

Psychologists don't take part in torture

It has recently been revealed that key leaders of the American Psychological Association knowingly misled their membership of 125,000 psychologists, as well as the American public, in regard to their collusion with the Department of Defense that allowed psychologists in the military to take part in abusive interrogations during the war on terror.

With psychologists across the nation, the 4,000 members of the California Psychological Association are appalled and disheartened at what the report reveals. The intentional relaxation of our ethics to enable these abhorrent practices violated our long-held principles and values to protect and preserve the mental



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and physical health and safety of our patients.

As members of the association's Board of Directors, we want to stress that the actions

described in the report do not in any way represent psychologists' values. In fact, the opposite is true. Psychologists as a group hold themselves to high professional, legal and ethical standards. Our professional associations and state licensing boards are part of this process.

We have practices in many settings, including community clinics, hospitals and private offices, and we volunteer for numerous organizations, including the American Red Cross. Psychologists also teach, consult and work for the state, counties and military as both clinicians and administrators.

The California Psychological Association and its 20 chapters initiate and support community and social justice activities, including training psychologists to assess immigrants who are facing deportation. Because of the work that we do and

the values that we have, it is disturbing and repellent to learn that some officials in our national organization made decisions that ultimately enabled acts of torture.

Our board does not support a dilution of our ethical code for any reason. We pledge to uphold the values of our profession, and to hold the national association accountable to make significant and necessary changes now and reform their operating procedures going forward. Most important, we want to reassure the public that we will continue doing the work of helping and healing our clients, just as we have always done.

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