2010 Women in Stone: A Consideration of Female Rulership among the Classic Period Maya. Presented at the Penn Museum’s 28th Annual Maya Weekend, Philadelphia, April 10
- 2009 Centering the Universe: A Triadic Stone Sphere Cache from La Blanca, Guatemala. Presented at the 74th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Atlanta, April 23
- 2009 Nourishing the Dead and the Divine: A Look at the UPM Burkitt Censers. Presented at the Penn Museum’s 27th Annual Maya Weekend, Philadelphia, April 4

Panel Discussions:

- 2021 Going Public: Writing and Speaking for Public Audiences. Hosted by the Center for Ancient Studies at the University of Pennsylvania., September 29 and April 10.

Public Lectures:

- 2021 “Aliens built the pyramids” and other absurdities of pseudo-archaeology. TED talk featured TED.com. Published on February 22. (Over 1.7 million views).
- 2020 Q&A with The Futures Club Schools. December 11.
- 2020 Aliens & Archaeology: Why Do We Get History Wrong On Purpose? Presented as part of the TEDx MileHigh event “Rise”, Denver, August 29.
- 2020 Maya Peoples and Maya Pasts. Presented as part of the Vail Symposium Speaker Series, Vail, September 24.
- 2020 Changing History at Punta Laguna, Yucatan, Mexico. Presented to the Denver Chapter of the Colorado Archaeological Society, Denver, September 14.
- 2019 Community Archaeology at Punta Laguna, Mexico. Presented as part of the Center for Native American and Indigenous Studies (CNAIS) Brown Bag Series, Boulder, April 5.
- 2019 Ancient Aliens and Contemporary Archaeology. Presented as part of CU on the Weekend programming, Boulder, March 16.
- 2019 History, Memories, and Social Change: Postclassic Maya Built Environments in the Northeast Yucatan Peninsula. Presented to the Indian Peaks Chapter of the Colorado Archaeological Society, Boulder, March 14.
- 2016 Assembling the Past and Altering the Future: Memory Construction and Collaborative Archaeology at Punta Laguna, Mexico. Presented as part of the Archaeological Institute of America Boulder Chapter Lecture Series, Boulder, April 13
- 2016 Archaeology for the People. Presented as part of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) Faculty Meet and Greet. University of Colorado, Boulder, January 21
- 2014 Razing the Roof: Acts of Purposeful Destruction in the Belize River Valley. Presented at Voices of the Past: Maya Research Today, Philadelphia, March 15
- 2012 The Truth about the Ancient Maya. Presented as part of the “Maya 101” programming associated with the “Maya 2012: Lords of Time” exhibit at the Penn Museum, Philadelphia, April 14

- 2012 The Ancient Maya and Contemporary America. Lecture presented to the docents of the “Maya 2012: Lords of Time” exhibit as part of a training session at the Penn Museum, Philadelphia, March 21

Academic Posters

- 2022 Nicholas Puente, Sarah Kurnick, and David Rogoff. The Vibrant Road: An Analysis of a Sacbe at Punta Laguna, Mexico. Presented at the 87th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Chicago, April 1.

Outreach Activities:

- 2021 Los Antiguos Mayas y Punta Laguna: Un Libro de Colorear / The Ancient Maya and Punta Laguna: A Coloring Book. Distributed in Punta Laguna, Yucatán, Mexico in June and available for download at <https://puntalagunamx.com/learn-options>
- 2021 CU and Fort Lewis College Partnership Graduate Student Recruitment Event. April 14 and September 29.

Technical Reports:

Kurnick, Sarah and David Rogoff

- 2021 Proyecto Arqueológico Punta Laguna: Informe Parcial de la Temporada 2021 para el Consejo Nacional de Arqueología de México

Kurnick, Sarah and David Rogoff

2019. Proyecto Arqueológico Punta Laguna: Informe Parcial de la Temporada 2019 para el Consejo Nacional de Arqueología de México

Kurnick, Sarah and David Rogoff

2018. Proyecto Arqueológico Punta Laguna: Informe Parcial de la Temporada 2018 para el Consejo Nacional de Arqueología de México.

Kurnick, Sarah and David Rogoff

2017. Proyecto Arqueológico Punta Laguna: Informe Parcial de la Temporada 2017 para el Consejo Nacional de Arqueología de México.

Kurnick, Sarah and David Rogoff

2016. Final Report on the Punta Laguna Archaeology Project’s 2015-2016 Fieldwork. Submitted to the National Geographic Society.

Kurnick, Sarah and David Rogoff

2014. Final Report on the 2014 Field Season of the Punta Laguna Archaeology Project. Submitted to the Gerda Henkel Foundation.

Kurnick, Sarah

2012. Laboratory Analysis of Artifacts from the Callar Creek Site Core. *In* The Mopan Valley Archaeology Project: Results of the 2012 Season. Jason Yaeger, ed. Submitted to the Belize Institute of Archaeology, National Institute of Culture and History, Belmopan, Belize.

Kurnick, Sarah and Alexander Hulse

2011. Continued Investigations in the Callar Creek Site Core. *In* The Mopan Valley Archaeology Project: Results of the 2011 Season. Jason Yaeger, ed. Submitted to the Belize Institute of Archaeology, National Institute of Culture and History, Belmopan, Belize.

Kurnick, Sarah

2010. Investigations in the Callar Creek Site Core. *In* The Mopan Valley Archaeology Project: Results of the 2010 Season. Jason Yaeger, ed. Submitted to the Belize Institute of Archaeology, National Institute of Culture and History, Belmopan, Belize.

Kurnick, Sarah

2009. Opportunistic Survey of the Area North of the Callar Creek Settlement Zone. *In* The Mopan Valley Archaeology Project: Results of the 2009 Season. Jason Yaeger, ed. Submitted to the Belize Institute of Archaeology, National Institute of Culture and History, Belmopan, Belize.

Professional Service:

To the Discipline of Anthropology

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 2022 | Award Committee Member, the Alfred Vincent Kidder Award for Eminence in the Field of American Archaeology, American Anthropological Association |
| 2020- | Grant Reviewer, National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) |
| 2020- | Grant Reviewer, National Geographic Society *competition canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic* |
| 2019- | Peer Reviewer, American Anthropologist |
| 2016- | Peer Reviewer, National Science Foundation |
| 2016- | Peer Reviewer, National Geographic Society |
| 2016- | Peer Reviewer, Expedition Magazine |

To the School of Arts and Sciences

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 2022 | Steering Committee Member, University of Colorado Boulder Center to Advance Research and Teaching in the Social Sciences (CARTSS) |
| 2022 | Award Committee Member, University of Colorado STUDIO undergraduate research lab |
| 2018-2020 | Steering Committee Member University of Colorado Boulder Center to Advance Research and Teaching in the Social Sciences (CARTSS) |

To the Department of Anthropology

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 2019-2021 | University of Colorado Boulder Department of Anthropology Curriculum Committee Chair. |
| 2017-2019 | University of Boulder Department of Anthropology Curriculum Committee Member |
| 2017-2019 | University of Colorado Boulder Department of Anthropology Space Committee Member |

Student Committees

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 2021- | Ph.D. Committee Member (Patrick Cruz, CU Boulder Anthropology) |
| 2020 - | Ph.D. Committee Chair (Nicholas Puente, CU Boulder Anthropology) |
| 2020-2021 | M.A. Committee Member (Alexandra Kulenguski, CU Boulder Anthropology) |
| 2019-2020 | B.A. Honors Thesis Committee Member (Joana Lara Nuñez, CU Boulder Anthropology) |
| 2017-2021 | M.A. Committee Member (Vanessa Monson, CU Boulder Anthropology) |
| 2017-2020 | Ph.D. Committee Member (Pascale Meehan, CU Boulder Anthropology) |
| 2017-2018 | M.A. Committee Member (Samantha Linford, CU Boulder Anthropology) |
| 2017-2018 | B.A. Honors Thesis Committee Member (Rachael Wedemeyer, CU Boulder Anthropology) |

Professional Memberships:

- American Anthropological Association
- Society for American Archaeology
- Sigma Xi: The Scientific Research Honors Society