

Rudy Mondragón
rudym@ucla.edu

Education

B.A., Chicano/Latino Studies with minors in African American Studies and Education, University of California, Irvine

M.Ed., Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (Higher Education), Iowa State University

M.A., Chicana and Chicano Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara

Born and raised in South Gate, California, sports have always been a part of Rudy's life. He vividly recalls the 1992 boxing match between Julio Cesar Chavez and Hector "Macho" Camacho, noting the ways in which nationalism and manhood were represented. After watching 1994 World Cup matches, he decided to try the sport for himself. Rudy eventually went on to earn an athletic scholarship to play soccer at the University of California, Irvine, where he was exposed to Chicana/o Studies and issues on race, immigration, and social justice.

After his undergraduate career, Rudy enrolled in Iowa State University's Masters of Education program. His final project engaged theories on student development and activism to examine the multiplicity and complexity of identities in the Chicana/o student movement in higher education. Following graduate school, he served as an intercultural specialist for cultural centers at Gonzaga and the University of Washington where he supported underrepresented students, worked with nationally recognized social justice scholars, and implemented the [Diversity Monologues](#). During this time, he also co-founded a blog dedicated to the politics of boxing and made multiple appearances on the ESPN Deportes Seattle radio show.

Though he considered a career in education administration, Rudy's scholarly interests drew him back to seek academic training at the University of California, Santa Barbara. While at UCSB, Rudy's research intentionally responded to the challenges set forth by Jorge Iber and José Alamillo where they call upon scholars to examine the racialized, gendered, class-based, and transnational dimensions of sport among Mexican American experiences. Rudy's research utilizes the sport of boxing as a site to interrogate representations of race and ethnicity, masculinities, immigration, and citizenship. His focus is on the ways in which boxers of color utilize spatial strategies to negotiate their position within and beyond the boundaries of boxing to creatively claim space as active agents of resistance.

As a Eugene Cota-Robles Fellow, Rudy aims to advance the collective idea that Chicana/o Sports Studies should become a subfield due to the rich material that scholars can draw from to better understand the complexities of broader social issues.