

## **COMMITTEE ON HISPANICS REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING**

**Monday, November 7, 2011**

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) (co-editor of *Newsletter on Hispanic/Latino Issues*)

**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 analysis of the relationship between Jorge Luis Borges' work and philosophy. Borges is probably the most important and influential of Latin America's writers, but also one of the most important and provocative philosophical writers. This panel was organized by Elizabeth Millan, a committee member. The second is a panel I commissioned for this upcoming APA meeting on "Latin American Feminisms." I asked Cynthia Paccacerqua to organize for the committee for I am aware that she has been doing work on this important topic.

### **III-J. APA Committee Session: Borges and Philosophy**

Arranged by the APA Committee on Hispanics

2:00-5:00 p.m.

Chair: Speakers:

Amy Oliver (American University)

Jorge J. E. Gracia (University at Buffalo–State University of New York)

"The Presence of the Absence in Interpretation: Destefanis and Celma on Borges"  
Marcelo Sabates (Kansas State University)  
"Three Versions of Borges"  
Alejandro Vallega (University of Oregon)  
"The Obscene Idiom of Imagination: Borges as a Latin American Thinker"

### **VIII-I. APA Committee Session: Latina Feminisms and Latin American Thought Prize Essay**

Arranged by the APA Committee on Hispanics

1:30-4:30 p.m.

Chair: Cynthia M. Paccacerqua (The University of Texas– Pan American)

Topic: Latina Feminisms

Speakers:

Edwina Barvosa (University of California–Santa Barbara)

"Self-Transformation as Political Struggle: Gloria Anzaldúa's 'Mestiza Way' in Philosophical Context"

Rita Alfonso (University of California–Berkeley)

"Queer Spaces, Racialized Marks"

Elena Ruiz-Aho (Florida Gulf Coast University)

"Latin American Feminisms and the Continental Tradition"

Topic: Latin American Thought Prize Essay

Speaker: John Kaiser Ortiz (Bowling Green State University)

"Octavio Paz and the Universal Problem of Mexican Solitude"

## **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 Casteñs and Carlos Sanchez to expand our pool of contributors.

As was reported last year we 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. This last year, Casteñs and Sanchez invited a colleague to guest edit a special issue dedicated to the work of the "American Association of Mexican Philosophers." This is an important organization that bridges the work of Mexican philosophers and US philosophers of Latino/Hispanic background.

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.

### **APA NEWSLETTER ON HISPANIC/LATINO ISSUES, VOL. 10, NO. 2 (SPRING 2011)**

FROM THE GUEST EDITOR, EDUARDO GARCÍA-RAMÍREZ

FROM THE CO-EDITOR, CARLOS ALBERTO SÁNCHEZ

ARTICLES

JOSÉ JORGE MENDOZA "The Political Philosophy of Unauthorized Immigration"

CARLOS MONTEMAYOR "Engagement and Universality in Latin American Philosophy"

EDUARDO GARCÍA-RAMÍREZ "On the Invisibility Problem of Latin American Philosophy"

GUILLERMO HURTADO "Paths of Ontology"

MIGUEL ÁNGEL FERNÁNDEZ "Wright on the Cognitive Role of Entitlements"

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

This last summer, like 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 is despite the fact that I sent multiple announcements through many venues. I used the APA list serve. I also sent it to colleagues who I know are at Graduate Programs. I sent it to colleagues both in Mexico and England, who have contacts with scholars who are interested in Latin American philosophy. We still only had one submission. The committee deliberated on whether to consider only one submission and grant the prize if the submission was worthy of the honor. We agreed to consider one submission and to grant the prize if it rose to the level of a winning essay. The committee unanimously agreed to grant the prize. The winning submission was by John Kaiser Ortiz. His essay is entitled: "Octavio Paz and the Universal Problem of Mexican Solitude"

Once again, like last year, I have to acknowledge that we –the committee and myself—have to work harder at publicizing the prize. I think we never get more than four submissions, and generally we get below four. This last year we got only one. This is surely not a reflection of the kind of work that is being done out there. 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 requested that the Inter-American Philosophy Journal (a web-based journal hosted at Texas A&M University) post the call for submissions on their website.

#### **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 have used the apa list serve to encourage members of the committee to contribute \$ 50 to the fund for the essay prize.

#### **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 Philosopher”