

NARTH BULLETIN

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National Association for Research & Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH)

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NARTH Responds With 'Good Science And Demonstrable Clinical Experience' At The Annual Conference

Keynote Speaker's New Study Called "Must Reading" By Former APA President

By Daniel Byrne, Ph.D.

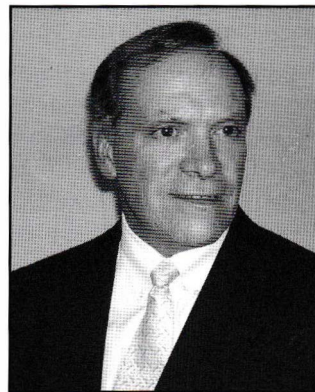
The NARTH Conference in Dallas, Texas this year included stellar presentations by scientists and clinicians who responded forcefully to the false notion that homosexuality is innate and immutable. In fact, scholars and practitioners provided convincing evidence that homosexuality is more fluid than fixed, and that indeed, individuals can make desired changes in their lives.

Responding from a strong research base with a study that meets the high standards set by the American Psychological Association, Dr. Stanton Jones presented the results of his longitudinal, prospective study—a book just released by InterVarsity Press entitled, *Ex-Gays? A Longitudinal Study of Religiously Mediated Change in Sexual Orientation*.



Douglas Abbott, Ph.D.

Dr. Jones noted that the answer to whether or not some motivated people can alter aspects of their sexual orientation through religious ministry is "Yes." His presentation was entitled, "Can Homosexuals Change? Is the Attempt Harmful? Results of a Prospective, Longitudinal Study of Religiously-Mediated Change Attempts."



Keynote Speaker Stanton Jones, Ph.D.



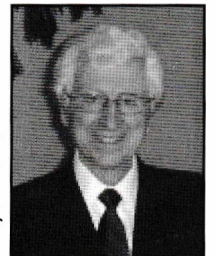
Christopher Rosik, Ph.D.

Dr. William O'Donohue, the Nicholas Cummings Professor of Organized Healthcare Delivery, University of Nevada, Reno, characterized Dr. Jones' study as "first-rate scholarship." Dr. Brent D. Slife, Professor of Psychology at Brigham Young University, characterized the study as "careful scholarship and empirical rigor."

Further, Dr. Nicholas Cummings, former president of the American Psychological Association, commented:

"I have waited for over thirty years for this refreshing, penetrating study of an imperative, though controversial human condition. This is 'must reading'...."

Those in attendance were impressed with the scholarship and clinical expertise of many of the presenters, including that of Dr. James Phelan, who provided a comprehensive review of the scientific evidence regarding the genesis and treatment of unwanted homosexual attractions.

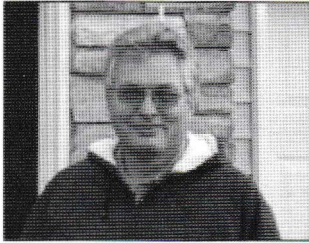


Nicholas Cummings, Ph.D.

Dr. Christopher Rosik focused on the ethi-

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cality of providing psychological care for those with unwanted homosexual attractions and offered ethical guidelines. (The NARTH Governing Board is slated to review the guidelines for possible adoption.)



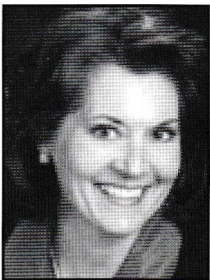
Peet Botha, Ph.D.

Presenters also included Dr. Douglas Abbott, University of Nebraska, who offered a stimulating paper on the role of free will in same-sex behavior. This new model focused on the power of choice in responding

to unwanted homosexual attractions, notwithstanding environmental and biological influences. Other presenters were Dr. Peet Botha, South Africa, who offered a presentation on "Homosexuality- A Phenomenological Approach to Early Communities' Attitudes to Homosexuality"; and Dr. Julie Harren-Hamilton, whose presentation was titled, "Homosexuality 101: What Every Therapist, Parent, and Homosexual Should Know But Isn't Being Told."

Dawn Stefanowicz, who grew up in a household with a homosexually active father, spoke about the impact that his gender confusion and promiscuity had on their family.

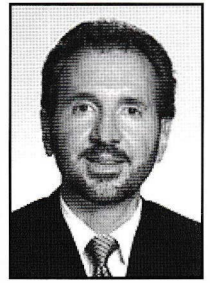
Psychotherapist Janelle Hallman offered a paper on "The Next Generation of 'Lesbian' Women." In her clients, she sees disruptions in mother-daughter attachment, deficits in development of the core self, and an attitude of "gender irrelevance," where gender is seen by the SSA woman as somehow detached from personhood or irrelevant to it. She spoke about the growing phenomenon of bisexuality, and offered advice to parents with lesbian or bisexual daughters.



*Janelle Hallman,
M.A., LPC*

NARTH Board member and psychotherapist Mary Beth Patton presented a speech about "The Bisexual Woman." Most of her clients reported childhood attachment losses -- typically, having consciously chosen not to identify with their mothers, and having experienced a lack of closeness to other girls. In adulthood, there is a tenuous connection to men. Many of her bisexual clients are married women enmeshed in a same-sex relationship that is threatening their marriage. Respecting their uniqueness and right to autonomy, she

assists her clients in untangling their relational conflicts.



*Joseph Nicolosi,
Ph.D.*

NARTH President Joseph Nicolosi, Ph.D. offered a workshop on "Revisiting the Scenario Preceding Homosexual Enactment." When clients report an unwanted incident of same-gender sex, they commonly describe having struggled with one or more of the following immediately beforehand: shame, envy, a feeling of having been slighted, unexpressed anger, being mired in "The Gray Zone" (boredom/depression), or an aborted expression of masculine assertion. Dr. Nicolosi explained how therapists can help their clients avoid moving from those negative states into unwanted sexual experiences.

With Dr. Dean Byrd now moving into the NARTH leadership post, Dr. Nicolosi chronicled some of the accomplishments of NARTH during his many years at the helm, where membership grew from three founding members to over 1,000. Only two persons have led NARTH since its beginning in 1992: Charles Socarides, M.D. and outgoing president Nicolosi.

Dr. Byrd offered a talk on "The Interpersonal Approach to the Psychological Care of Men with Unwanted Homosexual Attractions." Interpersonal theory and therapy provide an effective approach for unwanted homosexual attractions. This approach finds support for its effectiveness in the neuropsychological literature.

From moderated panel discussions involving seasoned academics and clinicians to informal discussions between professional and laypersons, the conference provided a warm, open, and inviting atmosphere for exchange. Attendees repeatedly expressed appreciation for the scholarly, yet understandable dialogues.



*Mary Beth Patton,
M.A., LPC*

The conference's mission statement was described as "respecting every client's dignity, autonomy and diversity," supporting the inalienable freedom of every client to claim a gay identity, or to diminish their homosexuality and develop their heterosexual potential. ■

THE NARTH BULLETIN



"Victory on the Bow of a Ship"