

Two NARTH Research Studies Published

In April, the peer-reviewed professional journal *Psychological Reports* published NARTH's survey of 206 sexual-reorientation therapists.

In June, *Psychological Reports* published NARTH's survey of 882 dissatisfied homosexuals. A press release announced both studies.

What the Therapists Reported

The first article, entitled "Beliefs and Practices of Therapists Who Practice Sexual-Reorientation Therapy," was written by Joseph Nicolosi, Ph.D., A Dean Byrd, Ph.D. of the University of Utah, and Richard W. Potts, M.A., of Utah Valley Regional Medical Center.

"We wanted to conduct this survey in order to better understand what members of our psychotherapist community believe about conversion therapy and their treatment of dissatisfied homosexuals," the authors reported.

The authors emphasized that the study was not a random survey, but it specifically sought out therapists who conduct reorientation therapy. Most surveyed therapists said they believe the 1973 decision to remove homosexuality from the psychiatric manual was politically, and not scientifically, motivated. Most believed that homosexuality is not genetically determined, but is instead a primarily developmental phenomenon which results from a combination of nature and nurture.

The therapists surveyed said that reorientation therapy is not appropriate for all clients. They agreed that clients have a right to pursue a gay lifestyle, and change-type therapies should not be imposed on a client who is not receptive.

Two Types of Coercion

Yet there is an opposite type of coercion commonly being practiced, Dr. Nicolosi said; clients who seek change are being told that change is impossible, that their real nature is homosexual, and that they should grow more fully into a

gay identity—which for them may be ego-dystonic.

"Therapists have an ethical obligation to respect their client's right to dignity and autonomy," Dr. Nicolosi stressed. "They have no right to tell clients that their religious convictions should be discarded, they were created homosexual, and that the client's only problem is lack of self-acceptance."

A significant minority of the therapists surveyed by NARTH (26%) were themselves ex-gay men and women.

What 882 Subjects Reported

The second study, titled "Retrospective Self-Reports of Changes in Homosexual Orientation: A Consumer Survey on Conversion Therapy Clients," was written by the same three authors as the first NARTH study. Joseph Nicolosi was the Principal Research Investigator, and analysis of the data was performed by a group of statisticians at Brigham Young University.

The study surveyed 882 dissatisfied homosexual people, of whom 726 had received therapy from a professional therapist or pastoral counselor.

Over 67% of the participants indicated they were exclusively or almost exclusively homosexual at one time in their lives, while only 12.8% of them perceived themselves in this manner at the time of the survey.

Significantly, 45.4% of the exclusively homosexual participants reported having made major changes in their orientation.

On the other hand, 35.1% of the participants were unsuccessful in making significant changes.

Those participants who were successful reported statistically significant reductions in the frequency of their homosexual thoughts and fantasies. They also reported significant improvements in other important areas of their lives—particularly, their psychological, interpersonal, and spiritual well-being.

Copies of both published articles are available from NARTH for a cost of \$5 each. ■

