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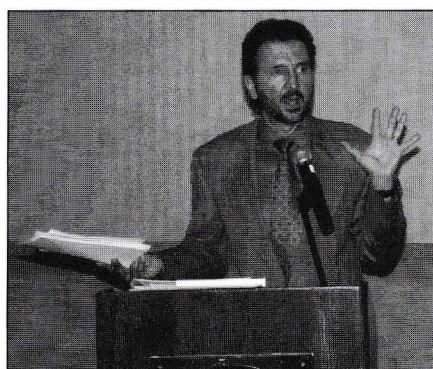
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NARTH's Annual Conference Celebrates Another Year of Progress

By Daniel Byrne, Ph.D.

NARTH's commitment to excellence via the organization's emphasis on client autonomy, self-determination and diversity was highlighted during the recent conference held in Orlando, Florida. Scholars from as far away as New Zealand, South Africa, Azerbaijan, Switzerland and Germany joined their American and Canadian colleagues for scientific and clinical presentations from Nov. 1-12, 2006.

Several speakers honored the memory of one of NARTH's founders, Charles Socarides, M.D., who passed away this year. Dr. Socarides dedicated one of his last books to his patients, "whose



Joseph Nicolosi, Ph.D., spoke on interpersonal relationships and brain plasticity.

courage and endurance for self-knowledge" had drawn his utmost respect and admiration.

The first annual Charles Socarides Lecture was given by Dr. George Rekers, Distinguished Professor of Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Science Emeritus at the

University of South Carolina School of Medicine. Dr. Rekers' lecture provided an empirically-supported rational basis for the importance of mothers and fathers to the healthy development of children. "Optimal child development," noted Dr. Rekers, "occurs in homes where there is a married mother and father."

Clinical training was provided in workshops. Dr. A. Dean Byrd provided a day-long training focusing on an interpersonal approach to the assessment and treatment of unwanted homosexual attraction. Dr. Norman Goldwasser presented a clinically-based psychodiagnostic approach to the treatment of ego-dystonic homosexuality.

Dr. James Phelan focused on a practical approach to helping those with unwanted homosexual attraction, while Floyd Godfrey focused on characteristics of effective group work for this clinical population.

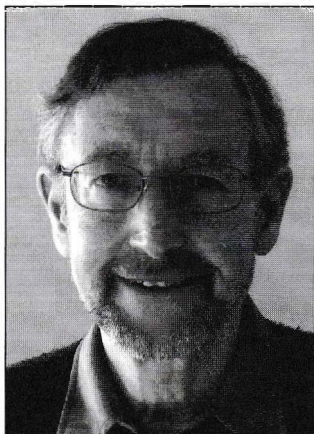
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New Zealand biochemist and neuroscientist, Dr. Neil Whitehead, co-author of *My Genes Made Me Do It*, offered a fascinating presentation on what genes do and what they don't do. "Homosexuality is not simply biologically determined," noted Dr. Whitehead, "because identical twins are not concordant for homosexuality." Dr. Whitehead focused extensively on the twin research conducted by J. Michael Bailey.

"In his first study," Dr. Whitehead noted, "J. Michael Bailey admitted selection bias—he recruited research participants from pro-gay venues. In his second study, he used the Australian twin registry, a source less vulnerable to selection bias. The concordance was significantly lower in the second study." An audience participant noted that the second study received almost no media coverage.

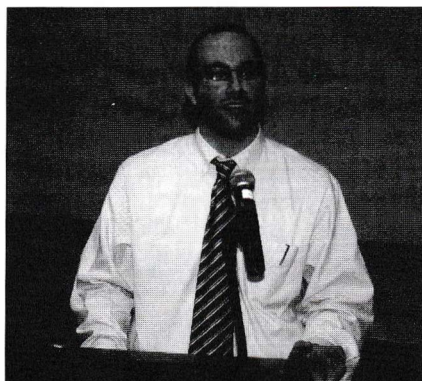
Dr. Elan Karten presented the results from his dissertation completed at Fordham University. As a logical follow-up to the Spitzer landmark study, the Karten research was designed to investigate the factors important in treatment success.

In his study, Dr. Karten defined success as "an increase in heterosexual functioning, a decrease in homosexual functioning, improved psychological well-being, and a greater heterosexual identity." Among Dr. Karten's most robust findings was that treatment success was best predicted by a reduction in conflict regarding the expression of non-sexual affection toward other men.



Dr. Neil Whitehead discussed the lack of evidence for a biological explanation for SSA.

Psychiatrist Dr. Sander J. Breiner provided a presentation titled, "Who Should Be In What Therapy? Gender Conflict." Dr. Breiner noted that "in every therapeutic experience, the patient gains increasing understanding of themselves; and the therapist likewise gains increasing understanding of the patient."



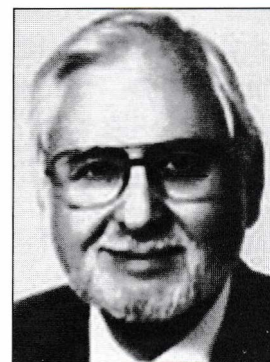
Dr. Elan Karten spoke on his dissertation at Fordham University about the factors involved in treatment success in individuals with unwanted same-sex attraction.

Dr. Breiner noted the importance of encouraging the patient to adopt this positive attitude toward this kind of self-understanding.

Other presenters included Mary Beth Patton who moderated a discussion on "personality disorders, mood disorders and female SSA." Konstantin Mascher, visiting from Germany, provided a stimulating overview of "The Erosion of Monogamy – What History Tells Us About Sexual Codes and Cultural Development," while Assistant Professor of Law at Liberty University Rena Lindevaldsen offered an interdisciplinary approach to litigation concerning same-sex attraction and gender-identity disorders.

Lindevaldsen emphasized that NARTH scientists must help those in the legal profession

understand what the science says and what it does not say. She noted that "the APA and other medical organizations appear willing to sacrifice the mental, physical, and spiritual well-being of hurting people to support a political viewpoint. The legal and medical communities need to jointly demand respect for an equality and diversity of viewpoints on the origins, causes, and treatments for SSA and GID."



Dr. Sander Breiner spoke on the importance of client self-understanding in counseling.

NARTH President Dr. Joseph Nicolosi offered a presentation on attachment theory and homosexuality, focusing in part on his interview with Dr. Alan Schore, the author of "Affect Regulation and Affect Deregulation." Dr. Nicolosi noted, "With our increasing understanding of the importance of interpersonal attachment as a major organizing principle of brain development, combined with the new research on neuroplasticity—the ability of the brain to reorganize itself—we are beginning to understand scientifically how therapeutic change occurs."

The Town Hall meeting, a new feature of NARTH Conferences, offered an opportunity for NARTH members to have a lively exchange with NARTH leaders. There was significant support for

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"Victory on the Bow of a Ship"