

SAM VONG

<https://americanhistory.si.edu/about/staff/sam-vong-huangjingsen>

EDUCATION

- 2013 Ph.D., History, Yale University, New Haven, CT
2005 M.A., History, California State University, Los Angeles, CA
2001 B.A., Sociology, University of California, Berkeley, CA
1998 A.A., Pasadena City College
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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Acting Chair of Division of Work & Industry (*Feb 2026–present*)

National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC

- Provide leadership for one of five curatorial divisions, with responsibility for over 600,000 objects, including the earliest known artifacts in the Smithsonian’s holdings; lead division-wide collections planning across 20+ research collections, as well as initiatives to enhance access and discoverability of collections.

Guest Curator (*Sep 2023–present*)

Asian Pacific American Center, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC

- Worked collaboratively with designers, contractors, and a cross-section of Smithsonian colleagues to develop a 1,200 sq. ft. exhibition, *How Can You Forget Me: Filipino American Stories*, that will serve as a pilot for a dedicated gallery at NMAH to exhibit Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander histories.

Curator of Asian Pacific American History (*Oct 2018–present*)

National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC

- Acquired 150+ objects to the museum’s collection, bringing greater visibility to under-represented communities and to highlight the diversity of APA communities.

Distinguished Public Historian in Residence (*Jan 2019–present*)

Department of History, Public History Master’s Program, American University, Washington, DC

- Teach grad seminars *Museums Inside Out* and *Professional Development in Public History*.

Assistant Professor of History (*Aug 2015–Jun 2018*)

Department of History, University of Texas, Austin, TX

- Taught undergraduate courses on the history of Asian Americans and upper-division seminars on international refugee migrations.
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SELECT PUBLICATIONS

- “The 2010s: Democracy, Data, and Dissent,” in *The Promise of a Nation: Commemorating 250 Years of Patriotism, Resilience, and Aspirations from the National Collection* (Apr. 2026).
- “Large trunks discovered in a basement offer a window into the lives and struggles of early Filipino migrants,” in *The Conversation* (Dec. 18, 2025).
- “Girlhood (It’s complicated): An Exhibition Exploring the Politics of Girlhood,” by Kathleen Franz (lead author), Nancy Bercau, Kenneth Cohen, Mireya Loza, and Sam Vong in *The Public Historian* (2021).
- “‘Assets of War’: Strategic Displacements, Population Movements, and the Uses of Refugees during the Vietnam War, 1965–1973,” in *Journal of American Ethnic History* (2020).
- “‘Compassion Gave Us a Special Super Power’: Vietnamese Women Leaders, Reeducation Camps, and the Politics of Family Reunification, 1977–1991,” in *Journal of Women’s History* (2018).