

TRIBUTE TO DR. JOE NICOLOSI SR. FROM HIS WIFE, LINDA



Dr. Joseph Nicolosi Sr. died suddenly this year. He was the founder of reparative therapy, and was one of the greatest contributors to the science of sexuology in the past three decades. With a keen insight and a great knowledge of the empirical literature on the subject, he wrote books about the phenomenon of same-sex attractions which make him stand out in the crowd.



He founded the National Association on the Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH), and in a Youtube video in 2012 (click [here](#)) he looked back on twenty years of pioneer work.

After his death in 2017, his wife Linda Ames wrote a tribute to him:

“I never thought I would be writing a tribute to my husband, because I, like most people, thought he was invincible.

Joe never complained about feeling tired or unwell, and was a dynamo of energy who got up at four in the morning to start work on his laptop. He not only had enormous energy, he was a wellspring of optimism. He rarely said no to any request, and he loved his work. He used to say he planned to continue seeing clients until he dropped. Everything he did was always right on schedule— awake at 4, going to the gym at 5 a.m. for what he called “a helluva workout”; mealtimes exactly at the same time each day, bedtime at 9 p.m., and nap time right after lunch.

He was a highly productive creature of habit who would unwind in the evening by cooking some extravagant gourmet dish—often his mother’s recipe—blasting his Italian music on his I-Pad and enjoying a glass of Chardonnay while he told stories and jokes. He made a clear division between work time and play time, and never the two would mix.

Then Joe died unexpectedly this year on March the 8th. He is buried in Westlake Village, CA and his gravestone reads, *“Joseph Nicolosi, Ph.D.: Warrior for Truth.”*

My husband cared deeply about men with unwanted homosexuality, but besides his compassion and patience with suffering people, he was also a fighter who rarely thought about playing it safe. The following is an example.

Not long ago, gay activists pushed the CA state legislature to pass a law banning anything but gay-affirming therapy for under-18 clients. This same law is now being passed now in many other states. It is based on the dramatic, sobbing testimony of a young man named Sam Brinton who is currently being funded and tutored by a gay-activist group.

Brinton says he was physically tortured and given electric shocks by a “licensed therapist” whose name he just somehow cannot remember— and even trying to remember the name, he says, might “trigger him.” But another time, he said the “conversion therapist” was actually a religious counselor, not a licensed therapist — however activists just had to get the anti-therapy law through, regardless of the lack of verifiable facts.

And so the legislators complied— at least, the Democratic legislators; most of the Republicans stood their ground. The new law, of course, turned out to be a “bait and switch” — it wasn’t the therapists who were supposedly torturing kids that the activists were after, because they don’t exist—but *any* therapist who holds a traditional worldview on sexuality and gender. And they succeeded in shutting those voices down.

But getting back to Joe: at the time of his death, he was publicly insisting on continuing to see under 18’s in California. “I’m not violating the law. I don’t ‘change’ any teenager,” he told a reporter. “I just ask them ‘why,’ and let them consider the options.” Of course, the CA Board wasn’t pleased with that explanation. But to abandon these confused kids to the gay-activist movement, just wasn’t, for Joe, an ethical option.

When he died, Joe had been working on a new book with a co-author which pulled together the rich trove of literature on homosexuality from the psychoanalytic tradition. The following reading is a VERY condensed version of that upcoming book’s Introduction. Here it is. It describes the history of Joe’s career and of reparative therapy, which he originated:

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During the 1970’s, I spent eight years training toward a Ph.D. in clinical psychology,. Throughout that time, there was never a word spoken about the causes or treatment of unwanted homosexuality. The entire topic from a clinical point of view was nonexistent.

I recall in 1973, in my first year of doctoral internship, during staff supervision, someone mentioned that the American Psychiatric Association had just declassified homosexuality as a disorder. I turned to my supervisor and said: *“But I thought it was a disorder.”* With a shrug of

the shoulders, my supervisor responded: *"Of course it is."* *"Then,"* I asked, *"How did they decide to make it normal?"*

With the same shrug, he answered, *"politics."*

Due to this problem of politics, there had occurred a sudden intellectual silence in my profession, which made me poorly prepared to assist clients who came to me distressed by their homosexuality. Loyal to the dictates of psychology, I listened, empathized, and then just affirmed them in their distress. In other words, I did nothing.

But as I listened – which I was required to do, if nothing else – I began to notice common themes in their boyhood.

So with nothing available in the contemporary literature, I looked to the past. I began reading the old psychoanalytic papers, and there it was — all that my clients were speaking of.

As I went back and forth between my clinical observations and my psychoanalytic readings, I attempted to develop the most effective treatment for my clients. It became clear to me that homosexual behavior is an attempt at reparation for one's internal sense of gender deficit. Thus, the name of the treatment I developed: Reparative Therapy. As a result, I have come to understand that it is shame, and not the homosexuality itself, that should be the focus of Reparative Therapy. When we eliminate the shame, the homosexuality dissipates.

As these clients learned about themselves and experienced change, I felt a great satisfaction in achieving something my profession warned its members not to do. But I had developed less respect for my profession, knowing, now, how vulnerable it was to the influence of politics, and seeing how its members were "sheep" who were following a scripted set of beliefs, not daring to think differently.

In a recent interview, Camille Paglia, a lesbian-feminist activist, said:

"Now you are not allowed to ask any questions about the childhood of gay people anymore. It's called 'homophobic.' The entire psychology establishment has shut itself down, politically . . . So all the sophistication of analysis, in being able to analyze the family background [is] all gone. That entire discourse is gone. Everything is political now. It's really sick. It's a sick and stupid way of looking at human psychology. We are in a period now of psychological stupidity" (From Paglia, 2014, in a Dennis Prager interview).

We have now entered the Dark Ages of scientific investigation and intellectual exchange, what I call "The Great Shutdown."

And that ends the short version of the Introduction to Joe's book. But Joe had great hope that NARTH and the International Federation for Therapeutic and Counseling Choice (IFTCC) would continue the intellectual investigation, and be a beacon of hope against that shutdown.

He wanted NARTH and IFTCC members to be trailblazers for new treatments to help every man/woman who seeks to live his/her life in harmony with his/her biological design.

That was his life's work. And we will forever miss him.