
Can NARTH Be Denied the Right to Advertise in APA Publications?

...APA Says Yes, It Can;
They Are "Exercising Their First-Amendment Right of Free Association"

NARTH wrote APA's president, Norine Johnson, to request that APA's declared commitment to "scientific openness" be extended to discussion of reorientation therapies. In response, we received the following letter from Dr. Clinton Anderson, the APA officer to whom matters relating to homosexuality are routinely assigned. Dr. Anderson is an openly gay man who opposes reorientation therapy.

August 22, 2001

Dear Drs. Nicolosi and Byrd:

I am responding to your letter of May 30, 2001, on behalf of American Psychological Association (APA) President Norine G. Johnson, Ph.D. In your letter, you request that your rights as members in good standing of the APA be restored. After consideration, we have concluded that there is no basis for complying with your request, because your premise, that your rights as members of APA have been denied in the past, is incorrect.

APA members have a right to submit notices and advertisements to APA publications and to propose continuing education workshops and programs for the APA Convention. There is no right, however, to have those submissions and proposals accepted. Proposals for workshops and programs are accepted or rejected through a process of peer-review by the Continuing Professional Education Committee and by the APA Divisions' program proposal review committees, respectively. Further, APA accepts advertising and notices consistently with its policies as published in its rate card.

In contrast to APA members, the National Association for

Research & Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH) does not have membership rights, because APA does not have organization members. APA has denied requests from NARTH in the past. In denying such requests, APA has exercised its rights under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution to choose to avoid associating itself with an organization with which APA has fundamental differences on psychological issues. NARTH has as its founding premise the idea that homosexuality is a developmental disorder for which treatment is indicated.

APA chooses not to be associated with NARTH, because APA vigorously opposes NARTH's premise. APA opposes NARTH's premise because the psychological research does not support the premise and because the advocacy of such a position by NARTH contributes to the climate of prejudice and discrimination to which lesbian, gay, and bisexual people are subject.

Any organization may apply for APA approval as a sponsor of continuing professional education. In considering such applications, the Committee on Continuing Professional Education may consider such issues as the nature of the applicants' positions on psychological issues on which APA itself has taken a position.

Sincerely,

Clinton W. Anderson
Officer,
Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Concerns