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# NARTH



## National Association for Research & Therapy of Homosexuality

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March 3, 2001

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Dr. Rozangela Justino, who we understand has been called before the Brazilian Board of Psychology because she believes that homosexuality is changeable, and that it is a form of psychosexual immaturity.

I am the President of the National Association of Research and Therapy of Homosexuality. NARTH is a 1,000-member professional group in the U.S. composed of psychologists, psychiatrists, psychoanalysts.

Perhaps you would be interested in our recent study of 882 formerly homosexual men and women who have experienced a substantial degree of sexual-orientation change. The professional journal *Psychological Reports* published our study in June 2000.

### Among the findings:

A total of 45.4% of the respondents reported a shift that made them more heterosexual than homosexual. The respondents who had undertaken therapy were overwhelmingly in agreement that counseling had helped them reduce their homosexual attractions. Many perceived their homosexual behaviors as an addiction.

A large majority said their religious and spiritual beliefs played a crucial role in overcoming their homosexuality.

Areas of functioning in which the respondents reported significant improvement include the following:



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- Self-acceptance
- Self-understanding
- Sense of personal power
- Assertiveness
- Sense of clarity and security in gender identity
- Self-esteem
- Diminishment of loneliness
- Improvement in emotional stability and maturity
- Lessened depression
- Better ability to resolve interpersonal conflicts
- Decreased homosexual thoughts, feelings and behaviors

Before counseling or therapy, 68% of the respondents perceived themselves as exclusively or almost entirely homosexual. After treatment, only 13% perceived themselves as exclusively or almost entirely homosexual.

Also, the following respected professionals have expressed at least conditional support for the possibility of sexual orientation change:

**Robert Spitzer, M.D.**, the psychiatrist who is called the "architect of the 1973 decision" that removed homosexuality from the DSM, recently expressed serious concern about the movement against sexual-orientation therapy. In two months, Dr. Spitzer is scheduled to report the findings of his own study to the American Psychiatric Association. He studied about 200 individuals who say they have achieved a sexual orientation change and have maintained that change for at least 5 years ago.

Dr. Spitzer says:

"I'm convinced from people I have interviewed...many of them...have made substantial changes toward becoming heterosexual. I came to this study skeptical. I now claim that these changes can be sustained."

About exclusive homosexuality, he conceded, "I think, implicitly, there is something not working."

**Dr. Raymond Fowler, Chief Executive Officer of the American Psychological Association**, says that his interpretation of the APA's position on reparative therapy is that those who



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behavior have a right to do so as part of every client's right to self-determination.

**Dr. Brent Scharman, former president of the Utah Psychological Association,** considers himself a "typical" psychologist—not an activist on either side of the homosexual issue—and he says that all homosexual individuals should have the right to pursue change. It is the client, he says, who should determine the direction of the treatment.

**Dr. Warren Throckmorton, past president of the American Mental Health Counselors Association,** studied a broad cross section of research on sexual-orientation change. He says such treatment has been effective, can be conducted in an ethical manner, and should be available to those clients requesting such assistance. His paper was published two years ago ("Attempts to Modify Sexual Orientation: A Review of Outcome Literature and Ethical Issues," *Journal of Mental Health Counseling* October 1998, vol. 20, pp. 283-304.

**Dr. Martin Seligman, 1998 President of the American Psychological Association,** cites research in his book *What You Can Change and What You Can't* that is optimistic about change for those who have had fewer homosexual experiences and/or some bisexual feelings.

In a recent paper in the premiere academic journal *Psychotherapy*, and again in the *American Journal of Family Therapy*, **Dr. Mark Yarhouse of Regent University** made a powerful case for such therapy:

"Psychologists have an ethical responsibility to allow individuals to pursue treatment aimed at curbing experiences of same-sex attraction...not only because it affirms the clients' right to dignity, autonomy and agency...but also because it demonstrates regard for diversity."

NARTH believes that effective counseling evolves from a shared value system between client and counselor. But when gay activism labels the desire to change orientation illegitimate, it imposes its own views and values on a dissatisfied homosexual, and takes away his right to self-determination.



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We hope you will visit our website, [www.narth.com](http://www.narth.com), for documentation of these statements and others. Please feel free to contact us to discuss this issue, should you wish to do so.

Respectfully,

*Joseph Nicolosi*  
Joseph Nicolosi, Ph.D.  
President, NARTH

*AD*