

COMMITTEE ON HISPANICS REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 10/05/2010

Submitted by

Eduardo Mendieta

The present composition of the committee is the following:

Committee Chair

P-Eduardo Mendieta (2011)
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Associate Chair

P-Mitchell E. Avila (2011)

Committee Members

C-Greg Gilson (2011)
S-Renzo Llorente (2011)
E-Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2012)
P-Carlos A. Sanchez (2012)
E-Roderick M. Stewart (2012)
S-Michael Da Silva (2013)
E-Elizabeth Millan Zaibert (2013)
C-Bernardo Canteñs (*ex-officio*) (*Newsletter on Hispanic/Latino Issues*)

The Editor of the *Newsletter on Hispanic/Latino Issues* serves in an *ex officio* capacity on this Committee.

I. Sessions at the Division Meetings:

Over the last year, I worked closely with members of the committee to organize the following two sessions. One session is devoted to the emergence, development and impact of positivism in Latin America, with a special focus on the Mexican revolution. The second panel is organized by Elizabeth Millan, and concerns the developments of aesthetics in Latin American philosophy. In collaboration with a younger scholar, and the winner of the APA Prize in Latin American Thought, Jose Jorge Mendoza, a session on immigrant rights is being hosted at the Central Division Meeting of the APA. Presently, I am coordinating a panel for the Pacific APA on similar issues.

II-G. APA Committee Session: Latin American Positivism Arranged by the APA Committee on Hispanics

9:00 a.m.-Noon

Chair: Gregory F. Pappas (Texas A&M University)

Tuesday Morning, II-A to II-H

Main Program **17**

Speakers: Meri Clark (Western New England College)

"The Development of Latin American Positivism,
Compared"

Oscar R. Marti (California State University–
Northridge)

"Why Positivism?"

Gregory D. Gilson (University of Texas–Pan
American)

"Logical Positivism and Latin American Positivism"

Eduardo Mendieta (Stony Brook University–State
University of New York)

"From Mexican Positivism to Liberation

Philosophy: The Decline of Positivism and the
Mexican Revolution"

Winner of the APA Prize in Latin American Thought

Speaker: Jose Mendoza (University of Oregon)

Title: "The Political Philosophy of Undocumented
Immigration"

**III-I. APA Committee Session: How Does the Latin American
Tradition of Aesthetics Challenge Mainstream
Conceptions of Aesthetics?**

Arranged by the APA Committee on Hispanics

2:00-5:00 p.m.

Chair: Elizabeth Millán (DePaul University)

Speakers: Amy Oliver (American University)

"Difference, Différence, Diferencia: Hispanic
Counter-Themes in Aesthetics"

Hugo Moreno (University of Western Ontario)

"José Gaos and Alain Badiou on the Philosophical
Significance of Artworks: A Defense of the
Humanistic Scheme"

Omar Rivera (Southwestern University)

"Aesthetics on Trial—Art and Political Action in
Mariategui's Thought and Lineage"

II. Newsletter

The newsletter, which I helped establish a decade ago, has been an important venue for Latino/Hispanic scholars to remain informed about new philosophical work by and for Latino/Hispanic, to publish review essay, commentaries, and exchanges. The essay selected for the APA Prize on "Latin American Thought" is also published there. I continue to work closely with Bernie Castens to expand our pool of contributors.

A significant change for the future of the Newsletter is that we have decided to have an Editor and an Associate Editor. The Editor will train the associate editor and in this way facilitate a transition to the new editor, without too much of time lag, and above all, looses in content and overseeing of contributions. The associate

editor will be Carlos Sanchez, a young Mexican-American Philosopher, who was a past winner of our APA Prize in Latin American Philosophy, and a recently tenure professor.

We continue to make sure that everything we published is peer reviewed anonymously. This was one of our goals when we establish the Newsletter, for we want to make sure that what is published there can count as a publication on your c.v. I am glad to report that our newsletter has a substantive offering of different, high quality, texts: essays, commentaries, and review essays. I am also glad to report that the Newsletter has become a vehicle through which to recruit or socialize younger Latino/Hispanic scholars into the profession and membership in the committee. I identified a group of such young and upcoming Latino scholars and have assured their contributions to the Newsletter.

This last spring contents of the newsletter reflect how we sought to reach out across different philosophical tradition and APA constituencies. The essay on Gracia's book were presented at last year's APA panels, but underwent substantive revisions. Here are the contents:

Articles

- Towards a Latin American Political Philosophy of/for the United States: From the Discovery of America to Immigrant Encounters
Grant Silva
- Is There an Ethics of Racial Political Solidarity?
Falguni A. Sheth
- What Is Interpretation? Images and Thoughts about Philosophy and Art
John M. Carvalho
- A Philosophical Hermeneutics of Visual Art: On Gracia's Images of Thought, Philosophical Interpretations of Carlos Estévez's Art
Mariana Ortega
- The Philosophical Interpretation of Visual Art: Response to Mariana Ortega and John Carvalho
Jorge J. E. Gracia

Book Reviews

- The Existential Turn in African American Philosophy: Disclosing the Existential Phenomenological Foundations of *Black Bodies, White Gazes: The Continuing Significance of Race*
Reviewed by Clevis Headley
- George Yancy: *Black Bodies, White Gazes: The Continuing Significance of Race*
Reviewed by David Clinton Wills

For the record, I want to express my special gratitude to Bernardo J. Castens, who has edited the Newsletter so diligently and effectively. I also want to acknowledge Carlos Sanchez for assuming the role of associate editor.

III. APA PRIZE FOR BEST ESSAY IN "LATIN AMERICAN THOUGHT"

This last summer we selected the winner of the APA prize on "Latin American Thought" after we had to move back the deadline, due to the lack of sufficient submissions. This last summer we had two submissions. Fortunately, the winner was an extremely solid contribution, from a young Ph.D. candidate of Mexican background, who is finishing his degree at the University of Oregon—just like last year's winner. The essay will be published in the next issue of the Newsletter. The winner is Jose Jorge Mendoza, and his essay is titled "The Political Philosophy of Undocumented Immigration"

I do have to be sanguine and acknowledge that we—the committee and myself—have to do a better job of publicizing the prize. It is my anecdotal sense that we never get more than four submissions, and at the most, we get three. This is surely not a reflection of the kind of work that is being done out there. We have exchange e-mails with the national office about how to best publicize this. I circulate the CFS through our APA list-serve, and send it to all my colleagues who may have graduate students working on Latin American and Latino Philosophical issues. I circulate it to several other societies, and even sent it to colleagues in Europe and Canada, where I know some Latino philosopher working on Latino and Latin American Philosophical Issues.

I contacted SPEP and SAAP to see if they can announce these prizes in their respective websites. I will continue to send out special requests to key faculty at Ph.D. granting programs to encourage their students to submit their work for the prize.

IV. INCREASE THE ENDOWMENT/FUND FOR THE NEWSLETTER

Two of my main goals when I came on board were to increase visibility of the original work Latino/Hispanic philosophers are doing by acknowledging through such dispositifs as the prize, but also and concurrently, to increase contributions from our members to the fund that underwrites the prize. I continue to plan a massive fund raising, which I hope to get to in the Spring, to encourage our committee members and other Latino/Hispanic members to add to their membership fee an extra 30 to 50 dollars, especially ear marked for the essay. I like to see if we can increase the purse of the prize to 500 dollars, and eventually to have two different prizes. One for the best essay and the other for the best book on "Latino/Hispanic Philosophy."

Another way in which we can both support and give greater credibility to the work of the committee is by organizing a mini-conference on the future of American Philosophy in light of the contributions that "Latino/Hispanic" as well as "Asian and Asian American" philosophers have been making and will continue to make.

V. TASKS AHEAD

The committee has been busy on different fronts: the division meetings, the newsletter, the prizes and creating community with other committees.

I have presently identified four immediate major goals that I will work on assiduously with the other committee members—goals that are carried over from past years, but which remain vital and recurring needs of our mission:

1. Expand and sustain the Newsletter
2. Fundraise to increase the purse of the APA Essay Prize
3. Do more and better outreach and promotion of the Prize (SPEP, SAAP, and the American Philosophies Forum)
4. Write a grant proposal for a mini-conference on “Latino” and “Asian American Philosophy”