

## NEWS

**From The Desk Of The ACCP President**

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*Jill M. Kolesar, Pharm.D., M.S., FCCP, BCPS***Ladies, We Can Do Better***Jill M. Kolesar, Pharm.D., M.S., FCCP, BCPS*

I want to thank the many ACCP members (mainly women, but also two men ☺) who called, e-mailed, and volunteered after reading my December editorial, "Advancing Our Members, Elevating Our Profession," wherein I advocated equal pay and opportunities for female pharmacists. I especially appreciated hearing your personal stories of gender discrimination and how you overcame bias in the workplace. A consistent theme in the feedback struck a chord with me: some *women* discriminate against other women more often and with more impact than their male counterparts.

My husband, also a pharmacist, is an officer in an international professional organization. I often attend this organization's annual meeting as an "accompanying person," yet despite having spoken there as a program faculty member on multiple occasions, many members of the organization know me simply as "Lee's wife." Most of my professional acquaintances at these meetings are kind and interesting people, and I am grateful to know many highly successful women who have been both encouraging and inclusive toward me. However, a few of the women I have encountered there are unhelpful, dismissive, or even openly hostile and unwilling to acknowledge that a woman can be both a spouse and a leader in her own right.

To understand why women treat other women badly, we might delve into the psychology of this phenomenon. Van Breen and colleagues<sup>1</sup> report that women have two dimensions of gender identity: as traditional women and as feminists. Women can identify with both of these dimensions, neither of them, or some combination of the two. Women who identify primarily as feminists are often opposed to traditional gender roles (marriage and childbearing) and perceive workplace discrimination<sup>2</sup> as less serious when the victim is someone who does not identify as a feminist.

Although unfortunate, it is not necessarily surprising when women who identify primarily as feminists sometimes behave uncivilly toward a colleague who is also a wife and mother, or decline to help her advance in the workplace. Psychologists have coined a phrase for this, "biased response to threatened gender identity." In all fairness, women who identify primarily with traditional gender roles may not treat feminists well, either. But they also aren't standing between another woman and her promotion.

Although it is interesting to recognize this somewhat counterintuitive behavior of women toward other women, it is more important that we focus on overcoming the negative behaviors that reduce inclusivity and diversity in our profession. The nursing profession has a growing awareness of exclusionary behavior, including incivility, bullying, and violence in the workplace. Termed *horizontal violence*, this type of behavior involves aggression and hostility directed toward peers. The

American Nurses Association developed a nursing code of ethics outlining core professional values, including respect, integrity, and altruism,<sup>3</sup> and nurses in the profession have called for a code of conduct based on measurable behaviors to foster inclusion and diversity.<sup>4</sup> Pharmacy should follow suit.

ACCP members, our profession needs you to lead the way in advancing inclusion and diversity within our ranks. Diverse and inclusive climates are uniformly associated with better work outcomes and happier workers. We owe the promotion of this climate to ourselves and our patients.

## References

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2. Cichocka A, Golec de Zavala A, Kofta M, et al. Threats to feminist identity and reactions to gender discrimination. *Sex Roles* 2013;68:605-19.
3. American Nurses Association (ANA). Position Statement. Incivility, Bullying, and Workplace Violence. 2015. Available at [www.nursingworld.org/DocumentVault/Position-Statements/Practice/Position-Statement-on-Incivility-Bullying-and-Workplace-Violence.pdf](http://www.nursingworld.org/DocumentVault/Position-Statements/Practice/Position-Statement-on-Incivility-Bullying-and-Workplace-Violence.pdf).
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