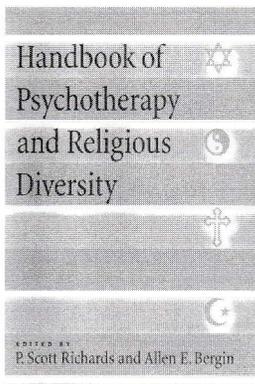

Book Review:
***Handbook of Psychotherapy
and Religious Diversity***

Edited by P. Scott Richards and Allen E. Bergin

Published by the American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C.: 2000

Reviewer: Joseph Nicolosi, Ph.D.



Demographic statistics suggest that the majority of people who present for psychotherapy are religious, and many of them devoutly so.

The authors of the **Handbook of Psychotherapy and Religious Diversity** recognize the need for a clinical encyclopedia of religious belief and custom which will help mental-health professionals work more effectively with clients of different faiths.

With the publication of books such as this one, psychology will be less likely, we believe, to justify its often dismissive attitude toward a client's religiously based view of homosexuality. And as a publication of the American Psychological Association—an organization not known as friendly to religious diversity—this book marks a significant trend, one must hope, in a new direction.

NARTH Scientific Advisory Committee member P. Scott Richards tackles a new and very important project with the

publication of this handbook.

Drs. Richards and Bergin report evidence of a number of professional articles reflecting psychologists' growing openness to spiritual and religious experience. They are pleased that the American Psychiatric Association, American Psychological Association and the American Counseling Association now include religion as one aspect of diversity that their members are obliged to respect, and an area of study in which practitioners should seek competency.

Indeed, many who seek reparative therapy are influenced by religious convictions. When the practitioner views the client's non-acceptance of his homosexuality as an "irrational fear" requiring "resolution" and eradication, he does not do justice to the totality and integrity of that person.

This highly readable sourcebook sensitizes the clinician to all of the major Christian and Jewish denominations, as well as Buddhism, Hinduism, and ethnic-centered spiritualities of African-American, Asian, Latino and Native American traditions. It should prove to be a valuable desktop reference. ■