

NARTH BULLETIN

In this age of "openness and tolerance," NARTH still finds it remarkably difficult to reach members of the healing professions with information and inquiries. Gay activists have intimidated all the major professional therapists' organizations into the position that NARTH must be silenced--or, as Dr. Richard Isay put it, "isolated."

First the A.P.A.

Two years ago, the American Psychological Association denied us meeting space at their convention, and prevented us from announcing our annual meeting in the A.P.A. *Monitor*.

Now, T.A.P.

Just recently, in a blatant show of unfair discrimination, *The American Psychoanalyst* ("TAP") refunded NARTH's payment for our annual meeting advertisement, after having originally accepted it.

Last year, TAP printed a display advertisement announcing this meeting. The ad generated many bitterly angry letters to TAP from gay activists. NARTH officers responded with letters-to-the-editor inviting TAP members to read our literature and attend our meetings--in order to judge for themselves if we were really "homophobic," and so on and so forth (the usual litany of accusations).

Then in early January of this year, NARTH mailed another advertisement announcing its upcoming 1997 May symposium. Nearly two months later--after the advertising department had accepted the ad and cashed our check--the editor, Dr. William Jeffrey, wrote a letter describing TAP's new advertis-

Efforts to Silence NARTH Continue

ing policy of selling space only to "selected organizations." This carefully worded new policy (requested by TAP's Executive Committee) allows space for all of TAP's regular advertisers, but is worded in such a way that NARTH will now be excluded.

By the time we received that letter, the deadline had passed to announce our meeting in a similar publication.

Clearly, the oppressive tactics of gay activists continue.

Next, The A.P.A. Research Office

NARTH recently requested the help of the Research Office of the American Psychological Association to obtain names and addresses of A.P.A. psychologists. We need to survey psychotherapists about their therapeutic successes in sexual-conversion therapy, in order to complete our large-scale research project (we currently have 1,000 responses). Such help is routinely provided to other organizations. Yet A.P.A.'s Director of Research, Jessica Kohout, Ph.D., refused NARTH's request.

NARTH's Executive Director replied as follows:

Dear Dr. Kohout:

If the APA position that homosexuality is not a disorder is scientifically

based, you should not fear this research project.

Years ago in graduate school, I was taught that the researcher's agenda--i.e., personal views, opinions, values, religious and political affiliations--will not jeopardize a good research design. Whether NARTH views homosexuality as a disorder or not is irrelevant to the objectivity of the research design. Admittedly, the *interpretation* of the results may be influenced by the researcher's agenda, and that can and should be debated.

Our premise is that there is a population of persons dissatisfied with homosexuality who have experienced varying degrees of sexual orientation change. *Gay activists claim that no one has changed sexual orientation*, and that attempts to do so will leave the person with damaged self-esteem. In fact, the A.P.A. reaffirms just this claim in its scientific literature. *Whether or not people have changed is essential to the ongoing debate within our profession*. I would expect the A.P.A. to be very interested in learning about the possible existence of this hidden population. If your scientific literature is in error, I would think you would be concerned about correcting it.

On the other side of the question, Drs. Ariel Schidlow and Michael Schroeder are currently soliciting interview subjects for their project, entitled "Homophobic Therapies: Documenting the Damage." They expect to interview between 100 and 200 gay men and lesbians who once pursued reparative-type therapies,

A.P.A. Supports Same-Sex Marriage

NARTH has learned that the American Psychological Association not only supports the legalization of same-sex marriage, but is now using its financial resources to actively lobby for it.

In the past, the A.P.A. has been politically pro-active on homosexuality through boycotts, engaging in court actions, and strongly affirming homosexuality in its publications.

Now, A.P.A.'s Public Policy Office is working in concert with other advocacy groups to plan judicial lobbying strategy to oppose DOMA (The Defense of Marriage Act). DOMA would allow individual states to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages if they became legal in Hawaii.

A.P.A. distributed a "Question and Answer" document on DOMA which was targeted for distribution to the audience they believe will help their cause--"moderate to progressive" House of Representatives members. A.P.A.'s goal is to "counter the attempts of conservative think tanks to portray same-sex marriage as harmful to children and families" (Report of the A.P.A. Public Interest Policy Office to the Council of Representatives, August 1996).

Most recently, A.P.A. sent out an "!!!Action Alert!!!" report calling DOMA an "anti-gay" bill which--according to the A.P.A.'s analysis of legislators' values and motivations-- "attempts to exploit anti-gay prejudice in an election year." Psychologists were advised to send their senators a letter, which A.P.A. provided, in order to express their opposition to DOMA.

Going further, A.P.A.'s Action Alert states: "DOMA is an example of prejudice rooted in negative stereotypes. Lesbian and gay relations are not a threat to family values. Most gay men and lesbians want intimate relationships and are successful in creating them. Gay couples frequently make substantial commitments to each other that endure for decades." (Note the use of the careful term "substantial commitments"; in fact, research indicates that most gay relations do not last, are typically non-monogamous, and evidence more dysfunction.)

Clearly, the A.P.A.--which should be the sounding board for the views of all of its broadly diverse membership--has decided to represent only gay activism. The organization has moved from a concern for civil rights, to the assumption of an explicit advocacy posture on this and many other social issues.

Not surprisingly, NARTH has formed to fill the void in information. Now, our task is to break through the wall of silence built by the major professional organizations which seek to restrict NARTH's free communication with other psychotherapy professionals (see story, front page).

THE NARTH BULLETIN

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"Victory on the Bow of a Ship"

A Collective Clinical Profile

by Joseph Nicolosi, Ph.D.

It is widely agreed that many factors likely contribute to the formation of male homosexuality. One factor may be the predisposing biological influence of temperament (Byne and Parsons, 1993). No scientific evidence, however, shows homosexuality to be directly inherited in the sense that eye color is inherited (Satinover, 1996).

Recent political pressure has resulted in a denial of the importance of the factor most strongly implicated by decades of previous clinical research--*developmental factors, particularly the influence of parents*. A review of the literature on male homosexuality reveals extensive reference to the prehomosexual boy's relational problems with both parents (West 1959, Socarides 1978, Evans 1969); among some researchers, the father-son relationship has been particularly implicated (Bieber et al 1962, Moberly 1983).

One psychoanalytic hypothesis for the connection between poor early father-son relationship and homosexuality is that during the critical gender-identity phase of development, the boy perceives the father as rejecting. As a result, he grows up failing to fully identify with his father and the masculinity he represents.

Nonmasculine or feminine behavior in boyhood has been repeatedly shown to be correlated with later homosexuality (Green, 1987, Zuger, 1988); taken together with related factors--particularly the often-reported alienation from same-sex peers and poor relationship with father--this suggests a failure to fully gender-identify. In its more extreme form, this same syndrome (usually resulting in homosexuality) is diagnosed as Childhood Gender-Identity Deficit.

One likely cause for "failure to identify" is a narcissistic injury inflicted by the father onto the son (who is likely to be most vulnerable if he is temperamentally sensitive) during the preoedipal stage of the boy's development. This hurt appears to have been inflicted during the critical gender-identity phase when the boy must undertake the task of assuming a masculine identification. The hurt manifests itself as a defensive detachment from masculinity in the self, and in others. As an adult, the homosexual is often characterized by this complex which takes the form of "the hurt little boy" (Nicolosi, 1991).

During the course of my treatment of ego-dystonic male homosexuals, I have sometimes requested that fathers participate in their sons' treatment. Thus I have been able to familiarize myself with some of the fathers' most common personality traits. This discussion attempts to identify some clinical features common to them.

For this report, I have focused on sixteen fathers who I con-

sider typical in my practice--twelve fathers of homosexual sons (mid-teens to early 30's), and four fathers of young, gender-disturbed, evidently prehomosexual boys (4- to 7-year-olds). The vast majority of these fathers appeared to be psychologically normal and, also like most men, well-intentioned with regard to their sons; in only one case was the father seriously disturbed, inflicting significant emotional cruelty upon his son.

However as a group, these fathers were characterized by the inability to counter their sons' defensive detachment from them. They felt helpless to attract the boy into their own masculine sphere.

Clinical Impressions. As a whole, these fathers could be characterized as emotionally avoidant. Exploration of their histories revealed that they had typically had poor relationships with their own fathers. They tended to defer to their wives in emotional matters and appeared particularly dependent on them to be their guides, interpreters and spokespersons.

While these men expressed sincere hope that their sons would transition to heterosexuality, nevertheless they proved incapable of living up to a longterm commitment to help them toward that goal. In his first conjoint session, one father cried openly as his 15-year-old son expressed his deep disappointment with him; yet for months afterward, he would drive his son to his appointment without saying a word to him in the car.

Further, while they often appeared to be gregarious and popular, they tended not to have significant male friendships. The extent to which they lacked the ability for male emotional encounter was too consistent and pronounced to be dismissed as simply "typical of the American male." Rather, my clinical impression of these fathers as a group was that there existed some significant limitation in their ability to engage emotionally with males.

From their sons' earliest years, these fathers showed a considerable variation in their ability to recognize and respond to the boys' emotional withdrawal from them. Some naively reported their perception of having had a "great" relationship with their sons, while their sons themselves described the relationship as having been "terrible." Approximately half the fathers, however, sadly admitted that the relationship was always poor and, in retrospect, perceived their sons as rejecting them from early childhood. Why their sons rejected them remained for most fathers a mystery, and they could only express a helpless sense of resignation and confusion. When pushed, these men would go further to express hurt and deep sadness. Ironically, these sentiments--helplessness, hurt and confusion--seemed to be mutual; they are the same expressed by their sons (my clients) in describing their own feelings in the relationship.

The trait common to fathers of homosexuals seemed to be an incapacity to summon the ability to correct relational problems with their sons. All the men reported feeling

"stuck" and helpless in the face of their sons' indifference or explicit rejection of them. Rather than actively extending themselves, they seemed characteristically inclined to retreat, avoid and feel hurt. Preoccupied with self-protection and unwilling to risk the vulnerability required to give to their sons, they were unable to close the emotional breach. Some showed narcissistic personality features. Some fathers were severe and capable of harsh criticism; some were brittle and rigid; overall, most were soft, weak and placid, with a characteristic emotional inadequacy. The term that comes to mind is the classic psychoanalytic term "acquiescent" - the acquiescent father.

Homosexuality is almost certainly due to multiple factors and cannot be reduced solely to a faulty father-son relationship. Fathers of homosexual sons are usually also fathers of heterosexual sons--so the personality of the father is clearly not the sole cause of homosexuality. Other factors I have seen in the development of homosexuality include a hostile, feared older brother; a mother who is a very warm and attractive personality and proves more appealing to the boy than an emotionally removed father; a mother who is actively disdainful of masculinity; childhood seduction by another male; peer labelling of the boy due to poor athletic ability or timidity; in recent years, cultural factors encouraging a confused and uncertain youngster into an embracing gay community; and in the boy himself, a particularly sensitive, relatively fragile, often passive disposition.

At the same time, we cannot ignore the striking commonality of these fathers' personalities.

In two cases, the fathers were very involved and deeply committed to the treatment of their sons, but conceded that they were not emotionally present during their sons' early years. In both cases it was not personality, but circumstance that caused the fathers' emotional distance. In one case the father was a surgeon from New Jersey who reported attending medical school while trying to provide financial support for his young family of three children. The second father, an auto mechanic from Arizona, reported that when he was only 21 years old, he was forced to marry the boy's mother because she was pregnant. He admitted never loving the boy's mother, having been physically absent from the home, and essentially having abandoned both mother and boy. Both fathers, now more mature and committed to re-establishing contact with their sons, participated enthusiastically in their therapy. But in both cases, the sons had, by then, become resistant to establishing an emotional connection with their fathers.

Attempt at Therapeutic Dialogue. My overall impression of fathers in conjoint sessions was of a sense of helplessness, discomfort and awkwardness when required to directly interact with their sons.

These men tended not to trust psychological concepts and communication techniques and often seemed confused and easily overwhelmed with the challenge to dialogue in depth. Instructions which I offered during consultation,

when followed, were followed literally, mechanically and without spontaneity. A mutual antipathy, a stubborn resistance and a deep grievance on the part of both fathers and sons was clearly observable. At times I felt myself placed in the position of "mother interpreter," a role encouraged by fathers and at times by sons. As "mother interpreter," I found myself inferring feeling and intent from the father's fragmented phrases and conveying that fuller meaning to the son, and vice versa from son to father.

Some fathers expressed concern with "saying the wrong thing," while others seemed paralyzed by fear. During dialogue, fathers demonstrated great difficulty in getting past their own self-consciousness and their own reactions to what their sons were saying. This limited their empathetic attunement to the therapeutic situation, and to their sons' position and feelings.

As their sons spoke to them, these fathers seemed blocked and unable to respond. Often they could only respond by saying that they were "too confused," "too hurt," or "too frustrated" to dialogue. One father said he was "too angry" to attend the sessions of his teenage son--a message conveyed to me by the mother. At the slightest sign of improvement in the father-son relationship, a few fathers seemed too ready to flee, concluding "Everything is okay - can I go now?"

Treatment Interventions

Before conjoint father-son sessions begin, the client should be helped to gain a clear sense of what he wants from his father. To simply expose him to a list of complaints is of no value. He should also decide on a clear, constructive way to ask for this. Such preparation shifts the son from a position of helpless complaining, to staying centered on his genuine needs and the effective expression of them.

The Deadly Dilemma. Eventually, within the course of conjoint sessions a particular point will be reached which I call "the deadly dilemma." This deadlock in dialogue--which seems to duplicate the earliest father-son rupture--occurs in two phases as follows:

Phase 1: With the therapist's assistance, the son expresses his needs and wants to his father. Hearing his son, the father becomes emotionally affected, so much so that he cannot respond to his son's disclosure. He is overwhelmed by his own reactions, becoming so "angered," "hurt," "upset," or "confused" that he cannot attend to his son's needs. Blocked by his own internal reactions, he is unable to give what his son asks of him.

Phase 2: In turn, the son is unable to tolerate his father's insular emotional reaction in place of the affirmative response he seeks from him. To accept his father's non-responses, the son feels he must abandon the needs he has expressed. The only recourse for the son is to retreat again to the defensive distancing which is already at the core of the father-son relationship. The son cannot empathize

Gender Narcissism

by Gerald Schoenewolf, Ph.D.

The following is an excerpt of "Gender Narcissism and Its Manifestations," by Gerald Schoenewolf, Ph.D. (NARTH Collected Papers 1996). Dr. Schoenewolf a psychoanalyst from New York City who is the author of ten books, including 101 Common Therapeutic Blunders; 101 Therapeutic Successes; Turning Points in Analytic Therapy: The Classic Cases; and the paper "Sexual Animosity in Individuals and Society" (Issues in Ego Psychology). His latest book is A Dictionary of Dream Interpretation.

The term "narcissism" was originally taken from the Greek myth about a beautiful young man who fell in love with his own reflection in a pool of water, jumped in after it, and drowned. The term was used to denote the attitude of a person who takes his own body as an object of attraction and desire, and is centered on the practice of masturbation. Since then, psychoanalysis has broadened the definition of narcissism to mean an excessive self-love or concern for the self, and lack of concern for others.

The idea of narcissism as "taking one's own body as an object of desire" could more aptly, I believe, be termed "gender narcissism." Gender narcissism develops in reaction to feelings of inferiority about one's gender and might be defined as excessive love or concern for one's gender, one's genitals, or one's gender identity, and an aversion to the opposite sex. It involves the formation of gender-narcissistic alliances rather than libidinal unions, and it is primarily rooted in the anal-rapprochement phase, during which time an individual's sexual orientation and identity are shaped.

In psychoanalyzing a number of individuals over the years who had gender-narcissistic features, I began to understand how gender narcissism is formed and manifested.

Overview of Gender-Narcissistic Patients. The male narcissists I studied had histories that confirmed the observations of classical psychoanalysts. Their mothers had bound them to themselves and prevented them from becoming pals with their fathers, often even preventing them from playing with other boys and later, from taking part in athletics. Sometimes an undertone, and sometimes an overtone, of emotional (or actual physical) incest permeated their relationships. Sometimes the mothers were hostile but close-binding.

The fathers, when they were present, were passive or hostile. There was often a barrier between these gender narcissists and their fathers, and the sons would end up resenting the fathers and displacing all their anger, both at their mothers and at their fathers, onto their fathers.

Mother--to whose allegiance they were sworn--had to be protected from their anger. This anger at fathers was then further displaced, and transferred onto heterosexual men in general.

Castration complexes of gender narcissists were manifested in a fear of competing with traditional (or heterosexual) men for the favor of women, or in attitudes of appeasement or disparagement toward women. One man had a compulsive need to dominate both men and women. Since most male narcissists are "oedipal conquerors," they feel they have already won their mothers (in fact, have gotten *more familiar* than they wanted), and do not wish to compete for other women. Such competition would arouse oedipal castration fears.

At the same time, they display an attitude of bitterness related to memories of having already been psychologically castrated; the source of this bitterness is repressed, while the bitterness itself is converted into resentment of the male role, envy of the female role, and an aversion to female sexuality.

In their treatment, the father transference had to be worked through first, then the mother and sibling transferences.

"Gender narcissism is...excessive concern for one's gender, one's genitals, or one's gender identity"

The father transference was apparent in ambivalence, and was comprised of alternately idealizing, then distancing behavior. Either they would try to please me, or--if homosexual, seduce me--or they would distance me. "You're straight (or, you're conventional) so you won't understand me."

Underneath this pose was a frightening unconscious desire to be initiated by me into the world of masculinity, often by being taken anally.

When they changed over into their mother transferences, they became submissive and idealizing and our relationship took on the quality of the idealizing, idealized, or twinship dyad they once enjoyed with their mothers.

The Politics of Gender Narcissism. A number of both female and male homosexuals had politicized their feelings about homosexuality. Not only their gender was idealized, but also homosexuality as well. Homosexuals, they held, were more sensitive, more humane, more refined, and more moral than heterosexuals. "If straights were as peace-loving as gays, the world would be a better place," was an often expressed sentiment.

Underpinning this grandiosity was the narcissistic anger. If I did not mirror their idealization, I would quickly experience this anger in the form of character assassination, threats, or hasty terminations. I also had to mirror their idealization of mothers, or face similar consequences.

Incidentally, it is this idealization of mothers and the almost complete and unquestioning identification with them--traceable to the inability to de-idealize mothers and separate from them during the anal-rapprochement phase--that lies behind the intractability of most forms of

gender narcissism. The success of the therapy with them seems to hinge on the degree to which we can resolve this mother fixation.

My aim has been to extend the concept of narcissism as developed by Freud and others. I do not believe there is much that is new in this theory; rather, it represents a reiteration of classical theories of male and female sexual development, with an emphasis on the gender narcissism that is formed during such development. As such, it constitutes a new angle from which to view sexual development, and the use of a new label--gender narcissism--for the particular kind of narcissism that Freud and others have previously described, and which I have further elaborated.

Male and female narcissism are manifested in an idealization of gender, gender identity, and gender sexual characteristics, and a disparagement of the opposite sex. These factors lead to an inability to form genuine emotional bonds with members of the opposite sex, or with members of one's own sex. The bond that is formed is of a narcissistic kind--that is, an alliance designed to feed gender narcissistic needs (affirm one's masculinity or femininity), but it leaves deeper emotional needs unmet.

Since they are particularly geared toward fulfilling narcissistic needs, gender narcissists tend to form relationships which are shallow and denying of reality.

Gender narcissism interferes with sexual expression because it is closely tied to castration and oedipus complexes. For male narcissists, there is a combination of oedipal guilt, feelings of inferiority about gender, and a fear of castration which make sexual activity a self-conscious, compulsive experience. A similar compulsive self-consciousness inflicts female narcissists, for whom penis envy, oedipal conflicts (about separating from mother and getting too close to father), and feelings of inferiority about

gender combine into a disturbing force.

Classical theories concerning the etiology of gender narcissism have been borne out by this study. Close-binding, emotionally incestuous, or hostile-controlling mothers and passive, passive-aggressive, hostile, or absent fathers seem to predominate in the backgrounds of gender-narcissistic patients. Sometimes siblings also contribute to the problem. This does not mean, however, that gender narcissism cannot be generated through another circumstance--such as when a father is close-binding with a daughter, and a mother is absent.

The Therapeutic Challenge. Gender narcissism is resistant to psychodynamic therapy, due to the intractability of gender grandiosity, and to strong identificational bonds with idealized mothers. The anal-rapprochement stage seems to be a critical stage for the formation of sexual identity; hence, severe cases of gender narcissism can be reversed only with great difficulty.

It seems evident, moreover, that gender narcissism not only contributes to individual sexual psychopathology, but also--because of the politicizing of feelings--to social pathology. Female narcissists with masculinity complexes are often militant feminists, as are male narcissists with femininity complexes. Both are also militant about rights. Indeed, militant feminism and militant homosexual rights have been closely linked. I dare say there is not a militant feminist who does not champion gay rights, nor a militant homosexual who does not actively support feminism. This may be seen as a social manifestation of gender narcissism--an alliance of mothers and their idealizing sons on the cultural level.

Our society, and Western society in general, has become inundated with social problems that are to some extent connected with gender narcissism.

Book Excerpt:

The Sexual Deviations, 3rd edition, edited by Ismond Rosen, M.D., Oxford University Press, 1996.

Editor Ismond Rosen's first textbook on sexual deviations was published in 1974 under the title of The Pathology and Treatment of Sexual Deviations. It included papers by Robert Stoller, Charles Socarides, Phyllis Greenacre, and many others. A second edition was printed in 1979, and a third in 1996.

The latest edition includes chapters by Ismond Rosen, Phyllis Greenacre, Robert Stoller, Loretta Loeb, Vamik Volkan and William Greer, Adam Limentani (former president of the International Psychoanalytic Association), Joyce McDougall, Mervin Glasser, Michael Freeman, and others. The subjects covered derive largely from psychoanalytic clinical studies. It includes a chapter by NARTH president Charles W. Socarides, entitled "Advances in the Psychoanalytic Theory and Therapy of

Male Homosexuality."

Other chapters include "Perversion of the Regulator of Self-Esteem," "Fetishism," "Childhood Gender Identity Disorders," "Transsexualism," "Reflections on Homosexuality in Women," "Dynamic Psychotherapy with Sex Offenders," and "Adult Sequela of Childhood Sexual Abuse and Methods of Treatment."

Dr. Rosen introduces Dr. Socarides' chapter as follows:

"Professor Charles Socarides has rewritten his section on male homosexuality. As doyen of U. S. psychoanalysts in this field, his ideas, based on wide experience in the treatment of male homosexuals, command great respect. They are nevertheless controversial in part, making for a very lively presentation."

The following is a small section of that chapter:

A Survey of Treatment Results

In 1960, Edward Glover devoted considerable attention to the problem of therapy of male homosexuality.

Glover divided the degrees of improvement into three categories: (1) cure, that is, abolition of conscious homosexual impulse; (2) much improved, that is, the abolition of conscious homosexual impulse without development of full extension of heterosexual impulse; and (3) improved, that is, increased ego integration and capacity to control the homosexual impulse.

In conducting focal treatment (brief therapy aimed at the relief of the homosexual symptom), Glover commented on the significance of social anxiety present in these patients. This social anxiety, despite apparently rational justification, however, is based largely on a projected form of unconscious guilt. The unfortunate punitive attitude of society enables the patient to project concealed superego conflicts of his own, onto society and the law.

Glover felt that almost from the outset the therapist must decide whether to conduct the treatment through the regular and prolonged course of analysis, or through brief, focal therapy of the symptom. In following the latter course, he would soon find that having uncovered some of the guilt, he would then strike against a core of sexual anxiety, and, in particular, the multifarious manifestations of the castration complex. At this point the history of the individual's familial relations, traumas, frustrations, disappointments, jealousies, and so on, would come to the surface or should be brought to the surface.

The Portman Clinic Survey in England reached the following conclusion: "Psychotherapy appears to be *unsuccessful* in only a small number of patients of any age—those in whom a long habit is combined with psychopathic traits, heavy drinking, or lack of desire to change" (p. 236).

An unpublished and informal report of the Central Fact-Gathering Committee of the American Psychoanalytic Association (1956) was one of the first surveys to compile results of treatment. It showed that of 56 cases of homosexuality undergoing psychoanalytic therapy by members of the Association, they describe 8 in the completed group (which totalled 32) as cured; 13 as improved, and 1 as unimproved. This constitutes one-third of all cases reported. Of the group which did not complete treatment (total of 34), they describe 16 as improved, 10 as unimproved; 3 as untreatable, and 5 as transferred. In all reported cures, follow-up communications indicated assumption of full heterosexual role and functioning.

A research team consisting of nine practicing psychoanalysts and two psychoanalytically trained psychologists published the findings of a nine-year study of male homosexuals (Bieber, *et al.* 1962). The team psychiatrist and 77 respondents to a 500-item questionnaire were members of the Society of Medical Psychoanalysts, whose roster consisted of faculty and graduates of the Psychoanalytic Division of the Department of Psychiatry of New York Medical College. The research sample consisted of 106 male homosexuals and a comparison group of 100 male heterosexuals, all in psychoanalytic treatment with members of the Society. The data obtained were analyzed sta-

tistically in consultation with statistical experts. The results were as follows:

Of the 106 homosexuals who started psychoanalytic therapy, 29 were exclusively heterosexual at the time the volume was published. This represented 27% of the total sample. Fourteen of these 29 had been exclusively homosexual when they began treatment: 15 were bisexual. In 1965, in a follow-up study of the 29, I was able to reclaim the data on 15 of the 29. Of these 15 men, twelve had remained exclusively heterosexual; the other three were predominantly heterosexual, but had occasional episodes of homosexuality when under severe stress. Of the twelve who had remained consistently heterosexual, seven had been among the 14 who had been exclusively homosexual when they started treatment. Thus, seven men who started treatment as exclusively homosexual had been exclusively heterosexual for at least six or seven years. (Englehardt and Kaplan 1987, p. 424)

My own clinical experience with homosexual patients in private practice may well be, with the exception of Bergler, one of the most extensive. During a 10-year period from 1967 to 1977, I treated psychoanalytically 55 overt homosexuals; 34 of these patients were in long-term therapy of over a year's duration (average 3.5 years). The number of sessions ranged from three to five per week. In this group, there were only three females. The remainder (eleven) were in short-term analytic therapy (average six to seven months) at two to three sessions per week.

In addition, full-scale analysis was performed on 18 latent homosexuals in which the symptoms never became overt, except in the most transitory form. Thus, the total number treated in long-term analysis, whether overt or latent, was 63. In addition, over 350 overt homosexuals were seen in consultation (average one to three sessions) during this 10-year period.

I can report that of the 45 overt homosexuals who have undergone psychoanalytic therapy, 20 patients, nearly 50 percent, developed full heterosexual functioning and were able to develop love feelings for their heterosexual partners. This includes one female patient. These patients of whom two-thirds were of the preoedipal type and one-third of the oedipal type, were all strongly motivated for therapy.

In addition, similar positive therapeutic results have occurred during the period from 1977 to 1988 in which I have treated over 50 more overt homosexuals in psychoanalytic therapy.

In answer to those who say a successful treatment has never been demonstrated in homosexual patients, I also report a seven-year follow-up of a patient who achieved full heterosexual function and the ability to love his opposite-sex partner (Socarides 1978, pp. 497-529).

Most recently, a report by MacIntosh (1994) reveals that in

a survey of 285 psychoanalysts who reported having analyzed 1,215 homosexual patients, 23 percent changed to heterosexuality from homosexuality, and 84 percent of the total group received significant therapeutic benefit.

During the early development of psychoanalysis, reports of favorable outcome in the treatment of homosexuality rarely appeared; the outlook was pessimistic. Starting in 1944, Bergler published extensive studies confirming his finding that with suitable treatment, homosexuality could be reversed (1944, 1959). Bychowski (1945, 1954, 1956); Loran (1956), and other workers including Guardsman

(1967); Ovesey (1969); Bieber (1967), and Socarides (1969) had also published significant material to this effect, including psychoanalytic, psychotherapeutic, and group therapy.

---(Excerpted from "Advances in Psychoanalytic Theory and Therapy of Male Homosexuality" by Charles W. Socarides, M.D. in The Sexual Deviations, (3rd Ed.)

Copies of this paper may be secured by writing Dr. Socarides at and including a contribution to NARTH for ten dollars. ■

Fathers of Homosexuals, continued from page 4

with the father's non-responsiveness because to do so is painfully reminiscent of childhood patterns that are associated with his own deep hurt and anger: namely the imperative, "My father's needs must always come before mine." The son's hurt and anger is in reaction to what appears to him to be "just more lame excuses" for Dad's inability to give the attention, affection or approval he has so long desired from him. Indeed, this seems to much like Dad's old ploy, with all the associated historical pain.

This deadly dilemma originated, I believe, during the preverbal level of infancy. As one father's recollections confirmed, "My son would never look at me. I would hold his face with my hands and force him to look at me, but he would always avert his eyes." Other fathers have described an "unnatural indifference" on the part of their sons during their growing-up years.

During the course of therapy with these fathers, I began to see the deep hurt in *them*--a hurt that came from their sons' indifference to their attempts (however meager) to improve the relationship.

Reflecting on his now-elderly father, one client sadly recalled:

"I feel sorry for my father. He always had a certain insensitivity, an emotional incompetence. Many of the interactions at home simply went over his head. He was dense, inadequate. I feel a pity for him."

These fathers appeared unwilling or unable to be open and vulnerable to their sons; unable to reach out, to hear their sons' pain and anger toward to them, and unable to respond honestly. Their emotional availability was blocked and they were unable to turn the relational problem around. Rather they remained removed, seemingly dispassionate and helpless.

In conjoint sessions, none of the fathers was capable of taking the lead in dialogue. When dialogue became stagnant, they were unable to initiate communication. I am convinced that the inability of these fathers to get past their own blocks and reach out to their sons

played a significant role in these boys' inability to move forward into full, normal masculine identification and heterosexuality during their development.

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A Glimpse at the Dark Side

Book Review: *Gay Soul: Finding the Heart of Gay Spirit and Nature, with Sixteen Writers, Healers, Teachers and Visionaries.* by Mark Thompson (Harper San Francisco, 1994).

This popular book, written by a gay journalist, provides a most interesting window into modern gay life and philosophy. Author Mark Thompson interviews prominent community leaders to show the reader the essence of "gay soul and spirit."

The world this author reveals to us, however, is deeply disturbing.

Some of the most common, recurring themes presented by the book's interview subjects:

- 1) Gay sex is labeled "sacred." The word "sacred" appeared over and over again in this book to describe the gay sex act, gay culture and gay consciousness. Similar terms like "holy" and "mystical" also appeared frequently. Eroticism is seen as the ultimate life force.
- 2) Gay men are described as a superior, third sex who are "two-spirited" because they are not limited to one gender: they have internalized femininity as well as masculinity.
- 3) Gay men are special--gifted with a mystical sensitivity and creativity that allows them to better understand life and serve as visionaries to the larger culture. They are a blessed people, graced by God.
- 4) Straight men ("breeders") are described as inhibited morally, sensually, and socially. They lead dull, emotionally restrictive, uncreative lives.
- 5) Primitive societies, as well as the gods and goddesses of pagan cultures, are presented as superior and more highly evolved.
- 6) The interview subjects express delight with ideas that defame traditional standards. They relate stories of "having sex with God," describe Jesus as a gay man, delight in sex enjoyed in seminaries between students and priests, take pleasure in describing the flouting of the priestly vow of celibacy, and go so far as to describe sadomasochism as a "sacred" sexual experience--along with what one Jungian scholar (and *psychotherapist*) labelled the "sacred" experience of incest between fathers and brothers.
- 7) The interview subjects repeatedly assert that gays are born that way. However, most of them describe distant, rejecting relationships with fathers. Another frequently described scenario is that of the classic over-intimate and smothering (even overtly erotic) mother. Some mention painful memories of boyhood alienation from male peers, and the experience of having been called sissies.
- 8) There is a recurring theme of gay superiority and narcissistic self-love, with the theme of evangelizing the world

into a celebration of homoerotic sexuality. This is contradicted by an inner struggle against self-hatred, which in turn is blamed on society.

9) The distinctions between the sexes are seen as arbitrary and socially constructed. There is no reference to moral boundaries.

10) There are repeated themes of fantasy, impersonation, grandiosity, and a sense of unreality.

Some sample quotes from Gay Soul:

From James Broughton, filmmaker:

"Sex is an avenue to bliss in the soul, and that bliss I have followed all my life...bisexuality is natural; nature is pansexual. The soul is androgynous in everyone...Watch out for conformity. Middle-class morality is ever ready to kidnap you. Support erotic workshops...gaiety makes us gods..."

From Paul Monette, author of the bestselling book *Becoming a Man: Half a Life Story*, for which Monette received the 1992 National Book Award for Fiction:

"Aphrodite and Apollo are my gods, not Jesus...my anger against the injustice and hypocrisy of religion goes...to the Vatican and the pope. Those people for whom God is only politics and not anything of the spirit--those people are evil...Carnality is not as easy as it used to be. I find it more precious."

Andrew Harvey, author:

"I was an eerie little boy, fantastically precocious and full of imitations. I've seen films of myself in which I look quite camp--like a tiny drag queen. It must have been rather difficult for my father, who was a policeman, and I never felt loved by him. Now I see that longing for my father's love was something that defined my homosexuality, just as my obsession with my mother must have..."

"Gay men and women...[are] essential to the health of society, as people who are freed from the responsibilities of procreation to cultivate the artistic, the spiritual, the values of living itself, as people who point to an inner fusion of male and female, a holy androgyny, that all beings could aspire to."

Andrew Ramer, teacher and writer:

"I think the future of the world, the hope of the world, depends on us, that men who love men are the only people who can save this planet. That's our job, our purpose. We carry this other kind of energy that no one else carries, and it's entirely in our hands to save the world...By virtue of our creativity, our passion, our humor, our exuberance for

life...we have the ability to model what it's like to be a human being on the planet for all of humanity. The world is looking to us even though it doesn't know it.

..."If there's theatre, we're doing it. If there's art, we're doing it. If there's music, we're doing it. If there's writing, we're doing it. If all of us decided to stay home for a week, the entire cultural life of the planet would grind to a complete halt.

"Because we live between genders, we also live between matter and spirit, between this world and the next...Nothing has stopped us [from having sex with each other]. Not damnation, not imprisonment, not all kinds of psychological labels, because this energy in us is so strong. It allows us...to feed our souls and feed the culture...we're going to be able to use that energy to change life on the planet."

From Harry Hay, the founding father of the gay-rights movement and the Mattachine Society:

"...gay men are constantly trying to put their dreams into words, music and motion--into new ways of talking to one another...That's why it's tremendously important right now for gay men to be in sensual and sexual contact as much as possible--it enhances that articulation."

Will Roscoe, anthropologist and author:

"I brought a jump rope to school, only to discover it was a 'girl thing.' I didn't choose jumping rope because it was a gendered activity. I chose it because it was personally right for me...I think my experience characterizes the gay attitude toward gender, which more than anything is actually indifference toward gender.

"I see gay men today who have a lot of hostility toward the mother and even more hostility, deeply buried, towards the father..."

"Dad was an introvert...he always had pets, but he couldn't relate to people. He was married five times...there was a love relationship [between my father and me] that was then broken...by the time I was in first grade..."

"He could not deal with emotions and people's love."

James Saslow, art historian:

"Somewhere, deep down inside, human beings know that all their social constructions are arbitrary.

"...in the physical and emotional rapture that comes with them [gay sexual relationships] we have some glimpse of the cosmic forces of the universe...gay people insist on ecstasy."

[Explaining why he sometimes wears a dress] "Being involved in cross-dressing is a way of laying claim to all the possible archetypes of the universe. It's all about symbols, right?...In the divide between men and women, I like being right on the fence, to be able to sense the experience of both sides and to implicitly point out that the divisions are artificial...Who says gay men can't wear this particular item of clothing?...Or makeup? Why not? The trouble is

that people insist on an either/or, binary system of perception...[but] we're not going to be just any old female. Aim high! This is part of turning yourself into an archetype...a lot of people...pick Bette Davis...I pick Elizabeth I. They have similar characteristics; larger-than-life, imperious, and somewhat gender-ambiguous."

Ram Dass, clinical psychologist and Harvard professor:

"I'm sure I've had thousands of sexual partners. It was often two a night. Then I returned east as a professor at Harvard and continued to have this incredible sexual activity...I had all these relationships with young men whom I really wanted to turn on [with LSD] with.

"My mother...had taken my power. She was such a deep love for me...I kept trying to stay a child to stay in intimate relationship with her. It was clear that if I became a man, she'd reject me. And so I got fatter and fatter, eating everything she gave me as my form of intimacy with her. At one point, in prep school, where I was horny all the time, I hugged her and got an erection...[My father] was a very successful and upwardly mobile person, so he didn't have too much time for the family. He was a somewhat remote figure...I never felt he heard me."

"[S]o I ended up having a hard time in my relations with women, in getting my pleasures...I got to the point where I would take huge amounts of acid and look at these slide pictures of women to try to see where my fear was because I saw that there was a block, where I just turned off women...If I want to venture a psychogenic description of my gayness, I would say it's about the absence of my relation to my father and the love affair I had with my mother, which I was never willing to give up...I didn't want to let go of the nurturance and intimacy I had with her."

[Asked what doubts and fears he struggles with] "There are some bizarre ones, like trying to be at peace with the emptiness of it all."

Joseph Kramer, former Jesuit seminarian, founder of the Body Electric School Workshops:

"High school years were the blossoming...I went to an all-boys Jesuit school, and that's where I recognized the importance of homosexual sensibility. Certainly the vast majority of Jesuits are homosexual. I loved my high school years so much, I didn't want to end them. So I decided to be a Jesuit...I was with 15 other men...12 of the 15 were homosexual...So here were gay boys coming together to be educated by older homosexuals...this was the best I could have found, unless the Radical Faeries had snatched me away...At least half of the students there had sexual encounters with one another. We were so close in so many ways, that it seemed right for our bodies to touch and to sear. We were the body of Christ.

"The hierarchical-political level of the Catholic Church--what I call the Imperial Church--is very oppressive of gay people. But the community-based levels of the church--where real men and women live, work and pray--can be incredibly nurturing of gay people."

"The image I like to use of myself is that of a body-based sex magician...My core tribe are those men and women, gay and straight, who honor eroticism as the life force.

"Maybe God is this astonishing vibration, the greatest possible orgasm of all, vibrating all the time. As I vibrate higher, I resonate with that orgasm...The very quality of our lives demands that we transform the sex-negativity of our culture...there are gay men whose life vocation is sex work."

Malcolm Boyd, Episcopal priest for over 40 years, and author:

"...I met more gay people in seminary than I ever met in Hollywood. There are more gay people in the church than probably anywhere else, and you could say intuitively I was motivated by this. Because here I found my tribe...The closet in seminary was huge...

"It's important for gay people to realize that we're unique. We're special."

Guy Baldwin, psychotherapist who works with gay men, and author of a book on the leather world:

"I would like to believe that there's something special about leather sexuality that leads people to a spiritual path...for me, the S & M experience is a kind of crucible in which I place myself, where I hope that my own impurities and illusions are somehow burned away...for me the S & M experience can function as a lens through which existence becomes focused, clarified, refined and revealed... Absolutely, it's a spiritual experience.

"[During S & M sex] I am left with an ecstatic contact with Self. There are no words passing through my mind; there are no cerebral events taking place. I suppose some in Eastern spiritual traditions might call that Nirvana... the ecstatic, transformational event can occur for me on either end of the top-bottom, master-slave, sadist-masochist dynamic.

At some level, deep in our primal consciousness, the top and bottom walk along the razor's edge of good and evil and are able to glance indifferently from one side to the other...

"In order for the S & M experience to deliver players to this place that we are now speaking of, certain elements must be present. One is that the bottom must have a real experience of his vulnerability. Some people need more than simple bondage in order to have that vulnerability revealed to them in crystalline terms. They may need a hand at their throat. They may need to feel themselves broken under the assault of heavy mental or physical stimulation--a whip comes to mind, or they must feel deep submission. And the top must experience as real the fact that his bottom's life is in his hands and feel his own urges to push the bottom's vulnerability...

"I think that at some level we all share the same inner beast...everyone needs some kind of lens through which to get a clearer focus on the self...in the moments of ecstatic fusion that occur in S & M scenes, there is no place to hide

from anyone or anything...If you beat the shit out of a man, he will learn all about you.'

[Responding to the interviewer's observation that gay men have developed S & M to a "high art," Baldwin agrees]-- "[M]ost world-class sadomasochists are to be found among gay men."

Robert Hopcke, Jungian scholar and author. (Alarming--Hopcke works as a psychotherapist. He finds mythical value in the gay stories "Father Blows Best," "The Coach Taught Me," and "Brothers Do It" -- "raw erotic tales of brothers as lovers, father-son couplings" which "exemplify the union of the same at its most potent: a relationship *no less satisfying, or sacred, than any other,*" according to the book's interviewer.)

Hopcke says:

"The outsiders, the tricksters, the androgynes, the people who break the boundaries--in other words, gay people in our culture--serve a very vital function...in the breaking down and dissolution [of the general culture]...That's why lesbians and gay men are in the forefront of creative pursuits, since we are the people who break down and let something new come in. That's the function we serve; that's why we're here. That's also why it's very easy to identify us with death and decay.

"That's why Jesse Helms targets us, since he perceives quite accurately that we are revolutionary.

"What heterosexuals don't cop to is how burdensome [procreation] is to them. I see that in my work with family men in particular. They're saddled with the provider role and feel all kinds of restrictions on their ability to be who they are. That's what that envy is all about: gay people are perceived as having more freedom. In fact, perhaps we do..."

(Asked about homophobia in his gay clients): "It's a huge problem. Even the most 'well-adjusted' gay man that I see struggles with it. I struggle with it myself. Having been identified from a very early age as gifted, I developed a certain kind of narcissism that helped protect me against self-hatred. But still, it's there."

(Here in this chapter, the author of the book offers some astute comments of his own. He describes rejection of the prehomosexual boy by the father, and observes that mothers wound their sons through seductiveness, using their "almost inseparably close bond" with their sons. The mother-son over-intimacy requires the boy to "labor under the weight of having to be the 'best little boy in the world.'" He says gay men are left narcissistically wounded, "ageless boys, afraid of growing up and finding our adult masculine power." Most reparative therapists would fully agree with these comments. The author describes exactly the "classic triangular relationship" that gay advocates typically insist is inaccurate.)

He says: "Gay men and lesbians know that there's a certain kind of salvation through the body...for us, the material world and the spiritual world are not dichotomous. They're one.

"I love the idea of male birth; it's a very archetypal symbol, a sacred symbol...our gayness is fertile...There's a union with the same that is the fount of self-love and therefore love of the universe. It brings the wholeness that occurs from uniting with someone who's the same as you...The homoerotic is an archetypal aspect of human sexuality...If our culture is able to integrate homoeroticism into everyone's sexuality, there won't be a need to identify anyone as [gay, straight or bisexual]..."

Mitch Walker, psychotherapist and author:

"One night in 1974, I had a revelation...Suddenly, I saw the truth. I realized that what I was experiencing in loving another guy was archetypal, not a mere accident or adaptation."

"I believe gayness is the immutable center of an inner truth that is harbored in the genes...We were born with sexual orientation...[Homosexual twinship] makes us two-in-one in a way that heterosexuals are not...The real things that move us are archetypal--those things that come from the lusty gonads, the surging blood, and the yearning heart..."

"Erotic body workshops, S & M and other rituals, tantric practices, and so on, can...be useful ways of encountering one's psyche...Passionate love is the doorway to a world of spiritual truth."

Ed Steinbrecher, widely-known author, teacher and lecturer, in a chapter called "Sex with God":

"[Gay men's] spiritual potential is incredible. They form one of the most important communities on the planet right now...They've been handed an incredible gift. The American Indian calls this group 'two-spirited.' Both the male and female aspects of spirit in-dwell...this gives metaxsexuals [gays] an incredible access to universal power. As a result of this potential, society instinctively reacts against gays as a threat to themselves and their established reality...While many people have to struggle for years to get the opposite-sex part of themselves back inside, the gay and lesbian is born with it automatically inside...Here you have this incredibly powerful group of human beings that have been given at birth what every spiritual person is speaking, but nobody has told them...They have the powers ascribed to sorcerers and witches...Gay men and the other metaxsexuals are designed for leadership."

[Describing a previous spiritual-sexual experience]:

"...Suddenly this energy awoke in me. All I can say is that it was like having sex with God. It was eight hours of constant physical orgasm. I know that that's impossible. But it was me as God's phallus, creating galaxies...continuous, unending creation. Once you've had sex with God, everything else sort of pales...There's nothing more awesome than sexual union with God."

If the above themes really are "the essence of gay soul and spirit" --as the author of the book claims--then they reveal a very dark night of the soul, indeed. ■

----Reviewed by Linda Nicolosi

A Framework for Understanding *Gay Soul*

The above book, *Gay Soul: Finding the Heart of Gay Spirit and Nature* reflects many disturbing themes.

Two recent books provide a particularly thought-provoking perspective by which to understand these themes--*Feathers of the Skylark*, by Jeffrey Satinover, M.D. (1996), and especially *The Empty Self: C.G. Jung and the Gnostic Transformation of Modern Identity* (also by Jeffrey Satinover, 1996).

From *Feathers of the Skylark*:

Self-Restraint Engenders "Needless Conflict"

"Today the most widely accepted philosophy of morals, which is more commonly implicit than explicit, comes from psychoanalysis as rooted in Freud. This view holds that conscience and guilt are culturally relative, and derive from nothing more...than learned restrictions. Because these restrictions oppose the natural impulses, they [supposedly] engender needless emotional conflict...increasingly often, as the quest for pleasure and immediate gratification spreads widely, they are held to be unnecessary. In this view, these restrictions are passed on from one gener-

ation to the next, foolishly and uselessly, with no absolute basis...until enlightened would-be liberators arise to free us from them.

"...The psychoanalytic point of view has deeply reinforced a widespread, modern version of pre-Christian, pre-Judaic, pagan morals in our society...many leaders...consider paganism as not at all going 'backward,' but going 'forward.'

"Everything Is Sacred"

"One of the great confusions of the modern world is the resymbolizing as sacred of that which is merely natural...The typically modernist error...leads to...the redefining as sacred of not just the profane [natural], but evil as well."

In *The Empty Self*, Dr. Satinover explains the origin of this resurgence of paganism. Paganism is essentially polytheism in the form of worship of human instincts. "The modern, psychologized manifestation of polytheism is the plausible idea that since people differ, there must be different standards of behavior--hence of morality--to apply to each type of person...For each type of person, there is a god among the many gods. There is a god for the tribe of

women..for the tribe of warriors...for the tribe of homosexuals..." Character flaws are then redefined as virtues by placing them within their own particular framework.

Gratification of the instincts is soon identified with spiritual progress. This process is "dressed up in lofty-sounding rhetoric" as we "dignify with fancy language that which, in an earlier age, would simply and unselfconsciously have been named as depraved." Sexual license masquerades as spiritual superiority. Through "re-imagining" we find new meaning--one which exacts no moral cost. We see a resurgence of the age-old symbolism of the "vulture as mother-goddess...sex and death in a sanctified embrace."

Worship of the Self

"When a neutral psychology becomes the authoritative worldview, then an empty, inflated self with relativized values and relativized standards of behavior --polytheism-- will swifly become the new religion, as indeed it already has, whether recognized as such or not."

The most profound examples of modern resymbolization, Dr. Satinover says, are the transformation of God into self, and of evil into wisdom. What makes this new form of evil so seductive, says Dr. Satinover, is the fact that it is a mixture of truth and falsehood; concepts like "tolerance" and "diversity"--undeniably worthy in the proper context-- are often used as seductive wedges.

Dr. Satinover describes how psychoanalyst Jung was influential in transforming modern thought via gnosticism. Jung believed that spiritual progress consists not of conquering evil, but of moving mankind into a "higher synthesis" by incorporating evil into good, says Dr. Satinover. Spiritual fulfillment was seen in terms of acquiring a special knowledge, or "gnosis," rather than through atoning sacrifice.

By displacing God with self, mankind began to redefine the creation as divine, thus falling into nature worship.

Gnosticism is responsible for many modern re-symbolizations, including an attempt to synthesize male and female. The result of the distortion of masculine and feminine, says Dr. Satinover, is a widespread disordering of relations between the sexes. (The French psychoanalyst Jeannine Chasseguet-Smirgel expresses a similar view in *Creativity and Perversion*; the pervert, she says, blurs the boundaries between the sexes, and between the generations.)

The New Paganism: The Instincts as "Sacred"

"The pagan psycho-theology that lurks behind Jungianism...is simply the psychologized worship of instinct," says Dr. Satinover. Pagans make idols that are mere representations of their own impulses--"gods of power, money, fame, violence and sexuality. In primitive societies, these are idols of wood and silver and stone.

"In civilized ones, they are of words and concepts."

The Fantasy of Gay Androgyny

Also reflecting on *Gay Soul*, Dr. Joseph Nicolosi comments, "These are individuals who as children began by making small compromises with reality. They accepted the fantasy that their psychic conflicts could be resolved by being both male and female. Later, gay deconstructionism supported them in the collective illusion that they were not bound by human nature, but could transcend heterosexual boundaries and be gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, or transgendered. That's the gay culture's 'gnosis,' or supposed special knowledge: one can fashion himself as anything he chooses to be." ■

In Memoriam: Bill Funk

One of NARTH's most loyal and enthusiastic allies, Bill Funk, recently passed away after a battle with cancer. The NARTH officers will always remember Bill as a kind, caring, and gentle man who quietly went about his good works with no desire for recognition. Bill's generous support was invaluable to NARTH in our difficult early years. He was a warm and good man of strong conviction, and he will be greatly missed.

Book Review

A Place at the Table: The Gay Individual in American Society

by Bruce Bawer, Poseiden Press, 1993

This is a most intriguing book by a gay conservative. It makes the argument that there is a large, silent, hidden gay community which is nearly indistinguishable from the straight community--one that it is high-functioning and stable. In fact, Bawer insists, his life and that of most other homosexuals in America bears little resemblance to the "narrow, sex-obsessed image of gay life" presented in most gay periodicals.

The book is interesting for the perspective it provides against the book *Gay Soul* (described previously), which portrays a gay America which is exactly the opposite of Bawer's gay America--one which is hedonistic, anti-religious, and even celebratory of practices such as incest and sadomasochism.

What is most significant about *A Place at the Table* is that it identifies the split between more conservative, mainstream gays (who tend to be less visible), and the more radical gay culture; Bawer believes most gays actually belong to the former category. Significantly, Bawer was harshly criticized by the gay press for making such a distinction, and for his criticism of the more radical elements of the gay community.

The author points out that religious objectors tend to focus single-mindedly on the biblical condemnation against homosexuality, while ignoring historic prohibitions against divorce, the accumulation of wealth, and similar issues which might "hit closer to home." Clearly, this point is well-taken.

"Most conservatives fight to preserve a system that forces most homosexuals to treat their private lives like a dirty little secret, and drives many others toward a subculture that encourages them to view themselves as extremists, subversives, outsiders," according to Bawer.

Bawer says he finds nothing "objectively wrong" about the tastes and interests of the gay subculture. But he is distressed that what he calls a "small but highly visible minority of the gay population" is speaking for the whole. More conservative men, living relatively conventional lives, tend to keep their homosexuality to themselves, he says, so young gays are unaware that there are other role models--and that they need not emulate "the gay subculture."

Bawer feels a strong need to communicate the following to young gays: "be true to yourself, your good and decent self, and understand that there's no inherent conflict between homosexuality and decency. Don't let anyone, straight or gay, tell you any different."

"In an of itself, homosexuality is morally neutral and with-

out interest...The truth is, homosexuality is not a problem and should not be seen as one." He decries the difficulty of convincing straights that "nothing about homosexuality is intrinsically contrary to their values."

Gays who are promiscuous are *not* manifesting a trait intrinsic to the homosexual condition, he insists; their behavior is an indication that they are *victims*--having fallen prey to self-hatred induced by society's homophobia.

Bawer's theme--that homosexuality is healthy, and the gay community would fit comfortably into straight society if only fully accepted--is argued in a conciliatory, reasonable, and very persuasive manner.

"No One Can Change"

On closer examination, though, we see that Bawer's thesis rests on a series of assertions which range from highly questionable, to quite patently false. Contrary to reliable recent research, he believes the 10% figure is "about right" for the proportion of homosexuals in the population. He insists that gays are no more likely than straights to sexually abuse children. He asserts they can never convert to heterosexuality; those who believe they have changed are living in a state of denial as "emotional cripples...who are lying to everyone, and most of all themselves." He further insists, "Parents need to be helped to understand that they *cannot* reduce this risk of their children becoming homosexual."

And Bawer proceeds to assert--buying into "sound bite" science, against the serious evidence--that one is "born homosexual." He says, "it is meaningless to speak of approving or disapproving of someone's innate characteristics." On whether there is any room for argument as to whether homosexuality is innate: "Well, yes, there's 'argument' because bigots who know nothing about the subject refuse to accept the testimony of gays about their own lives and feelings." Yet he bases this argument on a clearly indefensible assertion-- that when a person has felt a certain way from childhood, this is an indication of a genetic (not developmentally based) condition.

"Happy Families Are an Illusion"

Then he moves on to repeat another very characteristic gay assertion: that the hope of happy, traditional family life is only an illusion. He is deeply cynical about heterosexual marriage, saying he "wouldn't want to live in what was the 'moral equivalent' of most of the marriages with which I'm familiar. Half the husbands I know cheat on their wives. Some beat their wives. Some couples argue constantly, some hardly speak to each other. Some of the husbands are dominated completely by their wives, some of the wives are slaves to their husbands...Not in a million years would I want a relationship that was 'morally equivalent' to such marriages..."

There is no description here of the author's relationship with his own parents, about which the reader can only speculate; however, he does acknowledge he shares the almost universal gay experience of memories of boyhood

inadequacy with male peers.

"A World Of Repressed Homosexuals"

He describes a scenario which--many readers would believe--reflects a rather shockingly obvious distortion of his own:

"Any reasonably attractive gay man knows what it is like to be stared at with anxious longing by a dubious young daddy pushing a pram, or drop into a gay bar after work and find himself the object of lewd, desperate overtures by a weepy, bibulous middle-aged husband."

He says he and his lover pass so-called "ex-gay" men on the street "all the time....At first, seeing a young man walking toward us, arm in arm with his wife, one of them pushing a baby carriage or stroller or carrying an infant, we'll think we're looking at a nice, ordinary, happy little family. But then, just as this family is about to pass us, the young husband's eyes will suddenly meet mine or Chris's in a fleeting, painful, haunted stare, and all at once we'll both realize that the picture is a lie, a forgery, and that this family's home is built on quicksand."

Bawer makes the leap of assumption that a man's curious stare at himself and his lover reflects envy, romantic longing and repressed sexual attraction.

For Bawer, it is simply hypocrisy to separate homosexual behavior from the orientation. "Those who condemn homosexuality while maintaining 'friendships' with individuals gays are simply hypocrites who refuse to face the inconsistency--and the brutality--of their attitudes."

He sees no conflict in the Bible between his own religion--Christianity--and his homosexuality, calling that condition "God-given." Then he goes on to deliver a smooth-sounding but philosophically shallow argument for biblical approval of homosexuality:

"The first thing that such a reader must understand is that society was structured very differently in biblical times than it is today. One cannot easily draw parallels between relationships then and now. The ancients' sexual roles and sexual conventions were radically different from ours, as was their understanding of sexual emotions and sexual identity...What all these passages underscore is not that God is cruel and unreasonable, but that the Bible was written by men who lived in a particular time and place with values that differed dramatically from our own...the scriptures, as they have come down to us, could therefore not help bearing the marks of human frailty, ignorance and prejudice..."

His equally pleasant-sounding but simplistic solution: The "thing to do is to accept rather than condemn, to love rather than hate."

--But What New Standards?

"[T]he fringe elements of the gay population have failed in large part to set moral standards for themselves," he admits. But he is predictably vague (after having just deconstructed his own Bible) about just what those standards *should* be, or on what rational basis he could now defend *any* such new, revised standards.

But perhaps the reader can gain an inkling of those revised standards might be from Andrew Sullivan's bestselling book, *Virtually Normal*. Sullivan is perhaps the most prominent gay conservative, and he argues that gays "have a better understanding of the need for extramarital outlets."

Bawer's case is smoothly said and quite persuasive-sounding, but his book makes its case on many false assumptions, and offers no new revelations.

---Reviewed by Linda Nicolosi

Efforts to Silence NARTH, cont'd from page one

but have since changed their minds. Schidlow says that feelings of shame, depression, suicidal thoughts and attempts, and substance abuse plague clients who do not succeed in changing sexual orientation. This study specifically seeks out dissatisfied former clients with damaged self-esteem. We, of course, are attempting to seek out the opposite population: satisfied people who have made a degree of change, with self-esteem intact or higher.

What if Evelyn Hooker had not been allowed to conduct her study? At that time, she was in conflict APA's official position that homosexuality was a disorder.

What if gay backers and gay researchers (who collaborate to fund and conduct so many of today's studies) were denied help in distributing their questionnaires because APA did not support *their* assumption (that homosexuality

must be genetic)?

If our profession is committed to scientific truth--*rather than advancing certain ideologies*--then it should be willing to deal with NARTH in an unbiased manner.

Yours truly,

Joseph Nicolosi
Executive Director

But Dr. Kohut is not likely to change A.P.A. policy. Meantime, NARTH still hopes to find a foundation to fund our work, so we can hire the research and clerical staff necessary to move ahead...with or without the cooperation of the major professional organizations.

Quotes from Gay Researchers LeVay and Hamer

—Submitted by NARTH Member A. Dean Byrd, Ph.D.

From "gay gene" researcher Dean Hamer, (1994), *The Science of Desire*, published by Simon and Schuster:

1. "We knew also that genes were only part of the answer. We assumed the environment also played a role in sexual orientation, as it does in most if not all behaviors...." (Page 82)

2. "Kinsey himself never said 10 percent of the population was gay; but that 10 percent of adult white males he surveyed--many of them prisoners--had been predominantly homosexual for a period of three or more years, sometime between age 16 through their 50's. Fewer than 4 percent of them had been predominantly or exclusively homosexual for all of their adult lives." (Page 98)

3. "More recent random-population surveys in the United States, West Germany, and Canada had reported that anywhere from 0.3 percent to 6.2 percent of men identified themselves as gay. Estimates of homosexual behavior, as compared to self-identification, also had yielded a wide range of figures, from 1 percent for having had a homosexual partner during the previous year to 7 percent for any same-sex activity during adulthood." (Page 99)

4. The pedigree study failed to produce what we originally hoped to find: simple Mendelian inheritance. In fact, we never found a single family in which homosexuality was distributed in the obvious sort of pattern that Mendel observed in his pea plants." (Page 104)

5. "In other words, some people were gay partly because of their genes and some were gay for other reasons." (Page 107).

6. "Most sissies will grow up to be homosexuals, and most gay men were sissies as children...Despite the provocative and politically incorrect nature of that statement, it fits the evidence. In fact, it may be the most consistent, well-documented, and significant finding in the entire field of sexual-orientation research and perhaps in all of human psychology." (Page 166) [In Hamer's own study, he asked] "...Did you consider yourself less masculine than other boys your age, or were you ever regarded as a sissy as a child?" The answer was yes for 68% of the gay men, compared with 5% of the straight men. Another question was, 'Did you enjoy sports such as baseball and football as a child?' Of the heterosexual men, 78% said 'very much,' compared with 8% of the homosexual subjects"...The gay participants recalled substantially more gender-atypical behaviors than the straight subjects." (Page 167)

7. "...[B]iology is amoral; it offers no help distinguishing between right and wrong. Only people, guided by their values and beliefs, can decide what is moral and what is not." (Page 214)

From brain researcher Simon LeVay (1996), in his book *Queer Science*, published by The MIT Press:

1. "Most gay men and lesbian women have their own opinions about why they are homosexual. Although there are exceptions, gay men in the United States today generally tend to claim that they were "born gay." Ninety percent of gay men surveyed by the *Advocate* in 1994 claimed to have been born gay, and only four percent believed that choice came into the equation at all. Lesbians surveyed by the *Advocate* gave somewhat more diverse reasons: about half of them believed they were born gay, 28 percent thought that environmental circumstances (generally early childhood experiences) had played some role, and 15 percent said that choice had something to do with their sexual orientation. Although there are significant differences between the attitudes of lesbians and gay men, it is clear that both groups are far more inclined to consider their sexual orientation a biological "given" than is the general population.

"Should one take these assertions seriously? Not entirely, of course. No one even remembers being born, let alone being born gay or straight. When a gay man, for example, says he was born gay, he generally means that he felt different from other boys at the earliest age he can remember. Sometimes the difference involved sexual feelings, but more commonly it involved some kind of gender-nonconformist or 'sex-atypical' traits--disliking rough-and-tumble play, for example--that were not explicitly sexual. These differences, which have been verified in a number of ways, suggest that sexual orientation is influenced by factors operating very early in life, *but these factors could still consist of environmental forces such as parental treatment in the early postnatal period.* [emphasis added]" (Page 6)

2. "Recent surveys in the United States have also come up with prevalence figures well below 10 percent. Most studies agree that about 2 percent of the population have had at least one homosexual experience in the previous few years. In a large survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center in 1992, 2.8 percent of men and 1.4 percent of women identified as "homosexual" or "bisexual". Another 3.2 percent of men and 4.1 percent of women identified as "heterosexual" but acknowledged some degree of same-sex attraction. The highest percentages reported in recent random-sample studies come from a market-research firm, Yankelovich Partners, Inc., who stated that 5.7 percent of their respondents identified as 'gay/homosexual/lesbian'." (Page 62)

3. "They found that gays and lesbians were significantly

more nonconformist than heterosexuals in the following gender-differentiated traits: (1) participation in rough-and-tumble play, competitive athletics, or aggression, (2) toy and activity preference, (3) imagined roles and careers (significant difference for men only), (4) cross-dressing, (5) preference for same- or opposite-sex playmates, (6) social reputation as "sissy" or "tomboy," and (7) gender identity." (Page 98)

4. "Thus the association between childhood gender nonconformity and adult homosexuality is well established, especially in men." (Page 98)

5. "Richard Green, who trained with Money, searched for factors that might predispose to gender nonconformity in children. In his 1974 book *Sexual Identity Conflict in Children and Adults*, Green explored these factors by means of extensive interviews with gender-nonconformist boys and their parents. Although he was cautious in attributing causality, Green named several factors that he believed were associated with femininity in boys: the failure of parents to discourage feminine behaviors, their active encouragement of feminine behaviors, their active discouragement of boyish behaviors, maternal overprotection, and so on. He explained to parents that they might have unwittingly caused or promoted their son's femininity, and that they stood the best chance of correcting the problem if they started to actively discourage it and encourage masculinity instead. In particular, the fathers should take a more active role in the boy's life. "You've got to get these mothers out of the way," Green told the parents of one seven-year-old. "Feminine kids don't need their mothers around." (Pages 99-100)

6. "Surveys of the actual sex behavior of lesbians and gay men have indicated that gay men have far more sex partners than do lesbians. Sometimes the reported differences have been extreme. In a study conducted in the San Francisco Bay area in the 1970s, for example, almost one-half of the white gay men and one-third of the black gay men claimed to have had at least five hundred different male sex partners, whereas most of the lesbians had had less than 10 female sex partners." (Page 159)

7. "...[T]he gay men scored higher--they achieved more uncommitted sex--than the straight men." (Page 160)

8. "Although homosexual *behavior* is very common in the animal world, it seems to be very uncommon that individual animals have a long-lasting predisposition to engage in such behavior to the exclusion of heterosexual activities. Thus, a homosexual *orientation* if one can speak of such a thing in animals, seems to be a rarity." (Page 207)

9. "Hooker's findings...were a challenge to the prevailing notion that male homosexuality was invariably associated with florid psychopathology. Looking back at her work from a present-day viewpoint, one can see that it had distinct limitations." (Page 216)

10. "Gay activism was clearly the force that propelled the APA to declassify homosexuality." (Page 224)

11. "...it needs to be acknowledged that a significant part of the development of sexual orientation remains unexplained." (Page 250)

12. "At this point, the most widely held opinion is that multiple factors play a role. In 1988' PFLAG member Tinkle Hake surveyed a number of well-known figures in the field about their views on homosexuality. She asked: "Many observers believe that a person's sexual orientation is determined by one or more of the following factors: genetic, hormonal, psychological, or social. Based on today's state-of-the-science, what is your opinion?"

The answers included the following: "all of the above in concert" (Alan Bell), "all of these variables" (Richard Green), "multiple factors" (Gilbert Herdt), "a combination of all the factors named" (Evelyn Hooker), "all of these factors" (Judd Marmor), "a combination of causes" (Richard Pillard), "possibly genetic and hormonal, but juvenile sexual rehearsal play is particularly important" (John Money), and "genetic and hormonal factors, and perhaps also some early childhood experiences" (James Weinrich).

Somewhat discordant with these opinions were those of Lee Ellis ("prenatal factors"), Martin Weinberg ("biological factors for homosexuality and heterosexuality; conditioning for various degrees of bisexuality") and the then-director of the Kinsey Institute, June Reinisch ("no one knows"). (Page 273). ■

Important New Resource Available

In recent months, NARTH has experienced a heavy demand for informative literature. Thanks to a donation from one of our supporters, we have just completed a new 120-page booklet, "Understanding Homosexuality," which covers a broad spectrum of issues in readable language for the layman. Suggested donation is \$15.

Gender-Identity Disturbance in Children

The popular media continues to give the public one-sided information about childhood gender-identity disturbance and homosexuality. On the Oprah Winfrey Show (September 20, 1996), Oprah opened the show by saying:

OPRAH WINFREY: Little girls who dress like boys...
little boys who play with dolls and dress like girls...
parents who are scared...

What is it you really want to know? You want to know if you're raising a gay son? Is it just a phase?

And should the parents accept it or try to change it?

Oprah then introduced a Dr. Ettner, a child cross-gender expert who identifies social ostracism--not cross-gender identification--as the child's problem. Relieving the parents of any sense of responsibility for the child's condition and for hope of change, Dr. Ettner says the mother should allow the cross-dressing boy to express his feminine identity.

A sample of his comments:

Dr. ETTNER: (To a mother) "... maybe what you need to do is work with giving the child some options for when he can play with these (girls') toys. And actually talk to him about how terribly painful it is to be teased and how it hurts. And maybe if he's able to do it in a safe way, then he'll be satisfied, and he can leave those toys at home when he goes to friends' houses.

"...It's the rest of the world that makes these kids crazy...

"Because often, parents then think, 'If I just find the right psychiatrist or psychologist, we can help the child to move through this phase quickly and become who we want them to be,' and that may not happen.

"... imagine the child who feels, 'There's a female part of me that I have to keep hidden under wraps.' And respecting the child, understanding that these feelings are important to the child...It may not be what we want, it may not be what we expected, but nevertheless, these children may be born and not made. They may come into the world with this condition. It looks like this is a lifelong condition for many of these people, and if it were a better world, it wouldn't be such a terrible condition. But we have to help these children. Through compassion, we have to work with our school systems, with the parents, and we have to develop acceptance for these kids, too."

This talk-show discussion contrasts with findings reported in the August 1996 NARTH *Bulletin (Gender Identity Disorder and Psychosexual Problems in Children and Adolescents*, by Kenneth Zucker, Ph.D. and Susan Bradley, M.D.). Zucker and Bradley believe "the parents' valuing of their son as a male and discouragement of cross-gender

behaviors allows a gradual relinquishing of the defensive solution and a building of confidence in a same-sex identity."

Bradley and Zucker observe that parents have failed to adequately discourage cross-gender behaviors, and that fathers in particular have tended to be emotionally unavailable to their sons, with particular difficulty expressing feelings.

In gender-disturbed girls, nearly 77% had mothers with histories of depression, and all had been depressed in their daughters' infant or toddler years. "Thus, during the hypothesized sensitive period for gender-identity development, the mothers of the girls in our sample were quite vulnerable from a psychiatric point of view," Zucker and Bradley observe. They say:

"[O]ne consequence of this vulnerability was that the girls had difficulty in forming an emotional connection to their mothers. In some instances, it seemed to us that a girl either failed to identify with her mother, or disidentified from her mother because she perceived her mother as weak, incompetent, or helpless. In fact, many of the mothers devalued their own efficacy and regarded the female gender role with disdain...In a smaller number of cases, it seemed that the daughter's 'significant medical illness' or difficult temperament during infancy had impaired her relationship with her mother...Six of the mothers had a history of severe and chronic sexual abuse of an incestuous nature. The femininity of these mothers had always been clouded by this experience, which rendered them quite wary about men and masculinity and created substantial dysfunction in their sexual lives. In terms of psychosocial transmission, the message to the daughters seemed to be that being female was unsafe. The mothers had a great deal of difficulty in instilling in their daughters a sense of pride and confidence about being female."

Zucker and Bradley believe treatment of childhood gender-identity disorder can be both "therapeutic and ethical." They base their case on several points, claiming that therapy affords the following benefits:

- (1) A reduction in social ostracism by peers;
- (2) An opportunity to relieve the psychopathology which has been documented to be associated with the disorder, both in the child and within the family;
- (3) The prevention of later transsexualism;
- (4) The prevention of homosexuality in adulthood.

Unfortunately, the Oprah Show conveyed a very different impression to its millions of viewers. ■

Bem's Theory of Sexual Orientation: Implications for Treatment and Prevention

Uriel Meshoulam, Ph.D.
Cambridge, MA

These politically-correct days, discovering a paper which proposes a psychological theory of sexual preference is rare. I was therefore surprised to find Daryl J. Bem's article published in a recent issue of *Psychological Review* (Bem, 1996). This surprise is particularly gratifying when one bears in mind that *Psychological Review* is a publication of the *American Psychological Association*, an organization that often discourages research on homosexuality.

Bem does not claim that his theory is comprehensive. He admits that his developmental thesis "does not describe an inevitable, universal path to sexual orientation, but the modal path followed by most men and women," and that there are "individual variations, alternative paths, and cultural influences on sexual orientation" (Bem, 1996, p. 322). In this paper, I mean to summarize Bem's theory, and examine some of its implications to the issues surrounding the treatment and prevention of homosexuality.

The EBE Theory

Bem assumes that *heterosexuality* is not to be taken for granted as natural; just like *homosexuality*, he says, it needs to be explained. He rejects biological explanations--instead attempting to understand the development of sexual preference within the context of the "optimal level of arousal" theory of human motivation.

According to this theory, people show preference for experiences that elicit a moderate level of arousal in them (Mook, 1987). As applied to sexual preference, the theory contends that human beings are sexually attracted to those whom they have perceived as dissimilar, yet not *too* dissimilar to themselves. This principle applies equally to heterosexual and homosexual attractions.

Bem summarizes the principle underlying the development of sexual orientation in the phrase "exotic becomes erotic" (EBE). Typically, girls and boys play with peers of their own sex. This is due to their differing temperaments and cultural expectations. Consequently, more often than not, children become increasingly comfortable with members of their own sex. As same-sex peers become familiar to the growing child, peers of the opposite sex are commonly deemed dissimilar and exotic. The exotic, but not the *too* exotic, leads to a heightened but moderate level of arousal, which in turn is transformed into sexual attraction.

The development of *less typical* sexual preferences, such as homosexuality, follows the same EBE principle. Temperament, as well as cultural and other factors, affect the child's preference for certain activities and playmates. Thus, some children prefer activities that are atypical to

their sex. Some girls, for example, prefer rough-and-tumble play more characteristic of boys, whereas some boys prefer quiet activities and socializing more characteristic of girls. These gender-nonconforming children are led to construe themselves as different from their same-sex peers. Consequently, same-sex peers become mysterious and exotic to them. The unfamiliarity and mystique lead to heightened arousal, which later in life translates into sexual attraction.

Bem summarizes his theory in the following chart:

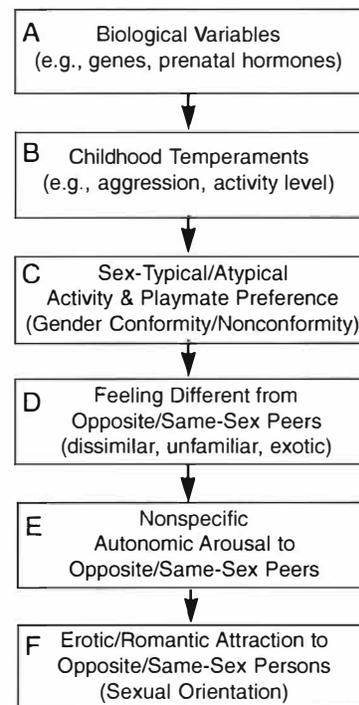


Figure 1. The temporal sequence of events leading to sexual orientation for most men and women in a gender-polarizing culture (Bem, 1996, p. 321).

The Ethics of Therapy

Probably the most fundamental question about conversion therapy with homosexual clients is whether it should be conducted at all. Critics often argue that homosexuality is inborn, as natural as heterosexuality, and therefore should not be treated at all. Others, in defense of therapy, respond with the argument that only heterosexuality is natural, whereas homosexuality is a perversion of nature.

Bem disregards the inflammatory construct of "naturalness," and considers it irrelevant. According to his theory, both homosexuality and heterosexuality are acquired con-

structions, and as such, neither is "natural." Sexual preference is determined not by our genes, but by the way we interact with others, he believes, and the way we feel about ourselves in the context of same-sex and opposite-sex peers. From the point of view of the EBE theory, homosexuality and heterosexuality are neither biological facts, nor moral statements, but rather constructions.

The psychotherapist's responsibility, then, is to help his client understand his or her constructions, to articulate and elaborate them, and to explore the possibility of replacing them with a better and more useful understanding. The ethical questions concerning the treatment of homosexuals are no graver than the questions surrounding the ethics of psychotherapy in general.

It may be fair to ask whether therapists have the right at all to influence the course of development of their clients. Is it any more unethical to help homosexual persons change their undesired sexual feelings, than it is to help stutterers eliminate the anxiety which underlies their undesired pattern of speech? Does the ethics of the treatment of stuttering depend on whether this speech pattern is said to be acquired or hereditary? Obviously, the answer to these questions must be "no."

Homosexuality Need Not be Categorized as a Disorder

Psychotherapists who do not automatically affirm homosexuality are often accused of having branded it pathological, and are therefore deemed homophobic. Bem wisely refrains from categorizing homosexual orientation as a disorder. In fact, one does not have to define a psychological phenomenon a disorder to believe in the legitimacy of its research and treatment. After all, we consider therapy legitimate when applied to numerous nonpathological conditions. Do we have to define test anxiety, bereavement, or stuttering pathological before we treat them? So long as these conditions are disagreeable to the client, we see little problem in applying psychotherapeutic procedures to treat them. One does not have to be homophobic to see validity in therapies which help homosexuals change the construction of their sexuality.

Implications to Prevention

Parents may regard the prospect of homosexuality in their children as undesirable for a variety of reasons. Their reasons may be related to social acceptability, health risks, moral and religious beliefs, or economics. Yet, as therapists we cannot be made judges of our clients' ethics. Those who consult us because they wish to reduce the likelihood that their children will construe themselves as homosexual deserve well-thought-out and well-researched answers.

Peers

"EBE theory predicts that the effect of any childhood variable on an individual's sexual orientation depends on whether it prompts him or her to feel more similar to, or more different from, same-sex or opposite-sex peers" (p. 331). Examining Bem's sequence of events (*Figure 1*)

reveals possible points of intervention which may help the child avoid seeing himself or herself as different from their own sex.

For example, children with nonconforming temperament can be guided in their choice of playmates. As my clients tell me about their homes, it is clear that parents of gender-nonconforming children are often concerned about their children's sexual identity. Anxious parents often try to compensate for the nonaggressive nature of their son by pushing him into competitive activities and aggressive sports. This is often done despite the boy's obvious disinclination and his protest. Casting the child into aggressive situations is likely to be counterproductive, making him feel inadequate in the company of boys. Steering such a child to spend time with boys of similar, quiet temperament is wiser. They are less likely to taunt him, and more likely to accept him. Temperament compatibility will induce more comfortable time for the child, advancing familiarity and minimizing arousal. Associating with nonaggressive boys is also preferable to finding refuge in spending time exclusively with girl playmates. The latter may accentuate his feeling of being different from other boys, and may even bring on other boys' ridicule.

Family

Bem's theory predicts that children who feel alienated from their own sex have an increased likelihood of developing sexual attraction to their own sex later in life. The child's same-sex parent has a special responsibility to help the child feel comfortable within his own sex group. The importance of the father's role in the development of male identity in the child was extensively discussed by Nicolosi (1991). In a close and positive relationship with their fathers, boys are more likely to develop the constructs useful to making them feel comfortable in the company of other boys.

Siblings may also play a significant role in the development of sexual identity in their brother or sister. Aggressive boys, for example, may make a less aggressive brother feel excluded and rejected. The connection between sibling relationship and homosexuality gained support by a recent study which showed that the likelihood of a boy to develop homosexual orientation is correlated with the number of older brothers (but *not* sisters) he has (Blanchard & Bogaert, 1996). By attending to possible consequences of sibling rivalry, parents can help prevent problems from developing in the gender-nonconforming child.

Culture

As a culture, we need to fight prejudice and misconceptions about the sexes and about sexuality. If we broaden the range of what constitutes acceptable behavior for boys and girls, gender-nonconforming children will have an easier time and feel more comfortable with their sex group. If we relax our construction of femininity and masculinity, fewer atypically active girls will feel unfeminine, and fewer gender-nonconforming boys will feel rejected by

members of their own sex.

Thus the redefinition, but not the elimination of the traditional differentiation between male-female cultural roles is recommended. EBE theory contends that we need to maintain a clear sexual differentiation, and to preserve a moderate level of tension and arousal between the sexes. After all, it is this tension or arousal that is being transformed into sexual attraction between the sexes. "Heterosexuality is the modal outcome across time and culture because virtually every human society ensures that most boys and girls will grow up seeing the other sex as exotic and, hence, erotic" (p. 329).

Implications for Therapy

Within the context of constructivist psychology, and following Bem's EBE theory, homosexual men and women are said to develop two discrepant constructions: of themselves, and of others of their own sex. In my practice, I find a consistent disparity between the self-definition of homosexual men on one hand, and their understanding of "what being a man is all about" on the other. Often the homosexual client develops the construct of "a real man" (*vs.* "men like me") and attributes to him exaggerated masculine characteristics. Thus, the client ends up clearly placing himself "out of the league of real men."

In therapy with homosexual men, moving away from homosexuality toward heterosexuality means bridging the discrepancy between one's construction of the self, and that of masculinity. At the conclusion of a successful therapy, the client will see himself as more similar to other men and feel more comfortable with them. The process involves shifting his self-definition closer to his definition of masculinity, and reconstruing masculinity so it is less caricature-like and more achievable. This reconstruction dislodges "real men" from their pedestal. Consequently, men are perceived as familiar peers, and thus less exotic and attractive.

Therapies which emphasize male bonding, such as Nicolosi's reparative therapy (Nicolosi, 1991; 1993), cultivate changes in the client's self-perception. This is achieved through the encouragement of positive nonsexual contact between the client and other men. Within the context of such relationships, the client bonds with male friends. This allows him to feel accepted by them as a male among males. Through the process of identification he increases his feeling of belongingness to his own gender. As an alternative to the limiting construct of "real men," the client finds it more useful to recognize that "there is more than one way of being a man."

Conclusion

The EBE theory of the development of sexual orientation is an interesting contribution to our understanding of homosexuality. One of its major strengths is its parsimony. First, the EBE theory applies a single principle to both homosexual and heterosexual attractions, and to men and

women alike. Second, it embeds its principle in the well-established theory of optimal level of arousal. Third, the theory draws support from a large variety of sources, and dozens of research studies.

Bem's theory also has the advantage of being nonideological. This allows us to free the study of homosexuality from the political controversy that has surrounded it for decades. The EBE theory does not condemn homosexuality; neither does it condone it. It refrains from seeing it as a disorder, yet focuses on the need to explain its development. By circumventing the issue of "naturalness" of heterosexuality and homosexuality, it invites more objective research on the subject.

Admittedly, the EBE theory is not all-encompassing and exhaustive. It surely requires elaboration and enhancement. Thus, tying the EBE principle to the concepts of self-perception and self-construction is essential. It must be broadened to incorporate the body of evidence that deals with sexual identity. For example, it will be useful to explore the relationship between gender-nonconformity and cultural and filial factors, rather than focusing chiefly on inborn temperament.

Overall, Bem's EBE theory is promising, since it is permeable, and is open for further elaboration and development. It provides us with a solid principle which can be further applied to other aspects of sexual orientation and sexual identity.

Last, but not least, Bem's theory has an appeal to those of us who believe in the legitimacy and efficacy of psychotherapy with homosexual clients. The theory supports the notion of reparative therapy, as it sees homosexuality set in one's construction of the self, rather than as genetically determined. As such, it gives therapists a good framework for thinking about the issue of homosexuality, its treatment, and its prevention.

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One Man's Struggle

Anonymous

This story is reprinted from Anchor: A Message of Hope for Non-Gay Homosexuals. (Publication available by writing Anchor, P.O. Box 153, Okemos, MI 48805-0153.) This account poignantly describes the religious client's conflict between his values, and those unmet childhood emotional needs which have led to his homosexuality.

What is it like being a homosexual in a Christian church? Is it even possible? These two concepts seem to be so diametrically opposed to each other. Yet it is true. God has called individuals who are struggling with homosexual feelings, and at the same time are strongly convicted towards His truth and way of life. Please allow me to tell you my story.

Ever since I can remember I can recall feeling and acting differently than those boys around me. I felt so self-conscious about myself and my body. I can't tell you why I felt this way. I just did. It didn't seem that any of the other boys felt like I did. I felt like I was on the inside looking out, both figuratively and literally. I would frequently sit inside our house and look out at the park or open fields, and watch as other boys my age were playing baseball or running. I just didn't seem to fit in, and consequently I was never invited, and never initiated any friendships.

I remember my childhood as a very lonely time. I did everything by myself. I rode my bike alone; I played in the snow alone; I went down to the river alone; I did everything alone. I've never played basketball, and I can count the hours I've played football and baseball combined on one hand.

I don't know why this happened, but I always felt like I didn't belong. I couldn't participate and whenever I had to, because of a school P.E. program, I was so inadequate at any kind of sport that my isolation was heightened.

I felt my loneliness would have been OK had I just been left alone. But that was not to be. I was, of course, the object of constant, bitter and biting ridicule and attack. "He doesn't want to play with us; he's just a sissy." "Go home and play with your dolls!" "Look at the little mama's boy!" It hurt so profoundly, so completely. I wanted nothing but to be invisible, to be just like the other boys. But the criticism only made me withdraw more. I became an avid reader and from fifth grade on, spent most of my time with books. But always alone and distant.

I wonder, as you might, about my father. Didn't he notice? Why didn't he intervene? I suppose he did notice, but I suspect he didn't know what to do. I have always felt my father to be a good man, but a very passive and distant figure in my life. I have never known how to relate to him and have never felt accepted or a part of his life.

He never took any interest in my activities, my interests,

my school, my projects or my friends. Nothing. I can't ever remember building a model car with my dad; I never played catch, or wrestled, or even held hands with him. He never put his arms around me. He never asked me about any book I was reading, never asked about my school - nothing. Everything I've learned, I learned on my own. I taught myself to play chess; I learned to drive - everything on my own.

My mother was the classic over-involved, possessive, protective mother. She acted the perfect role of a mother trying to fill in the gaps. However, it was a male I needed in my life, and that is what I sorely missed. It's been said that a boy needs any or all of three male influences in his life: a father or father figure, a coach or mentor, and male peers. I had none. My father was distant. I had a couple of uncles, but they weren't that interested in me and rarely gave me any attention. I didn't have any close family friend, coach or mentor. I never played sports, so I was deprived of both the coach and all the male companionship there. I also never had any close male friends. I was too shy to make any close friends, and most of my school friends surely didn't want to make friends with the "sissy."

If maleness is taught and learned from watching and spending time with other males, I certainly didn't learn it. As time went on, I continued to develop intellectually. Emotionally and sexually I was stunted and underdeveloped. When puberty hit, I took a different path. In school all the boys would be dating and have an intense interest in girls. I didn't. I didn't dislike girls, but they just weren't that interesting or exciting to me. I couldn't tell what all the fuss was about. I ignored the entire dating process.

I didn't see myself as a homosexual. I didn't know what was happening and didn't care. Looking back on it all now, it is so obvious. I was intensely modest. I hated gym class, not only because I couldn't do anything physically, but also because I was so shy about my body. While other boys seemed so natural and at ease in the nude, I was extremely prudish and modest.

It was at this time that God began to work with me. One religious magazine I was reading contained an article titled "How To Be A Boy." It had such a powerful impact on me, I would have done anything to trade places with the boy in that picture. There were pictures of a church college in which all the young men seemed to be just so robust and healthy, happy, at ease with themselves. Pictures of guys playing basketball and football, riding bikes and just having a wonderful time, and being so natural. What struck me was the accepting environment and how easy they all fit into the picture. If God could help me be accepted and fit in, I was willing to do anything and go anywhere. I needed to be in that picture. I needed that powerful influence in my life. I forsook my family, friends, and scholarships to get into that church college. I wanted to be normal, and I thought this school could do that for me.

I know now that my hopes were unrealistic. I am nonethe-

less tremendously grateful for the calling God has given me. Whatever hook He needed to get me to understand, I can't complain.

The homosexuality was sublimated for my entire college career. I say sublimated because I was beginning to see something coming to maturity in my life that both scared and interested me. Intense homosexual desires began to develop. Instead of being horrified by them, I found them neither scary nor unwelcome. I now began to realize that I had a serious problem, and I didn't know what to do about it.

At the time I was dating. I subsequently married and now have two children. I thought the homosexual feeling would disappear once I was married and started a family. My relationship with my future wife began as a very good friendship, a friendship that developed into love and finally into marriage. Sex has never been a problem. The mind is able to compartmentalize, and I have never had a difficulty with sexual performance, and even sexual attraction to females. However, the homosexuality never disappeared. In fact, over the years the homosexual attraction increased and intensified.

At this point it is important to mention that to most people, a homosexual is one who is actively involved in the "gay" lifestyle, who is effeminate and swishy, promiscuous and flamboyant. However, that does not describe me at all. I do not subscribe to any of the gay agenda. I reject all their arguments, as I must, being a Christian. God condemns it, and there is no way around it. However, that doesn't mean I can turn off my mind. It does mean that I must live within a certain code of conduct. The world makes that very difficult. There is a tremendous amount of pornography, videos, movie theaters, discos, clubs, homosexual strip joints, 976-lines, 800-lines, masseurs, classified advertising, etc., etc. It is not hard to find.

The problem for most Christians, as it was for me, was reconciling the fact that I was a Christian with the fact there was something in me that I didn't initiate, didn't want, and prayed and fasted fervently for God to remove. I wanted that change too much--I just wanted to be normal.

The Passover was always the most stressful part of the year for me. In my church, one of the ways we prepare for the Passover service is to examine ourselves in the light of God's Word and the example of Jesus Christ. I hated it because I felt like such a hypocrite. I would work myself up, believing and committing myself to a homosexual-free life for the rest of my years. I had to believe I was telling the truth; I didn't want to take the Passover unworthily. Yet, a month or six weeks later, there were these homosexual feelings again, inevitably and perennially. Each year I had to work up more and more energy. I was becoming two personalities: the individual who struggles and fights, and the other who wants to accept and embrace this powerful homosexual force.

The struggle is incredibly difficult, and it seemed fruitless.

I felt like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, fighting between these two conflicts. After years of struggle, I happened to be listening to a radio broadcast in which a well-known psychologist was discussing reparative therapy for homosexuals, primarily men. I had the sense that he was speaking to me. I immediately contacted him and began a long and enlightening path towards wholeness--a wholeness I have yet to achieve, but I am more *there* than *not*.

Homosexuality, I came to discover, is an attempt to repair something that was never given to me - my manhood, my male identity. I don't have the time to investigate the genetic argument. However, if I were born with a genetic predisposition to murder, would it be OK if I murdered because I had this proclivity? Certainly not. God condemns homosexual acts, no matter what the cause. There aren't any exceptions. I cannot be dishonest with what I know to be true. But how, then, do I reconcile what has happened and is happening to me? What I *have* come to understand through therapy, is that this is a process.

I went through an intense period of therapy trying to sort out what had happened. My father's betrayal, my anger towards him, my guilt, my embarrassment, my loneliness, my humiliation, my shyness, my disconnection from my body, all these issues and more were explored. I would be lying if I said that I have been cured, and am now a football player who goes camping and drives around in a jeep whistling and noticing all the women. The truth is, that has not happened.

But I have resolved many conflicts. I have forgiven my father for his inadequacies. I have taken responsibility for what I have done, and I have taken positive steps to solve some of my problems. As part of my reconciliation, I opened up to some close friends and to my brother. They all began to understand, and showed support and acceptance. I joined a gym in an effort to learn what guys do. It hasn't been totally effective, but it is a process. I am learning to play basketball, and although it isn't that fantastic, the friendships and camaraderie that I should have had as a child are something I look forward to now. I find that the powerful homosexual impulses have diminished tremendously. While I never acted out, that is, engaged in any type of sexual activity with other men, the desire to do so has diminished. In fact, it has almost disappeared.

Most importantly, because I had such a difficult relationship with my father, I have had to learn what it is like to build a relationship with God the Father. It has not been easy. The guilt and embarrassment were there at the beginning. I have come to see that God does not expect perfection today. It is a process that, with His help, makes the struggle easier. I now know that God has given me this trial. I am grateful that he has called me and that I have a future hope that I can depend on. The homosexual struggle is not unlike any other than man must go through, and it can be conquered. It must be conquered. ■

A Philosophical Perspective from the World's Religions

In past issues of the Bulletin, we have explored the positions of traditional Christianity and Judaism on homosexuality. The moral reasoning of these ancient faiths evolved over centuries.

In the last 25 years, the social-science professions have proclaimed that homosexuality is healthy. In doing so, they have boldly repudiated the teachings of all of the world's major religions. Here, another well-known faith explains its teachings on this subject:

The Baha'i Teachings on Homosexuality

(Statement published in QAWL B.E. 152, November 23, 1995, addressed to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States, excerpted below):

Dear Baha'i Friends:

We are instructed to provide the following guidelines...for assistance in guiding the believers.

It is important to understand that there is a difference between the Baha'i attitude toward, on the one hand, the condition of homosexuality...and, on the other, the practice of homosexual relations by members of the Baha'i community.

As you know, the Baha'i Faith strongly condemns all blatant acts of immorality, and it includes among them the expression of sexual love between individuals of the same sex...

In a letter dated March 26, 1950, written on his behalf, Shoghi Effendi, the authorized interpreter of the Baha'i Teachings... explicates the Baha'i attitude toward homosexuality. It should be noted that the Guardian's interpretation of this subject is based on his infallible understanding of the Texts. It represents both a statement of moral principle and enerring guidance to Baha'is who are homosexuals. The letter states:

"No matter how devoted and fine the love may be between people of the same sex, to let it find expression in sexual acts is wrong. To say that it is ideal is no excuse. Immorality of every sort is really forbidden by Baha'u'llah, and homosexual relationships He looks upon as such, besides being against nature.

"To be afflicted this way is a great burden to a conscientious soul. But through the advice and help of doctors,

through a strong and determined effort, and through prayer, a soul can overcome this handicap."

... Human nature is made up of possibilities both for good and evil. True religion can enable it to soar in the highest realm of the spirit, while its absence can, as we already witness around us, cause it to fall to the lowest depths of degradation and misery."

A distinguishing feature of human existence is that we have been given the capacity to know and love God and to consciously obey Him. Thus we also have the converse: the ability to turn away from God, to fail to love Him and to disobey Him. Indeed, left to himself, man is naturally inclined toward evil. Human beings need not only assistance in defining acceptable behavior of one person toward another, but also guidance which will help them to refrain from doing that which is spiritually damaging to themselves.

"Whether deficiencies are inborn or are acquired, our purpose in this life is to overcome them."

---Baha'i Teaching

The material world, in relation to the spiritual world, is a world of imperfections. It is full of dangers and difficulties which have been greatly aggravated by man's neglect and misuse of his responsibilities. Human society itself, which exists in the material world, is in disastrous disarray.

Genetic variations occur, producing conditions which can create problems for the individual. Some conditions are of an emotional or psychological nature, producing such imbalances as quickness to anger, recklessness, timorousness, and so forth; others involve purely physical characteristics, resulting not only in unusual capacities but also in handicaps or diseases of various kinds.

Whether deficiencies are inborn or are acquired, our purpose in this life is to overcome them and to train ourselves in accordance with the pattern that is revealed to us in the divine Teachings.

The Guardian has stated that "through the advice and help of doctors, through a strong and determined effort, and through prayer, a soul can overcome this handicap."

The statistics which indicate that homosexuality is incurable are undoubtedly distorted by the fact that many of those who overcome the problem never speak about it in public, and others solve their problems without even consulting professional counselors.

Nevertheless there are undoubtedly cases in which the individual finds himself (or herself) unable to eliminate a physical attraction to members of the same sex, even though he succeeds in controlling his behavior. This is but one of the many trials and temptations to which human beings are subject in this life. For Baha'is, it cannot alter the

basic concept taught by Baha'u'llah, that the kind of sexuality purposed by God is the love between a man and a woman, and that its primary (but not its only) purpose is the bringing of children into this world and providing them with a loving and protective environment in which they can be reared to know and love God.

If, therefore, a homosexual cannot overcome his or her condition to the extent of being able to have a heterosexual marriage, he or she must remain single, and abstain from sexual relations. These are the same requirements as for a heterosexual person who does not marry. While Baha'u'llah encourages the believers to marry, it is important to note that marriage is by no means an obligation. It is for the individual to decide whether he or she wishes to lead a family life or to live in a state of celibacy.

"Homosexuality...is regarded by the Faith as a distortion of true human nature."

To regard homosexuals with prejudice and disdain would be entirely against the spirit of Baha'i Teachings. The doors are open for all of humanity to enter the Cause of God, irrespective of their present circumstances; this invitation applies to homosexuals as well as to any others who are engaged in practices contrary to the Baha'i Teachings.

Associated with this invitation is the expectation that all believers will make a sincere and persistent effort to eradicate those aspects of their conduct which are not in conformity with Divine Law. It is through such adherence to the Baha'i Teachings that a true and enduring unity of the diverse elements of the Baha'i community is achieved and safeguarded.

The Universal House of Justice, Department of the Secretariat
September 11, 1995

Recent Article Available:

"Recollections of their fathers by homosexual and heterosexual men," In *Psychological Reports*, volume 79.

A comparison study of homosexual and heterosexual men describing their recollection of their fathers was conducted at Marywood School of Social Work. The findings support earlier research which finds that, compared to heterosexual men, homosexual men recollect their fathers as more rejecting and less loving. A complete bibliography of earli-

er and most recent studies is included. This article should be of value to clinicians interested in the connection between family dynamics and homosexuality.

Contact:

James Phelan, LCSW

Washington, D.C. Conference on Homosexuality

The American Public Philosophy Institute is sponsoring a four-day conference on homosexuality from June 19-21 entitled "Homosexuality and American Public Life."

There will be 35 speakers including William Kristol (editor, *The Weekly Standard*), psychiatrist Richard Fitzgibbons, M.D., psychiatrist and author Jeffrey Satinover, M.D., columnist Don Feder, entertainment critic Michael

Medved, psychologist George Rekers, Ph.D., Rabbi Barry Freundel, philosophy and law professor Russell Hittinger, and Richard John Neuhaus (editor of *First Things*), among many other prominent speakers.

For further information, see the brochure enclosed with this mailing.

Reprinted from the
Washington Times
(January 24, 1997)

Homosexuality Is Not Inherited, and Science Fiction Solutions Won't Help

by

Richard Fitzgibbons, M.D.,
Psychiatrist, West Conshohocken, PA

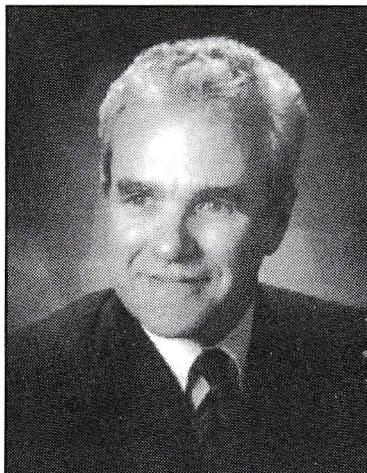
Ken Adelman, in his January 13th column, "Nature vs. nurture in the policy debate," has swallowed hook, line and sinker the junk science contained in Chandler Burr's book "A Separate Creation: The Search for Biological Origins of Sexual Orientation."

The book contains massive amounts of scientific information that is absolutely irrelevant to the question at hand. Two studies that are quoted have been discredited. Then, having proved absolutely nothing, Mr. Burr writes another article making the outrageous claim that "clinical research-- all but universally accepted among biologists-- [shows] that homosexuality is a biological trait."

In November 1995, an article ("Gay Genes, Revisited: Doubts Arise Over Research on the Biology of Homosexuality") published in *Scientific American* pointed out the two studies cited by Mr. Burr (Simon LeVay and Dean Hamer) had not been replicated by any other researchers. Furthermore, Mr. Hamer's research had been discredited by other studies and Mr. Hamer was "charged with research improprieties."

There is substantial evidence based on years of clinical experience that homosexuality is a developmental disorder. Every child has a healthy need to identify positively with the parent of the same sex, have same-sex friendships, a positive body image and a confident sexual identity. Homosexual feelings can occur when these needs are not appropriately met. The adolescent's unmet needs become entangled with emerging sexual feelings and produce same-sex attraction. Therapy consists in helping male clients to understand the emotional causes of their attraction and to strengthen their masculine identity. It has been our clinical experience that as these men become more comfortable and confident with their manhood, same-sex attractions resolve or decrease significantly in many patients.

There is no need for those who feel burdened by same-sex attraction to wait for the development of genetic surgery or some other science-fiction solution. Treatment is already available. At-risk adolescents and parents have a right to know that homosexuality is preventable and treatable and the sooner intervention takes place, the better the prognosis. ■



Richard Fitzgibbons, M.D.

Reprinted from
The Wall Street Journal
(January 9, 1997)

Don't Forsake Homosexuals Who Want Help

by

Charles Socarides, M.D., Benjamin Kaufman, M.D.,
Joseph Nicolosi, Ph.D., Jeffrey Satinover, M.D.,
and Richard Fitzgibbons, M.D.

Suppose that a young man, seeking help for a psychological condition that was associated with serious health risks and made him desperately unhappy, were to be told by the professional he consulted that no treatment is available, that his condition is permanent and genetically based, and that he must learn to live with it. Perhaps this young man, unwilling to give up hope, sought out other specialists only to receive the same message: "Nothing can be done for you. Accept your condition."

How would this man and his family feel when they discovered years later that numerous therapeutic approaches have been available for his specific problem for more than 60 years? What would be his reaction when informed that, although none of these approaches guaranteed results and most required a long period of treatment, a patient who was willing to follow a proven treatment regime had a good chance of being free from the condition? How would this man feel if he discovered that the reason he was not informed that treatment for his condition was available was that certain groups were, for political reasons, pressuring professionals to deny that effective treatment existed?

Every day young men seek help because they are experiencing an unwanted sexual attraction to other men, and are told that their condition is untreatable. It is not surprising that many of these young men fall into depression or despair when they are informed that a normal life with a wife and children is never to be theirs.

This despair can lead to reckless and life-threatening actions. Many young men with homosexual inclinations, feeling their lives are of little value, are choosing to engage in unprotected sex with strangers. Epidemiologists are well aware that the number of new HIV infections among young men involved in homosexual activity is rising at an alarming rate; within this population, the "safer sex" message is falling on deaf ears. One recent study revealed that 38% of homosexual adolescents had engaged in unprotected sex in the previous six months.

Young men and the parents of at-risk males have a right to know that prevention and effective treatment are available.

They have a right to expect that every professional they consult will inform them of all their therapeutic options and allow them to make their own choices based on the best clinical evidence. A variety of studies have shown that between 25% and 50% of those seeking treatment experienced significant improvement. If a therapist feels for whatever reason that he cannot treat someone of this condition, he has an obligation to refer the patient to someone who will.

Also, these young men and their parents have the right to know that, contrary to media propaganda, there is no proven biological basis for homosexuality. A November 1995 article in *Scientific American* pointed out that the much-publicized brain research by Simon LeVay has never been replicated, and that Dean Hamer's gene study has been contradicted by another study.

The truth is that the clinical experience of many therapists who work with men struggling with same-sex attractions indicates that there are many causes and various manifestations of homosexuality. No single category describes them all, but the disorder is characterized by a constellation of symptoms, including excessive clinging to the mother during early childhood, a sense that one's masculinity is defective, and powerful feelings of guilt, shame and inferiority beginning in adolescence.

If the emotional desire for another man is primarily a symptom of the failure to develop a strong masculine identity, then a man's unconscious desire to assume the manhood of another male may be more important than the sexual act. The goal of therapy in such cases is to help the client understand the various causes of his feelings and to strengthen his masculine identity. It has been our clinical experience that as these men become more comfortable and confident with their manhood, same-sex attractions decrease significantly. Eventually, many find the freedom they are seeking and are able to have normal relationships with women.

Help is available for men struggling with unwanted homosexual desires. The National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality offers information for those interested in understanding the various therapeutic approaches to treatment. In addition, a number of self-help groups have sprung up to offer support to those who suffer from this problem.

As we grieve for all those lives so abruptly ended by AIDS, we would do well to reflect that many of the young men who have died of AIDS have sought treatment for their homosexuality and were denied knowledge and hope. Many of them would be alive today if they had only been told where to find the help they sought. ■

On the Dilemma of Civil Rights

--From *Straight and Narrow? Compassion and Clarity in the Homosexuality Debate*, by Thomas Schmidt, Ph.D., InterVarsity Press, 1995:

The key issue in the link with civil rights is the issue of choice. Is homosexuality something that you *are*, like being black or elderly or handicapped or female, or is it something you *do*, like adultery or polygamy or incest? Those who practice these latter behaviors have certainly been discriminated against, economically and otherwise, but they are not linked to the civil rights movement.

The difference in the case of homosexuality has to do with public perceptions of the *inevitability* of the behavior. On what basis do we decide what is, or is not, inevitable when it comes to sex? ...When an adult solicits sex with a minor, we don't say, "Let him be--that's just the way he is." Is the homosexual "just that way," and does this imply that we should extend the same civil rights--even affirmative action--to homosexuals that we extend to minorities and women?

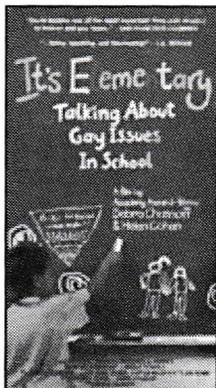
Enter the nature-nurture debate;...for public tolerance dramatically increases when people are convinced that a

desire for same-sex intimacy is biologically driven. Even though most scientists dispute the accuracy or the relevance of the research to date...even though very few experts on homosexuality limit causation to biological factors...even though the homosexual community itself is divided over causation--still the mass media persistently portrays, and the public increasingly adopts, a view that homosexuals do not *do*, but *are*.

...There are at least two factors at work [here]. One is the popular myth that science deals only in absolute, objective truths...

The second factor at work in changing public opinion is the simplification of issues for mass consumption, especially in television...Few people have the patience for a thorough presentation of a complex issue, even if such a presentation is offered. Instead...statements are measured for their value as sound bites.

Whether or not it is calculated, such reporting has a powerful, cumulative effect. It creates the impression that science is serving the cause of civil rights against...bigotry..." ■



Video Review:

It's Elementary--Gay and Lesbian Issues in the Classroom

Reviewer: Karen Jo Gounaud
President, Family Friendly Libraries
(703) 440-3654

It's Elementary, It's Slick...It's Alarming

There's a sophisticated new arrow in the gay activists' quiver: a polished, well-produced video called *It's Elementary*. This film is high-quality and very effective-- a direct testimony to the talent, determination, and funding of gay activism.

It's Elementary is a clarion call for those of us with opposing opinions to come forth with our own masterpieces of salesmanship. But if this film is any indication of the status of the culture clashes, traditionalists are way behind.

Produced by Academy Award winner Debra Shasnoff, along with Helen Cohn and the Women's Educational Media in San Francisco, *It's Elementary* visits six American primary and middle schools from New York City to San Francisco.

The main vehicles advancing the film's agenda are the brilliantly framed discussions with children and teenagers. The producers effectively record (and carefully edit) the participation of students in activities addressing lesbian and gay issues from a positive and pro-active perspective.

Even the simple music by Jon Herbst succeeds in underscoring the message of the film: the importance of expanding the "gay is OK" message into the school environment. The music then becomes subtly sinister when the film portrays news accounts of "gay-bashing," or when it spotlights "anti-gay" politicians and others who do not accept the concept that homosexuality is normal.

One of the most effective scenes revealed, in an elementary classroom, that the beloved music of the film *The Lion King* was the work of a gay musician. The overwhelmingly positive reaction of the children was powerfully reflected in their faces.

The children were also encouraged to join in praise of a young essay winner who wrote proudly of her two lesbian "moms." (One might wonder who had actually written this mature sounding essay--the young child, or her mother.) One school housed a gay and lesbian family photo display. And some of the most articulate teachers in the film

were openly gay, speaking directly and convincingly to the children about their belief in the legitimacy of a gay lifestyle.

"Indoctrination" is not too strong a word to describe what was really going on with those classroom activities. Criticism of homosexuality was invariably equated with racism and ethnic bigotry.

What was *missing* from the class discussions and the film's other presentations was equally revealing. There was never any mention of the scientifically proven promiscuity and disease crisis in gay male life, or the relationship between disease and anatomical unsuitability.

Missing also were the explicit sex lessons which are so often targeted toward children as AIDS education, on other occasions where public relations is not the issue.

Of course the existence of another school of thought--the reparative-therapy approach aiming toward reversal of the condition--was excluded from this work. No mention was

made of the many counseling programs that offer compassionate help for all hurting, sexually confused people.

And there was no acknowledgment of the fact that reasonable people who reject the gay agenda *also reject* "gay bashing," as well as the rock-throwing mentality it represents.

"The foundation for acceptance of homosexuality as a healthy alternative to heterosexuality has already been successfully laid down"

It's Elementary is alarming because the reactions of people in the video--adults, youth, and especially the children--indicate that the foundation for acceptance of homosexuality as a legitimate, healthy alternative to heterosexuality has already been successfully laid down in our country. In fact, within an unknown but growing number of American schools and classrooms, both public and private, affirmation of a sexually deviant minority has been advanced to a *much greater degree* than most citizens realize.

After I shared this film with the parents of a gay young adult, the couple labeled this a "bait and switch" vehicle. *It's Elementary*, they observed, seemed to be asking for respect for homosexual people; in reality, it was preaching respect for the homosexual *condition*. They believed the producers were using a subtle process of effectively and deceptively re-educating children, especially young children, incrementally to the point of accepting behavior that would ordinarily be seen as outside the norm.

The observant parents recognized that the authority figures in the film were clearly leading the young students to the assumption that being gay *can't be bad* because of the good things gay people have done.

This "sanitized presentation" of homosexuality, as the reviewing parents described it, obviously was intended to make it hard for the kids watching the film to discern facts from propaganda. They cited one boy's statement, describing the effect this lesson on homosexuality had had on him:

"It's kind of like vegetables: you don't know [you'll like homosexuality] until you try."

"What's the big whoop?" asked another child flippantly in response to tales of some parental concerns. Some children were even outspokenly critical of their own parents' negative attitudes about homosexuality.

This is not surprising when you consider: Today more than ever, homosexual activists--with perhaps only a 1-3% presence in society--are successfully "dumbing down" our ability to make accurate moral and socio-psychological discernments through their growing influence in government, business, the media, and even religion. An important part of that agenda has included the redefinition of several con-

cepts: our understanding of what constitutes religious bigotry, family values, human rights, and even our basic conceptions of right and wrong.

Decades of subtle and not-so-subtle propaganda materials such as this video--and organized political efforts like the one that culminated in this film's distribution--have been stunningly effective.

We must protect children from educational materials that contradict historic truths about family. The survival of the family needs all the armor of truth we can supply. *That truth is elementary*, and it is imperative. There's no time to waste. Let's get together and *get it done*.

A Father's Search For Understanding

NARTH's Executive Director recently received the following letter:

Thank you so much for returning my call to discuss my question about the young man in a relationship with my son. You may recall my question to you was, "How should I act toward my son's companion?" After talking with you I have decided to be cordial and polite while in his presence, but to go no further. My intentions are to be honest in my disapproval of the relationship, while being gentle but firm.

My son disclosed his sexuality to me just a few weeks ago. The two of us immediately told his mother. That was clearly the most painful event of my life. It has dominated my thinking almost every waking moment. He made it clear he had resolved himself to the situation, and he offered me no encouragement of any desire to change. My life was in total disarray and I simply could not believe it. Thank God I did not lose my temper and reject him. My state of mind was of total shock, as prior to that date I had no idea or suspicions whatsoever. His mother had none as well.

My home is near Columbia University. I was intensely motivated to research the subject of homosexuality and went to the university library for that purpose. I found very little on the subject that was not advocating the condition. Thankfully, through the Internet I discovered NARTH and the good books and articles of your organization.

A short profile on my son. White, age 27; brother, age 16. Ben was not athletic in grade and high school; has always been closer to his mother; and friends in school were mostly girls. He was meticulous, artistic, and a good student. He was, and is, especially caring and considerate--the "perfect child."

Through NARTH materials, I have learned that the most critical relationship in a male homosexual's life is that with his father. In recalling my son's childhood and adoles-

cence, I can look back and see the void that was always there. I never realized it or even thought about it before. My son did not have the same interests as me, and after about age ten, I aborted efforts to direct him to areas of my interest. I realize now how much in error this was. That was the time I should have done whatever necessary to enhance my relationship with him. I abdicated his rearing to his mother, while I spent more time and effort with his younger brother.

We do have a close family. I know my son loves me and I feel he looks to me with envy. My feelings are that he has a feeling of inadequacy. Since studying the material dealing with homosexuality, I have devoted my time with him toward improving our relationship. Last week I had a one-on-one talk with him. During that conversation I tried to recall my many failures and shortcomings with him. I sincerely and humbly asked for his forgiveness. I told him I wanted to spend as much time with him as he would give me, and I told him I wanted to make up for my past failures. I hoped and prayed he would allow me to do so. After the conversation, my feeling was of relief, as I believe my request was meaningful to him. My objective is to fill the void I created.

In our brief phone conversation, you gave me much hope and encouragement. At the appropriate time, I will have another talk with him, give him some reading materials, and ask him to try therapy as a means to seek change. I pray every day he will be receptive.

I have personally learned a great deal about the condition of homosexuality. It is easier for me to deal with this devastating situation with the knowledge I now have of the condition. Thank you for making this information available. My mission in life will *never* change: freedom for my son. I hope to be in contact with you again soon.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Father

Who is Dr. Charles Silverstein?

NARTH has recently been attacked by gay activists for denying membership to psychologist Charles Silverstein.

Activists writing on the American Psychoanalytic Association's Internet site and in issues of *The American Psychoanalyst* (30/3 and 30/4) have made this issue a *cause celebre*. We therefore believe we must respond.

These writers' conclusion is that NARTH "actively discriminates against homosexuals," is closed to divergent opinions, and is--yes of course--homophobic. In actuality, NARTH members include homosexuals and former homosexuals; some of those former homosexuals are now psychotherapists treating homosexual patients.

Why might NARTH not be receptive to the work of Dr. Silverstein? Let us examine the professional contributions of this man whom gay activists insist should be a member of our organization.

Who, in fact, is Charles Silverstein?

An Update on the Professional Contributions of Dr. Charles Silverstein

Charles Silverstein was one of the major expert witnesses at the American Psychiatric Association in 1973, arguing persuasively that homosexuality was not an illness. Silverstein reviewed the literature for the committee making the decision, and his observations were given respectful credence. He outlined the work of Evelyn Hooker, Alfred Kinsey, and Ford and Beach, and testified to the APA that homosexuality must be considered *normal and healthy*.

"Since none of the committee members was an expert on homosexuality, there was considerable interest in the data...much of which was new to those who would have to evaluate the issues," said one observer (1).

After he had successfully made his argument to that committee, Dr. Silverstein went on to make his next professional contribution: he wrote *The Joy of Gay Sex* and most recently, *The New Joy of Gay Sex* (1992, Harper), both of which are carried widely in public libraries.

The following are some section headings from the lavishly illustrated *New Joy*:

Bondage	Sadomasochism
Bottoms Up	Scat [gay slang for sex play with feces]
Daddy-Son Fantasies	Sex with Animals
Dangerous Sex	Sit on My Face
Doggy Style	Tearooms and Backrooms
Fisting	Three Ways
F--k Buddies	Tricking
Orgies	Water Sports [sex play with urine]
Rimming	

How to Throw an Orgy According to Dr. Silverstein:

"Over the years three-ways have become, if not common, then at least not unheard of -- especially in some long-term gay relationships.

Like the best movies, the best orgies are carefully orchestrated in advance...

"More than one gay youth has been astounded to discover that his presence (in a state of excitation if not undress) was all that was needed to begin an orgy among a group of men...There are several ways to bring the participants together. ... Or, you can go out and round up likely candidates.

"These days, in larger cities, one finds semiprivate or pay-as-you-go clublike orgies staged every week (same time, same place) at someone's loft in the city or house in the hills.

"Once everyone (or a quorum, at least) is assembled, the biggest problem is getting the orgy started. One way to break the ice is to greet your guests at the door naked, or in a jockstrap, or in underwear (torn, of course).

"Practical hints:... Lock up your valuables, and place towels, lubricants, and condoms in conspicuous places.

"...Appropriate music can help an orgy succeed. Pop music shouldn't be too soft or sentimental. Quiet jazz (though not blues) and disco with its insistent, repetitive rhythms are good bets for sustaining a hot, pounding, sexual mood."

Dr. Charles Socarides has a different interpretation of the appeal of such orgies: (2)

"It gives them psychic pleasure, a kind of relief. When Silverstein and White, in *The Joy of Gay Sex*, talk about the after-feeling of 'great tranquility,' I have to think of it as some kind of fix."

Dr. Silverstein further offers explicit advice to the uninitiated (with the help of graphic illustrations) on how to relax in order to achieve deeper penetration in anal sex and fisting, advocating a sex practice that is causing sickness and death at epidemic levels.

In light of this cursory review of Dr. Silverstein's "credentials," I hereby publicly challenge his supporters to defend his contribution to either psychoanalysis, or the advancement of the physical or mental health of our young people.

(1) Bayer, Ronald, *Homosexuality and American Psychiatry*, Basic Books, 1991.

(2) Socarides, Charles, *A Freedom Too Far*, Adam Margrave Books, 1996.

National Association for Research and Therapy
of Homosexuality

Symposium: **"Controversial Issues in Homosexuality"**

Saturday, May 17, 1997
San Diego Yacht Club, San Diego, CA
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Chairman of both panels: Benjamin Kaufman, M.D., Sacramento, CA, Vice-President, NARTH

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon: **Panel A: "Gender Identity, Sexual Identity, and Homosexuality"**

Panel Participants:

Sylvia Brody, Ph.D.,* New York, NY; Abraham Freedman, M.D., Philadelphia, PA;
Eleanor Galenson, M.D., New York, NY; Selma Kramer, M.D., Philadelphia, PA;
Charles W. Socarides, M.D., New York, NY; C. Downing Tait, M.D., Atlanta, GA;
Martin Silverman, M.D. **(From)**

12:00 noon - 2:00 p.m.: Luncheon served at the San Diego Yacht Club

1:00 p.m.: 1997 Sigmund Freud Award to Dr. Eleanor Galenson. Dr. Eleanor Galenson's Address

2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.: **Panel B: "Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy for Homosexuals"**

Panel Participants:

Ian Graham, M.D.,** Toronto, Canada; Felix Loeb, M.D., Portland, OR;
Houston MacIntosh, M.D., Washington, D.C.; Albert Mason, M.D., Los Angeles, CA;
Joseph Nicolosi, Ph.D., *** Encino, CA; Charles W. Socarides, M.D., New York, NY

* Honorary Member, American Psychoanalytic Association

** Member, Canadian Psychoanalytic Association

*** Member, American Psychological Association

All speakers are members of the American Psychoanalytic Association, except where otherwise noted.

Fee of \$100 includes registration, continental breakfast and a superb lunch overlooking San Diego Harbor.

Registration Form

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*Please enclose conference fee of \$100, payable to NARTH, and
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Paper Available from NARTH:

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