

# MEDIA KIT

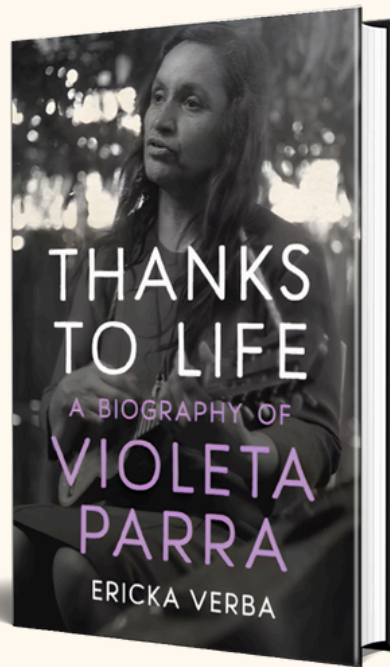


## Ericka Kim Verba

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Author | Director | Professor

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Ericka Verba

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# BIOGRAPHY

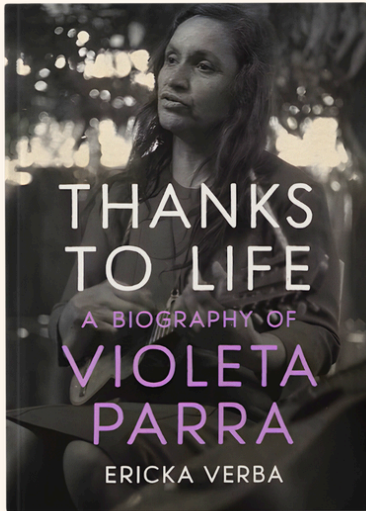


**Ericka Verba** is Director and Professor of Latin American Studies at California State University, Los Angeles. Her research interests include the cultural Cold War, the role of music in social movements, and the intersection of gender and class politics in twentieth-century Latin America. She has received grants from the National Endowment from the Humanities, the Mellon Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, the Fulbright, and the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs. She is a founding member of SCALAS (Southern California Association of Latin American Studies) and the recipient of the E. Bradford Burns Award for service to the Pacific Coast Council on Latin American Studies.

She is the author of the book *Thanks to Life: A Biography of Violeta Parra*. Her interest in Violeta Parra dates back to her early teens in the 1970s when she became friends with a Chilean family of musicians and artists who taught Verba her first Violeta Parra songs and guided her political awakening to the brutality of the Pinochet dictatorship and the role of the US government in installing and supporting it. As a musician and founding member of the US-based New Song groups Sabiá and Desborde, she has been performing Parra's music since 1976. In 1980, she wrote her undergraduate honors senior thesis on Parra's autobiography in verse. In 1996, She was the musical director and arranger for a tribute concert to Violeta Parra, supported by an Artists in the Community grant from the Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department and recorded and released as Desborde, *Tribute Concert to Violeta Parra*. As a professor of Latin American History since 2004, she has welded her research on the history of women in Chile with her interest in Parra to acquire a deeper understanding of the social context and gender dynamics that shaped Parra's life. Suffice to say, Verba's book represents the culmination of a decades-long curiosity about Violeta Parra and engagement with her work.

# THANKS TO LIFE

A Biography of Violeta Parra



**Publisher:** The University of North Carolina Press

**Publication Date:** January 14, 2025

**Price:** Hardcover \$99.00 / Paperback \$34.95

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"A stunning achievement. This comprehensive analysis of Parra's life provides an unparalleled opportunity to appreciate one of Latin America's greatest artists. *Thanks to Life* is an outstanding piece of biographical work on a world-class artist whose legacy continues to shape Latin American music and culture." —**Heidi Tinsman, author of *Buying into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Chile and the United States***

**PRAISE FOR**  
*Thanks to Life*

"Finally, a definitive biography of one of the most consequential global artists of the twentieth century." —**Karin Roseblatt, author of *The Science and Politics of Race in Mexico and the United States, 1910-1950***

"This extensive biography provides us with a detailed picture of Parra's life and multiple artistic endeavors. Verba eloquently synthesizes a vast number of archival resources in a text that is rigorously researched, beautifully written, and a joy to read. The book is a real masterpiece." —**Lorna Dillon, author of *Violeta Parra's Visual Art: Painted Songs***

"Ericka Verba's meticulously researched biography of Violeta Parra is a profound and insightful analysis of Chile's perhaps most influential and complex modern artist. As Verba systematically uncovers Parra's life and experiences she leads the reader simultaneously through a comprehensive and engaging narrative of the middle third of Chile's twentieth century." - **Patricia Vilches, Lawrence University**

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Chilean musician and artist Violeta Parra (1917-1967) is an inspiration to generations of artists and activists across the globe. Her music is synonymous with resistance, and it animated both the Chilean folk revival and the protest music movement Nueva Cancion (New Song). Her renowned song "Gracias a la vida" has been covered countless times, including by Joan Baez, Mercedes Sosa, and Kacey Musgraves. A self-taught visual artist, Parra was the first Latin American to have a solo exhibition at the *Museum of Decorative Arts* in the Louvre. In this remarkable biography, Ericka Verba traces Parra's radical life and multifaceted artistic trajectory across Latin America and Europe and on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

Drawing on decades of research, Verba paints a vivid and nuanced picture of Parra's life. From her modest beginnings in southern Chile to her untimely death, Parra was an exceptionally complex and talented woman who exposed social injustice in Latin America to the world through her powerful and poignant songwriting. This examination of her creative, political, and personal life, flaws and all, illuminates the depth and agency of Parra's journey as she invented and reinvented herself in her struggle to be recognized as an artist on her own terms.

# RECENT WORKS



## PUBLICATIONS

- "Violeta Parra: Her Life, Work, and Legacy." In the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Latin American History*. Ed. Stephen Webre. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021.
- "'Une Chilienne à Paris': Violeta Parra, auténtica cosmopolita del siglo veinte." *Artelogie* 13 (2019)
- "Violeta Parra and the Chilean Folk Revival of the 1950s." In Patricia Vilches (ed.), *Mapping Violeta Parra's Cultural Landscapes*. Palgrave Macmillan (2018).
- "Back in the Days When She Sang Mexican Songs on the Radio...Before Violeta Parra was Violeta Parra." In Lorna Dillon (ed.), *Violeta Parra: Life and Work*. Tamesis Books (2017)
- *Catholic Feminism and the Social Question in Chile, 1910-1917*. Edwin Mellen Press, 2003.

## AWARDS, HONORS, AND GRANTS

### National:

National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship, 2013-2014 National Endowment for the Humanities Faculty Award, 2013-2014 (declined) Mellon Fellow in the Humanities, 1988-1990 and 1993-1994 Social Science Research Council, Dissertation Fellowship for Area Studies, 1991-1992 Fulbright Full Grant - Institute of International Education, 1991-1992

### Regional:

E. Bradford Burns Award for service to the Pacific Coast Council on Latin America Studies, 2007 Artist in the Community Grant, Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, 1995

### University-based:

#### California State University, Los Angeles

College of Natural and Social Sciences, Research and Scholarship Grant, Fall 2020

#### California State University, Dominguez Hills

University Leaves and Honors Committee, Sabbatical Leave, Fall 2012 University Research, Scholarship, Creative Activities Awards Program Committee Summer Fellowship, Summer 2009 Center for Teaching and Learning "Travel to Present Research or Scholarly/Creative Project Results Grant," 2006, 2007, and 2009 Emeritus Faculty Association Faculty Legacy Fund Research Grant, Summer 2008

#### University of California, Los Angeles

Center for the Study of Women Graduate Student Travel Grant, 1996 Mabel Wilson Richards Scholarship, 1995-1996 Research Small Grant, Latin American Center, 1993-1994 Dissertation Fellowship, History Department, 1992-1993

#### Brown University

Albert A. Bennett Prize for Excellence in Latin American Studies, 1981 William Leopold Fitcher Premium in Spanish, 1980

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