**Notes from Student Town Hall on Hoffman Report – August 2015, Convention**

Scribed by Candice Crowell

* Introductions
* Discussion of DD guidelines
* Passed out “You Asked for It; Here it is” handout
* Including presenters, staff, and APAGS committee, approximately 55 people attended

Initial sentiments:

* Feeling nervous, a lot of questions about what will happen, wanting people to be held accountable.
* Wondering if they should be polite, can we be real? Involved in despicable human rights violations, and leadership has been sweeping it under the rug. Retirement announcements are not addressing the reason they’re being asked to retire.
* Sweeping thing under the rug; ethics seminars being cancelled is upsetting.
* Noted that there are people who are not students in this space, and feels intimidating.
* No problem with non-students being here, because they want to be heard by all people.
* Two non-students spoke about the reason they showed up, and they want to hear from students and what students need.
* Small minority would like it to be a student-only space, majority don’t mind other attendees.
* Hoping to work with military groups and feeling frustrated about what will happen to people in the military who already feel hesitant to seek services.
* Working with marginalized groups and concerned about what this report means for them and their impression of psychologists.
* Student leadership in other divisions wondering about how to answer student concerns and questions about why we should stay in APA.
* Profession is doomed if people who value social justice walk away.
* Identifies with disappointment and also disappointment feels like a lack of fire and passion. It feels passive. Wondering about how harsh reactions should be.
* Needs more than APA covering itself. Needs a kind of reckoning, rather than a passive response. Wants more than apathy.
* Wants to see more transparency. Just took ethics, and felt thrown off by first seeing about this in the NY Times. Feels like some people can “get around” the ethics code, whereas students and others cannot. Needs accountability.
* Questioning how much she identifies with the organization, and connecting that to the emotional response. Doesn’t trust herself to be part of the organization. Feeling disconnected.
* Scientists feeling disengaged already, and this may be an out for theme to discontinue membership.
* Been treated like a PR nightmare, rather than something we need to change. What can I do, and how can we move forward.
* Wanted transparency, and does not feel like she’s gotten it.
* Confusion about whether to work within or change outside of it. Torture as one element, devaluing Black and Brown lives as another element. Hasn’t been talk about the latter as much. Toolkit to talk about this for campus reps.
* A lot of discussion has focused on profession, but many unnamed people have been impacted. What are we going to do for them?
* Already an uphill battle for people to seek mental health treatment, so a big loss is that people are turned off by psychology and will not seek treatment. APA has not been transparent enough. Name the ways we’ve fucked up and say what we’re doing. There’s no way to regain trust unless there is a way to be genuine.
* Being a different points in the process of understanding and digesting this. People have been playing fast and loose with the ethics code. Own our privilege and think about what we can do. We’re not just lowly students. Students showed up at council.
* We had that anger in the office. Staff feels frustrated, angry, and constricted about how they could express that.
* Action steps shared.
* What do students want, need.
* Feeling torn as student leaders.

**APA Town Hall Meeting Notes – August 2015, Convention**

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* Asked to rise, as helpful people: Archie Turner, Ann Spring, and Jessie Raven, David Ogden and Jeanie Reed, and non-recused board members, non-recused CLT members, governance staff, non-recused members of executive management group, and colleagues Steven Reisner, Steven Schultz, Dan, Scott Church, Ellen Garrison. Members of council asked to rise. David Hoffman, Danielle Carter, and colleagues from Sidley Austin.
* Blue Ribbon Panel to review ethics policies and procedures.
* Language change for resolution on torture to require no participation by psychologists.
* Priority on ensuring human rights was lost. Sincerely apologize for the actions and lack of oversight. Everyone deserved better.
* We need to tend to our culture, behavior, through transparency, civility, and caring for military psychologists.
* Highlighting good works done by APA.
* Trust has been lost and reputation has been damaged.

*Individual comments follow:*

* Apologized and we need to do more, APA is not monolithic, deep faith in our selves as an ethical discipline, heroes within APA need to be acknowledged, return to our ethical roots
* ECP coalition for the advancement of psychology, influence APA culture towards transparency, accountability, and integrity. Focused and even tempered persistence, 400 responses, 250 from ECPS, finalize a letter to interested stakeholders
* Looking at their division of what they did and didn’t do; see the same people in the org over the past 40 years, people who’ve known each other protected each other, how can we make the org open and easy to move up into
* Increase communication by sharing minutes online
* Felt disgusted with the report, some facts, some opinion, and some narrative, people were maligned without the opportunity to respond
* There’s a lot of data in addition to the tone, so people are encouraged to look at it. People have had the opportunity to respond on the APA website and have shared responses on listservs.
* Focus on the facts, as well as the good APA has done, people involved are more than their worst moment, not think about retribution and vindictiveness, but move forward in a positive way
* In the spirit of looking forward, think about the CEO search committee have a certain number of critics; hear people saying we shouldn’t have retribution, but we are deeply compromised when a person remains. As far as people not knowing things, I personally delivered information to the board. CEO search will need a diverse committee, including peace psychologists.
* Responding to the commentary about it being a narrative, was on council at the time and felt Hoffman captured the experience of what it was like; for the past 10 years, the problem was also that we had presidents and boards aware, without organizational self-examination to figure out the truth and better ourselves.
* Process of reflection, learn and reflect and grow from this to build an organization, committed to APA; gave a shout out to state orgs
* As a White woman, thinking about reinjuring people who have been harmed by torture or represent marginalized groups in this conversation. “remember all the times when I wasn’t racist?” approach to this town hall.
* One of three co-authors of the member referendum, NBI 23-B, wants to offer thanks, tell people what it says, and what we need to do. We adhere to the strongest standards against torture. We pass a strong interrogation ban that applies to all settings.
* Advocating for the passage of the ban on torture; quit APA over the torture issue. Just came back this year. Support whistle blowers. Would like to see APA do more in this support.
* Left APA, considering returning depending on next steps. Moving forward requires accountability and credibility. Clear intent to shield psychologists involved in torture from consequences. What are you going to do to ensure that the complaints to the state are reconsidered?
* Letter requesting resignations of current president and legal counsel, 500 signatures, would have had more than 1000. Wonders how they want us to believe these leaders should lead us ethically now, when they’ve been implicated or named in the report.
* Systematic implications outside of APA, including victims and clients. Wondering what the timeline for action plan is, and who will keep us accountable.
* Many people have apologized to APA, but no one has apologized to victims of torture, to their families, communities, and groups that have reason to distrust psychology. How are we going to attend to them?
* Created an evidenced-based report and submitted it to council. Submitted proposal today in book form.
* EMPAs noted that when we talk about torture, it fits a historical narrative. We need to start being real. We haven’t addressed people of color’s perspective in these discussions, and how are we going to do that moving forward?
* Asked APA to disassociate from DOD to avoid this a long time ago. Asking for this now. Turning our eye from ways psychology is used in media, prisons, and we can use this to clean up psychology.
* Hoffman report has used thousands of pages of evidence, so the opinion that the narratives are biased is unfounded.
* Act now, rather than a year from now, for people impacted in and out of the association.
* Reflecting on the history of psychology’s relationship with the military, how will psychology provide the appropriate support as threats are posed against the US?