NARTH Signs On to Full-Page Newspaper Ad

On May 17th—the same day as the cancelled American Psychiatric Association debate—-NARTH signed on to a full-page advertisement in USA Today. The ad, which urged the Psychiatric Association to reopen this debate at a future time, featured photos of ex-gays and their families.

In addition to running in USA Today, the advertisement was reprinted in a Focus on the Family publication which reaches 1.7 million subscribers. The ad said:

And they say all this joy is dangerous?

There's Inexpressible Joy in Freedom

We Refuse to Be Silent About the Truth

Open-Minded People Can Rethink Their View

We Defend the Legitimacy of Therapy for People Struggling With Homosexuality

We Believe in Giving Americans a Choice

This week, the APA holds its annual convention in Chicago. Unfortunately, they cancelled today's scheduled debate on this issue of therapy to homosexuals. Why? Perhaps it's all in the name of political correctness. Sure, people want the right to live any way they choose. Who's denying that? We're just wondering, why does the APA seek to deny the rights of struggling homosexuals who want help? Shouldn't people searching for help out of homosexuality be able to find it? Yet the APA is moving in a direction to **silence the dialogue**—and the hope.

Psychiatrist Robert L. Spitzer, M.D. was a key player in the original 1973 decision to remove homosexuality from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. He was moved to rethink the issue of sexual-reorientation therapy when a group of former homosexuals picketed a 1998 APA meeting. Since then, Dr. Spitzer has talked to numerous ex-gays and has had a radical change of mind regarding the possibility of change. During an interview with Dr. Laura Schlessinger on January 21, 2000, he said, "I'm convinced from people I have interviewed, that for many of them, they have made substantial changes toward becoming heterosexual...I came to this study skeptical. I now believe that for many, these changes can be sustained."

Indeed, thousands of people have succeeded in changing—with and without therapy. Don't others have the right to hear about this kind of success?

The APA refuses to recognize this kind of reorientation therapy as ethical and effective. This is scientifically indefensible. When psychiatrists dismiss the honest and deeply-held values of their patients, these doctors are actually demonstrating a *disregard for diversity*, and a refusal to respect the patient's right to dignity, autonomy and self-determination.

On the issue of coming out of homosexuality, Americans deserve to know the truth: Freedom from homosexuality is possible.

Homosexual activists rightfully demand that we respect their right to define themselves as gay. So, what about the men and women who define themselves as *ex*-gay? Many homosexuals have found themselves dissatisfied with the gay option and seek professional assistance. Don't they have the right to pursue their dream of heterosexual singleness, or conventional marriage and family? Many have. And their joy is great.

Signers of the ad:

NARTH
Exodus International North America
Focus on the Family / Parents & Friends of Ex-Gays
Evergreen International / Transforming Congregations
International Healing Foundation
Jews Offering New Alternatives to Homosexuality (JONAH)
New Life Clinics