

Editor of the Journal of Marriage and Family Therapy Takes a Stand for Science

By A. Dean Byrd, Ph.D., MBA, MPH

Dr. Karen S. Wampler, Editor of the *Journal of Marriage and Family Therapy*, (JMFT) has decried activism and elevated science to its proper place as she defended her decision to publish an article last year by NARTH member Dr. Christopher H. Rosik.

The JMFT article by Dr. Rosik was "Motivational, ethical and epistemological foundations in the treatment of unwanted homoerotic attractions" (2003, pp. 12-28).

Just recently, in the most recent edition of the JMFT (P. 395), Dr. Wampler described the difficulties she encountered after her decision to publish Rosik's article, and she reflected on the potential consequences for herself personally as well as for the *Journal*.

Criticism focused, she said, "not on the article itself, but on me as an editor accepting it for publication." Some readers chided her with "anger and disgust that I would accept something that was perceived as extremely harmful to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered individuals and their families." Wampler noted that the discussion is continuing now within AAMFT itself, "triggered in part by publication of the Rosik article."

Citing the imperfections of even good research, Wampler correctly noted that any published study can be used to support political agendas. However, scientists must ensure that the findings of research are as free from personal and political influences as possible. The same high standards must apply whether or not a political agenda is supported.

Science, good science, should not be contingent on a study's consequences. Rather, the search for truth should override the strident cries of those who would define "diversity" as nothing more than a narrow politicism, and who would simply discount other research that does not support their political agendas.

In this instance, Dr. Wampler (and the JMFT Board) took a stand for science, and like a growing number of respected scientists who are rejecting the politics of intimidation, she does not regret the decision to publish the Rosik article.

She notes, "...this was not an easy decision, but it was the right one." I agree.

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