

Fighting Back Against Jew Hatred Among Psychologists

By Phyllis Chesler

On February 23, 2025, Dr. Julie Ancis, who founded Psychologists Against Antisemitism, and others, organized a letter to the APA which has, so far, garnered nearly 4000 signatories, mine among them. Other signatories included the Psychologists Against Antisemitism, the American Jewish Medical Association, the Network of Engaged Canadian Academics, and the Jewish Identity and Antisemitism Collective. Professors from thousands of universities also signed as individuals.



I wonder whether and if President Dr. Kawahara and the Board of APA will respond.

The American Psychological Association (APA) has allowed—and failed—to acknowledge or to remedy the most grievous antisemitism that has run rampant within its organization.

Several divisions have specialized in the kind of hot Jew-hatred that once prevailed at German and at other European universities in the Nazi era. Herr Doktor Freud's books were burned and had he not escaped Vienna at the last moment, he too, might have gone up in smoke. But Christian pro-Nazi professors and doctors of Psychology and Psychiatry eased themselves right into all the academic and organizational

positions in the place of the murdered or exiled Jewish psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, and neurologists.

A version of this has dominated and plagued several divisions, especially Division 39, (Society of Psychoanalysis), and Divisions, 17, 9, 48 (please read the letter below to know what these divisions are allegedly about). Division 39 is a psychoanalytic division and its President, Lara Sheehi, (and her acolytes and accomplices) have publicly stated that "the Israelis and Zionists are 'genocidal' (FKs) and that the belief in Israel's right to exist is a psychosis."

The APA has responded swiftly to other issues and has issued apologies (!) concerning racism, the use of torture, and Ukraine, but it has adamantly refused to understand that antiZionism is part of what the new antisemitism is about (something that I concluded in my 2003 book "The New Antisemitism"). The harassment and humiliation of Jewish students, which we have seen on countless campuses in the West, has also run riot at professional organizations and on professional listserv groups.

The Psychologists Against Antisemitism's letter holds the APA accountable for refusing to live up to its own stated principles when it comes to the Jews.

I have my own little history with the APA.

First, it was the sexism at the American Psychological Association that compelled me to demand "one million dollars in reparations on behalf of all the women whom they had harmed and in no way helped." I did so in Miami, in 1970, and I spoke on behalf of the newly formed Association for Women in Psychology. The distinguished assembly laughed at me; some accused me of "penis envy." On the plane back to New York, I started writing "Women and Madness." Unbeknownst to me, my demand had made world headlines, and by the time I landed, I had offers for just such a book from many publishers.

More interesting: The suffragists, Jeanette Rankin, offered me her home and land in Athens, Georgia, for an alternative asylum for battered and other suffering women who had been ill-served by the helping professions. To this day, I regret that I could not take her up on her generous offer.

I/we never got a dime for an alternative to psychiatric institutions for women. What the APA funded was work on racism—and they allowed many more women to appear on panels to present their work. I never returned. I still have not done so. Women psychologists flocked there and became influential.

This was not enough as far as I was concerned. I moved on. But I am moved and cheered by the existence of Psychologists Against Antisemitism and hope that their letter is taken seriously.

[Link to Dr. Ancis's letter to the APA](#)

First published in [Phyllis' Newsletter](#)