

CAPIC Response to the APA and the Hoffman Report

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Attachments: CAPIC Response to APA Hoff~1.pdf (490 KB)

CAPIC Program Members,

As most of you are aware, the American Psychological Association (APA) is currently holding its annual convention. A great deal of attention is properly being directed to the recently released report of its independent review dated July 2, 2015 (generally known as the Hoffman Report), and APA's response to it. The Hoffman Report asked whether APA officials colluded with government officials to permit abusive interrogations and essentially facilitate torture. The Hoffman Report documents, with great detail, how this was in fact true.

CAPIC has released a formal statement in response to the APA's Hoffman report. Below is a summary of our CAPIC response. The [full CAPIC statement](#), which was unanimously approved by the full CAPIC Board, is posted on our website under [>About CAPIC>Publications...](#), along with [related statements from the CPA](#), and the [Hoffman Report](#) itself.

We are encouraged by the [steps already taken by the APA membership](#). We also encourage all our members to stay involved to ensure APA truly represents its membership, and its policies reflect its values.

Summary of CAPIC Response to the APA Hoffman Report

CAPIC is extremely troubled by the actions by APA leadership to essentially facilitate torture. They are in direct violation of our core principles, violate the public's trust in our profession, and undermine our ability to serve our patients. It is also unnerving how fully the APA leadership intentionally, repeatedly and dismissively misled its own members and the public regarding its position, even after direct inquiries. This second violation deeply undermines our trust in the APA and its ability to lead our profession.

However, CAPIC also reaffirms statements by the California Psychology Association (CPA) and others that the APA leadership's position does not represent our ethics and values, and those of the overwhelming majority of psychologists.

CAPIC also greatly appreciates the actions of the current leadership at the APA, particularly Drs. Susan McDaniel & Nadine Kaslow, for calling for the internal investigation that led to the Hoffman report, for acknowledging the two core findings of the report, and for seeking guidance from its members as APA charts a new course forward. We are also encouraged by the recent statement by Dr. Debora Bell regarding the Commission on Accreditation (CoA). We must work together to regain the public's trust both in our ability to help our patients and in our profession generally, caused by these significant lapses in judgment by the APA leadership.

CAPIC calls on the APA leadership to change the culture at APA. For too long, a culture of exclusivity has existed within APA, coupled with a lack of transparency and an unwillingness to hear dissent. Such a culture allowed the APA leadership to take the path which led to the serious

violations laid out in the Hoffman report.

The recent steps by Drs. Susan McDaniel & Nadine Kaslow to communicate more frequently with APA members and to seek their feedback are key first steps to ending that culture, and we applaud them for that. Beyond soliciting feedback, an essential step in leadership, transparency and accountability will be to also communicate the considerations, decisions, and actions resulting from that feedback. Steps and structures will be needed to ensure that changes are not simply based on an individual leader's position but are supported and sustained by institutional procedures and safeguards.

We believe that better communications and feedback with the APA membership will reflect a common desire for greater inclusivity and diversity within the psychology doctoral program student body by supporting diverse educational and training models, which CAPIC itself supports. Research supports the inherent value of having professionals who reflect the underserved and high-need communities we serve. This not only encourages public trust but it also demonstrates a culturally competent and ethical profession truly serves the public interest.

We also believe that the inherent conflict of interest that appears to exist between APA and its accrediting arm, the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) must be closely examined, and with transparency. While the APA has been promoting a single path to licensure, the CoA has been debating the addition of a standard of accreditation for doctoral academic programs that would mandate that APA-accredited academic programs send their students only to APA-accredited internship programs. What is even more objectionable about these arrangements is the fact there are currently not nearly enough APA-accredited internships for the clinical psychology students who would be required to obtain one. The secondary consequences of these arrangements must be openly examined, as they do a disservice to our profession by negatively impacting the diversity of our profession and our ability to serve communities in need. We are pleased that CoA has formed a workgroup on these issues, and look forward to its findings and the discussions that arise from them.

In summary, in addition to addressing the direct and egregious violations laid out in the Hoffman report, we believe this is an ideal time for APA to change its culture and make it truly inclusive to the whole of the psychology profession. It is also time to re-examine APA's relationship to CoA and for CoA to scrupulously avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest in the positions it takes and the policies it makes.

Again, the [full CAPIC statement](#) is posted on our website under [>About CAPIC>Publications..](#) [Related statements from the CPA](#), and the [Hoffman Report](#) itself are also found there.

Stay tuned. Stay involved. And thanks to each of you for your service to our profession.

Many thanks!

René

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2015 CAPIC Board Elections:

The elections results are in!

Visit our [Board Elections](#) page for details.

Thanks to everyone who voted and to everyone who ran!

2015 CAPIC Online Internship Match:

Post-Clearinghouse is now open on the [CAPIC website](#).

The D&D Digital website is now closed. Contact the CAPIC office for match issues.

2016 CAPIC Online Internship Match:

Our 2016 match schedule will be available in mid-August.

Registration will open on the CAPIC website on September 15th.

Next Quarterly CAPIC Board Meeting: September 18-19 (@ JFKU in Pleasant Hill)

The open session for CAPIC members is on Friday from 1 to 3 pm.

Members may come in person or join us by phone.

Call in info and more details are on the [CAPIC website](#).

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