

INTRODUCTION

Jason Thomas Wozniak
Teachers College, Columbia University

David Backer
City University of New York

In the pages that follow the reader will encounter a question and five responses to it, generated roughly over a six month time period. The papers collected here are initial attempts at addressing the question “What is Latin American Philosophy of Education?”, a question which is meant to always be asked again, and taken up from different perspectives at different times, in different locales, by different people. Beginning with our first volume, it is the hope of the Latin American Philosophy of Education Society (LAPES) that our journal *Lápiz* becomes a hospitable “site” where the question(s) about Latin American Philosophy of Education (LAPE) can find a home, a place to settle and be ruminated on, by diverse groups of people, from diverse walks of life.

It seems more appropriate to introduce the reader to the origin of the question which led to the creation of this volume, as well as the process by which the responses to this question came to be included here, instead of introducing the articles through lengthy summation. The articles speak for themselves, and put on the table a whole new set of questions concerning LAPE which undoubtedly will call the reader into thinking about education in novel ways.

LAPES was founded in the late (North American) summer of 2013 with the belief that the English speaking world needs to be introduced to, and in discussion with, LAPE in more significant ways that it has been in the past, and is currently. But despite either having lived in Latin America for significant amounts of time, or being originally from the region, and even though all the founders of LAPES have worked within the field of education in Latin America as theoreticians and practicing teachers, none of us would feel comfortable declaring with any certainty what LAPE is. Most of our initial conversations about LAPE therefore, were filled with a lingering doubt: Just what is it that we are talking about when we talk about LAPE? It seemed only natural then that our first annual symposium address the question to which this volume is devoted.

With little expectation or desire to find one definitive answer to

our lingering question, we convened our first annual LAPES symposium in late 2013 at Columbia University in New York City. The symposium featured what we hope become trademarks of the manner in which LAPES conducts research. Symposium sessions were structured to allow time (each presenter was given two hours of presentation and discussion time) for the slow process of simultaneous philosophizing and community building. What we tried to cultivate at our symposium, and what we wish this journal will foster, is what many in the Philosophy for Children field in both Latin America and abroad refer to as “communities of inquiry.” During our symposium authors presented, audiences questioned, and collectively we inquired into LAPE through extensive dialogue and debate. It is our hope that this current volume prolongs these debates and nurtures further philosophizing amongst communities of inquiry engaging with philosophy of education questions.

If one thing is made clear in this volume of *Lápiz* it is that even though we may not know how to answer the question we ask, we do know that asking the question is generative. Inquiry into this question engenders discussions and debates too often ignored, and long overdue, in the English speaking philosophy of education community. Simply by asking the question, “What is Latin American Philosophy of Education?” for example, we broach the supposition that philosophy of education comes from somewhere, but also that ideas about education travel in time and space in non-linear, and often circular, manners. The articles collected here address this “somewhere.” Philosophy of education may be produced in localities, for instance, though it is not necessarily delimited by those localities, as Alcoff reminds us. Rocha proposes that philosophy of education may come from a particular culture’s folkloric phenomenology. Philosophy of education may come, if we concur with Lopez, from the anthropological machine which imposes education on colonized peoples. And we should also remember, as Mendieta suggests, that philosophy of education is not just a product of place, but is also periodized. Finally, it could be that philosophy of education’s locality originates from a “collision zone”, as Duarte argues in the epilogue. The contributors to this journal thus put on the table ways of thinking situational philosophy, folkloric phenomenology, the an-

thropological machine's ties to colonization, an often neglected philosophy of education cannon, and "originary" thinking, through the lens of LAPE.

It should be reinforced that the papers presented here bear the marks not only of the authors who composed the works, but also the traces of the questions and conversations that enriched two days of intense discussion on LAPE. We can only hope that our authors' contributions, and the marks and traces made on these contributions by our symposium's participants, are the first of many brushstrokes which illustrate an ever changing LAPE kaleidoscope receiving its contours and colors from diverse communities of inquiry in Latin America, and around the globe.