

## **Reorientation Panel Said to Be Well-Received at APA**

Drs. Warren Throckmorton and Mark Yarhouse led an American Psychological Association panel to discuss sexual-orientation theories and the possibility of change. The panel, held in late July, was part of the APA's annual conference, which took place this year in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Dr. Throckmorton and Dr. Yarhouse presented evidence from their research that indicated that individuals could overcome same-sex attractions—especially those clients with a religious background.

According to Dr. Throckmorton, "Mark and I presented the side that argued that a same-sex attraction does not obligate a person to declare a gay identity. We argued that sexual identity management was a very viable option for young people whose beliefs and values do not endorse homosexuality."

Throckmorton and Yarhouse view success in changing a person's sexual orientation not as something quickly achieved, but as a process over time.

During the Q&A session, both psychologists were treated cordially and with respect. "It was the kind of response that I think a professional association ought to be known for," said Throckmorton.

He noted that when he spoke four years ago at an APA conference in Washington, DC, the audience was decidedly hostile to his message. This year was different. He expressed appreciation to the APA for allowing such a panel to be conducted.

Throckmorton was also encouraged that a number of psychology graduate students were in the audience, and he expressed gratitude that they had been exposed to his views. "These graduate students were exposed to a perspective they had never heard before," said Throckmorton.

Dr. Brent Scharman, past president of the Utah Psychological Association, told Throckmorton that this was the best presentation he had heard in 20 years.