

# Spain and the Birth of the United States: A California Conversation

April 17 & 18, 2026  
The Huntington in San Marino, California

*In Partnership With:*  
Iberdrola  
Cultural Office of the Embassy of Spain in Washington, DC  
Queen Sofía Spanish Institute  
The USC-Huntington Early Modern Studies Institute

Academic Program Committee

Emily Berquist, California State University, Long Beach

Manuel Lucena Giraldo, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid

María Bárbara Zepeda Cortes, Lehigh University

Friday, April 17

9:30 am Registration, Coffee and pastries

10:00 am Welcome

Sue Juster, Director of Research, Huntington Library

Peter C. Mancall, USC and Linda and Harlan Martens Director, EMSI

10:10 am A California Conversation about Spain and the Birth of the United States

Emily Berquist, California State University, Long Beach

10:30 am *Unveiling Memories*

Rafael Orbegozo, Iberdrola

11:00 am Session 1: Spain and the American Revolution on Land and Sea

José Manuel Guerrero Acosta, Director of “Unveiling Memories”  
project, Iberdrola

Rafael Torres Sanchez, University of Navarra

Moderator: Manuel Covo, University of California, Santa  
Barbara

12:30 pm Break: lunch available for purchase at 1919 Café at The Huntington

1:30 pm Session 2: Spanish California

Steve Hackel, University of California, Riverside

Ruben G. Mendoza, California State University, Monterey Bay

Moderator: Verónica Castillo-Muñoz, University of  
California, Santa Barbara

- 2:30 pm Coffee
- 2:55 pm Session 3: Urbanization and Infrastructure in Spanish North America and the United States  
 James Tejani, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo  
 Manuel Lucena Giraldo, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas  
 Moderator: Jorge Leal, University of California, Riverside
- 3:45 pm Session 4: Music of Spain, Mexico, and California Missions  
 Thornton Baroque Sinfonia, directed by  
 Adam Knight Gilbert, University of Southern California, and Jason Yoshida, University of Southern California
- 4:45 pm End of day one

Saturday, April 18

- 9:30 am Registration, Coffee and pastries
- 10:00 Session 5: Business, Trade, and Migration  
 Fabricio Prado, William & Mary  
 Moderator: Alex Borucki, University of California, Irvine
- 11:00 am Coffee
- 11:15 am Session 6: Biographical Frontiers  
 María Bárbara Zepeda Cortés, Lehigh University  
 Thomas Chavez, University of New Mexico  
 Moderator: Emily Berquist, California State University, Long Beach
- 12:15 pm Break: lunch available for purchase at 1919 Café at The Huntington
- 1:15 pm “Conversatorio” and Final Remarks
- 2:30 pm End of day two

