

# Committee on Hispanics

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## *2015-2016 Membership*

Amy Oliver, chair (2017)

Luciana Garbayo (2016)

Vicente Medina (2016)

Ernesto Velasquez (2016)

Natalie P. Cisneros (2017)

Jose Jorge Mendoza (2017)

John W. Kaiser Ortiz (2017)

Kim Diaz (2018)

Cynthia M. Paccacerqua (2018)

Robert E. Sanchez Jr. (2018)

Carlos Alberto Sánchez, newsletter editor

**APA Committee on Hispanics**  
*2016 Report*  
*September 30, 2016*  
*Submitted by Amy A. Oliver*

Membership:

Amy A. Oliver, Chair	American University
Juan J. Colomina	University of Texas
Ana K. Diaz	Montana State University Billings
Kim Diaz	University of Texas El Paso
Lori Gallegos	Texas State University
Robert K. Garcia	Texas A&M University
Vicente Medina	Seton Hall University
Natalie P. Cisneros	Seattle University
John W. Kaiser Ortiz	Millersville University
Jose J. Mendoza	University of Massachusetts Lowell
Robert E. Sanchez, Jr.	Mount St. Mary's University
Carlos A. Sánchez	San Jose State University, Editor <i>Newsletter on Hispanic/Latino Issues</i>

The members of the APA Committee on Hispanics engaged in the following activities during the 2015-2016 academic year.

We organized two sessions and co-sponsored a third for the 2016 APA Eastern Division meeting:

**I. Contemporary Perspectives on Latin American Philosophy**

Chair: Anne Freire Ashbaugh (Towson University)

Speakers:

Ernesto Rosen Velasquez (University of Dayton)  
“Theorizing Latina/o Identity in Politics”

Elena F. Ruiz (Florida Gulf Coast University)  
“Existentialism for Postcolonials: Ambiguity,  
Contradiction, and the Politics of Authenticity”

Andrea Pitts (University of North Carolina at Charlotte)  
“Examining Self-Knowledge and Ignorance through the Writings of Gloria E. Anzaldúa

**II. 43 Disappeared Students: Philosophical Perspectives on Ayotzinapa**

Chair: José Mendoza, University of Massachusetts Lowell

Speakers:

Amy Reed-Sandoval, The University of Texas at El Paso

“Ayotzinapa: An Attack against Latin American Philosophy”

Abstract: Amidst the extensive news coverage across the globe of various elements the Ayotzinapa tragedy, there has been at least some reference to the political activism of the 43 disappeared students of the Raúl Isidro Burgos escuela normal or “teachers college”. Most people in the United States who have followed this story are aware that the students were on their way to a protest that angered key players in the Mexican government. However, there has been considerably less discussion of the political philosophy espoused by the 43 normalistas, and of how that philosophy relates to the ideological underpinning of many other escuelas normales throughout Mexico.

In this paper I aim to present the Ayotzinapa tragedy as, in part, an attack against Latin American philosophy itself. I begin by exploring the early history of escuelas normales in Mexico and, in particular, the role that the late Mexican philosopher José Vasconcelos played in their founding. While Vasconcelos intended for the escuelas normales to play a vital role in the development of a solidified mestizo intellectual culture in Mexico, in accordance with the vision he argued for in *La Raza Cómica*, the escuelas normales quickly became spaces of Indigenous “separatist activism” in places like Guerrero, Chiapas and Oaxaca. Indeed, within the walls of many escuelas normales, Indigenous community leaders collectively formulated a distinctive philosophical vision of Indigenous political autonomy in Mexico. This vision eventually inspired robust and largely successful Indigenous political activism in Oaxaca in the 1990’s. Most recently, the normales have become known as spaces in which a distinctively Latin American approach to Marxist philosophy and activism has developed (as evidenced by the work of many students of the Raúl Isidro Burgos escuela normal). I shall, in this paper, explore these philosophical systems at play in many of Mexico’s escuelas normales in order to argue that in addition to the unquestionable moral horror that is the disappearance of these 43 students, the Ayotzinapa tragedy also constituted a form of violence against Latin American philosophy.

Sharon Murillo, The University of Texas at El Paso

“Cultivating Awareness through Philosophical Dialogue with Children and Youth Post-Ayotzinapa”

Abstract: Rarely does a news-cycle go by in which the widespread corruption, poverty, war on drugs and impunity for wrongdoers currently happening in Mexico goes unmentioned. In the face of this ongoing turmoil, many citizens of Mexico—particularly young people—generally feel that nothing can be done to change their broken political system. And yet, Ayotzinapa has inspired a

global youth movement condemning the injustices afflicting Mexico. Why has this happened? And how can we continue to create conditions in which Mexican youth feel empowered to question the grave injustices that surround them?

In this paper I will respond, at least in part, to both questions. In response to the first question, I begin with brief discussion of the global political youth movement that the Ayotzinapa tragedy has inspired. In particular, I will call upon some of my own experiences as a youth organizer for “Ayotzinapa Sin Fronteras” in El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. Then, in response to the second question, I will discuss ways that educators can cultivate political awareness for children and youth through Philosophy for Children (P4C) post-Ayotzinapa.

Gareth Matthews, a Philosophy for Children pioneer, demonstrated that children have rationality and curiosity that allows them to explore philosophical problems of existence, knowledge and justice. Using Matthews’ Philosophy and the Young Child I will argue that we tend to underestimate children’s philosophical abilities and sense of justice. Furthermore, if we start to bring philosophical dialogue into the K-12 schools, we can open the door to dialoguing with them about social justice issues such as Ayotzinapa. I end by recounting one of my experiences dialoguing about Ayotzinapa in a Spanish-language Philosophy for Children class in El Paso, Texas, in order to provide a concrete example of how P4C can be used to cultivate such political awareness in children and youth around issues as grave as Ayotzinapa.

Luis Rubén Díaz, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana  
“Addressing Ayotzinapa: Using Dussel’s Analytic Method for Establishing an Ethical Framework for Social Movements”

Abstract: On October 26, 2014, policemen attacked student teachers, “normalistas”, from the Raúl Isidro Burgos Teachers College in Ayotzinapa while they were traveling. During this attack, the policemen kidnapped forty-three normalistas, and allegedly handed them over to a local criminal organization, Guerreros Unidos. After three months of investigation, the federal government of Mexico concluded that members of Guerreros Unidos killed and incinerated the normalistas due to protests that were affecting their illegal income. However, due to several inconsistencies in the investigation, the parents of the normalistas and several social organizations rejected it and demanded justice. Yet, their calls for justice went unanswered. The inability of the federal government to search for justice, along with the accumulation of outrage in Mexico’s population, brought about a social movement. This movement started with a demand for answers to the whereabouts of the normalistas, but it has progressed to a call for a new constituent assembly.

In this paper, I propose an ethical framework to facilitate the critical consensus required for a new constituent assembly. In order to build my argument, first I will show that despite their good intentions, most groups in the Ayotzinapa social movement lack the ethical tools to reach a consensus with other groups that do not share their worldview. Second, I will show that we can use Enrique Dussel's analectic method to solve this problem. Finally, in cases wherein disagreements persist, despite using the analectic method, I propose to take the ethical command of preserving the life of the other as the ultimate criterion to solve controversies.

The Committee on Hispanics also co-sponsored a panel on Jorge J.E. Gracia's thought with the Committee on Inclusiveness:

**Race, Ethnicity, and Latino Identity: A Conversation with Jorge Gracia**

Arranged by the APA Committee on Inclusiveness in the Profession and the APA Committee on Hispanics

Chair: Susana Nuccetelli (St. Cloud State University)

Speakers: Ivan Jaksic (Stanford University)

“Working with Jorge Gracia”

Steve Tammelleo (University of San Diego)

“The Social Construction of Race and Ethnicity: A Reply to Jorge Gracia”

Naomi Zack (University of Oregon)

“Critical Insights about the Role of Culture in Philosophy from Discussion of Gracia's Work”

Commentator: Jorge Gracia (University at Buffalo–SUNY)

“A Response to Jaksic, Tammelleo, and Zack”

Carlos Alberto Sánchez, editor of the *Newsletter on Hispanic/Latino Issues*, published the following issues:

**Volume 15, number 1 (fall 2015)**

**From the Editor**

Carlos Alberto Sánchez

**Call for Submissions**

**Announcements**

**Articles**

Julio Covarrubias, “Report on the 2015 Fleishhacker Chair Lecture Series and Latin American Philosophy Conference”

Grant J. Silva, “Why the Struggle Against Coloniality Is Paramount to Latin American Philosophy”

Elizabeth Millán Brusslan, "Philosophy Born of Colonial Struggle: One Theme or the Whole Story of the Latin American Tradition?"

**Volume 15, number 2 (spring 2016)**

**From the Guest Editor**

Roberto Sirvent

**Announcement**

**Call for Submissions**

**Interviews**

Interview with Maria Lugones

Interview with Manuel Vargas

**2015 Essay Prize in Latin American Thought**

"Skillful Coping and the Routine of Surviving: Isasi-Díaz on the Importance of Identity to Everyday Knowledge," by Lori Gallegos de Castillo

**Articles**

"'Immigrant' or 'Exiled'? Reconceiving the Desplazada/os of Latin American and Latina/o Philosophy," Amy Reed-Sandoval

"Gilles Deleuze and Gloria Anzaldúa: A Matter of Differences," Robyn Henderson-Espinoza

"Existentialism for Postcolonials: Fanon and the Politics of Authenticity," Elena Ruiz

"The Philosophical Gift of Brown Folks: Mexican American Philosophy in the United States," José-Antonio Orosco

**Book Reviews**

*Debating Race, Ethnicity, and Latino Identity: Jorge J. E. Gracia and His Critics*, reviewed by Stephanie Rivera Berruz

*The Un/Making of Latina/o Citizenship: Culture, Politics, and Aesthetics*, reviewed by Veronica Sandoval

*Poetics of the Flesh*, reviewed by Elías Ortega-Aponte

*Haydée Santamaría, Cuban Revolutionary: She Led By Transgression*, reviewed by Daniel Camacho

Members of the Committee on Hispanics reviewed numerous essays for the 2016 APA Prize in Latin American Thought, and provided feedback to those who submitted essays. This year's prize was awarded to:

L. Sebastian Purcell (SUNY Cortland), "Neltilitzli and the Good Life: On Aztec Ethics"

The committee is planning sessions at the 2017 Eastern APA in Baltimore and the Pacific APA in Seattle:

Eastern:

Author Meets Critics Session on Mariana Ortega's *In-Between: Latina Feminist Phenomenology, Multiplicity, and the Self*:

Moderator: Cynthia Paccacerqua, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Critic: Linda Martín Alcoff, Hunter College

Critic: Gail Weiss, George Washington University

Author: Mariana Ortega, John Carroll University

Author Meets Critics Session on Alejandro Vallega's *Latin American Philosophy: From Identity to Radical Exteriority*:

Critic: Ernesto Rosen Velasquez, University of Dayton

Critic: Eduardo Mendieta, Penn State University

Critic: Linda Alcoff, Hunter College

Author: Alejandro Vallega, University of Oregon

Pacific:

Panel Title: Book Symposium

José-Antonio Orosco's *Toppling the Melting Pot: Immigration and Multiculturalism in American Pragmatism*

Chair: Alejandro Santana, University of Portland

Speaker: José Jorge Mendoza, University of Massachusetts Lowell

Speaker: Natalie Cisneros, Seattle University

Speaker: Grant J. Silva, Marquette University

Author: José-Antonio Orosco, Oregon State University

With the assistance of Ernesto R. Velasquez (University of Dayton), we expanded the number of listserv recipients.

I look forward to an active 2017 for the Committee on Hispanics.