

February 2, 2010

Dear Dr. Goodheart, Dr. Anderson, & APA Board of Directors,

We write on behalf of the Executive Committee of Division 32 (the Society for Humanistic Psychology), which voted unanimously to request that all of our division programming is not held at the Manchester Grand Hyatt during the 2010 APA Convention. We are writing to more fully describe our stance, and request that the APA take further action to reconcile more fully its stated values with the convention activities at the Manchester Hyatt Hotel.

Division 32 is focused on research and action related to the full range of human experience. As clearly stated on our website and in our mission statement, our “longstanding interest in the well-being of all persons, and in the importance of living life with purpose and meaning” does now allow us to support entities or individuals who intentionally work to block the civil rights and potential of all people regardless of their race, gender, ethnicity, ability, age, or sexual orientation.

A boycott of the Manchester Grand Hyatt San Diego is already underway and supported by a coalition of LGBT groups in California and labor rights supporters who back the rights of hotel workers. Division 32 cannot in good conscience ignore APA’s plans to use a facility whose owner actively supports discrimination. This is an important equal rights issue that goes against Division 32’s mission and is also inconsistent with APA values and policies.

THEREFORE Division 32 commits that:

1. We will request that no Division 32 programming, business meetings or social events are scheduled at the Manchester Grand Hyatt.
2. Our Division 32 hospitality suite will be at an alternative hotel.
3. We support APA’s plans to highlight scientific research and public debate about same-sex marriage at the Convention.
4. We will inform the Division 32 membership of these decisions and the rationale behind them. We will encourage members to make plans that best fit with their own personal values.

We appreciate the work of the APA working group and understand the difficulties the APA faces in navigating the best course of action. However, we urge the APA to be guided primarily by the values of the field of psychology, and the recently affirmed policy statements that the “APA shall take a leadership role in opposing all discrimination in legal benefits, rights, and privileges against same-sex couples.”

THEREFORE WE CALL UPON APA TO:

1. Make clear what, if any, negotiations have taken place with the Manchester Grand Hyatt regarding contract modifications or cancellation.

1. Aggressively pursue contract modifications with the Manchester Grand Hyatt. Given the concerns that have come to light, Division 32 believes that the APA has an obligation to its members and Divisions to continue to pursue possible legal solutions. We also believe that the APA will ultimately bring itself more credit, and stronger support of its membership and the public, by making good faith efforts to renegotiate the contract.

1. Fully respect the decisions of all members and groups that choose not to attend or hold events at the Manchester Grand Hyatt. Specifically, Division 32 requests that APA refrain from scheduling any Division 32 Convention programming at the Manchester Grand Hyatt, including Division 32 sponsored and co-sponsored addresses, symposia, and poster sessions.

1. Arrange an alternative site for Convention meetings of the APA Council of Representatives.

1. Assiduously adhere to the provisions and spirit of its 2007 policy “Opposing Discriminatory Legislation & Initiatives Aimed at Lesbian, Gay, & Bisexual Persons” in all future conventions, meetings of APA governance groups (including Board of Directors), and other meetings it sponsors. Among other things, this policy commits APA to assume a leadership role in actively opposing discriminatory legislation and initiatives, to consider these factors in making decisions about meetings and contracts, and to promote the physical and psychological safety of its members and staff when holding meetings or engaging in other contractual agreements in states or jurisdictions with public policy that discriminates on the basis of sexual orientation.

As an Executive Committee, we are keenly aware of our responsibility to align our actions with the guiding values of our field. We speak only for Division 27, but we are confident that many other

APA members and Divisions share these concerns.

Sincerely,

Sara K. Bridges, Division 32 Society for Humanistic Psychology President

Art Lyons, Division 32 Representative to APA Council

On behalf of the Division 32 – Society for Humanistic Psychology Executive Committee