

Committee on Hispanics

2014-2015 Membership

Amy Oliver, chair (2017)

Natalie P. Cisneros (2017)

Luciana Garbayo (2016)

Vicente Medina (2016)

Jose Jorge Mendoza (2017)

John W. Kaiser Ortiz (2017)

Elena Ruiz (2015)

Grant Silva (2015)

Ernesto Velasquez (2016)

Rocio Zambrana (2015)

Carlos Alberto Sánchez, newsletter editor

APA Committee on Hispanics
2015 Report
September 30, 2015
Submitted by Amy A. Oliver

Membership:

Amy A. Oliver, Chair	American University (2017)
Elena F. Ruiz	Florida Gulf Coast University (2015)
Grant J. Silva	Marquette University (2015)
Rocio Zambrana	University of Oregon (2015)
Luciana S. Garbayo	University of Texas El Paso (2016)
Vicente Medina	Seton Hall University (2016)
Ernesto Rosen Velasquez	University of Dayton (2016)
Natalie P. Cisneros	Seattle University (2017)
John W. Kaiser Ortiz	Millersville University (2017)
Jose J. Mendoza	University of Massachusetts Lowell (2017)
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 2014-2015 academic year.

We planned two sessions for the 2016 APA Eastern Division meeting:

I. January 7, 2:00-5:00: **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. January 9, 9:00-11:00: **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 Cósmica*, 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 is also co-sponsoring a panel on Jorge J.E. Gracia's thought with the Committee on Inclusiveness.

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

Volume 14, number 1 (fall 2014)

From the Editor

Carlos Alberto Sánchez

ARTICLES

Stefan Gandler

The Quadruple Modern Ethos: Critical Theory in the Americas

Alejandro Tomasini Bassols

Luis Villoro, the Tractatus, and Analytical Philosophy in Mexico

Amy Reed-Sandoval

The Oaxaca Philosophy for Children Initiative as Place-Based Philosophy: Why Context Matters in Philosophy for Children

CALL FOR PAPERS

CONTRIBUTORS

Volume 14, number 2 (spring 2015)

From the Editor

Carlos Alberto Sánchez

Announcements

Article

"Forging *El Mundo Zurdo*: Sexual and Linguistic *Atravesados* in Gloria Anzaldúa's Rio Grande Valley," Marianna Alessandri

2014 APA Prize in Latin American Thought

"Should a Concept of Truth Be Attributed to Nahuatl Thought? Preserving 'the Colonial Difference' between Concepts of the West and Nahua Philosophy," Philip T. L. Mack

Contributors

Members of the Committee on Hispanics reviewed numerous essays for the 2015 APA Prize in Latin American Thought, and provided feedback to those who submitted essays. This year's prize was awarded to:

Lori Gallegos (Stony Brook University)

"Skillful Coping and the Routine of Surviving: Isasi-Diaz on the Importance of Identity to Everyday Knowledge"

She will present her paper at the 2016 Pacific APA in San Francisco. Her essay also will be published in the *Newsletter on Hispanic/Latino Issues*.

The committee is planning sessions at the 2016 Central APA in Chicago and the Pacific APA in San Francisco.

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

I look forward to an active 2016 for the Committee on Hispanics.