LETTER

Response to Pharmacy History Courses May – and Should – Offer More Than Professionalism

To the Editor: We thank Dr. Tekiner for his insightful and positive comments in response to our manuscript.¹ Dr. Tekiner observes that the teaching of the history of pharmacy has been neglected in many countries. This has also been the case in the United States, and the findings of our study document that fact. We agree that the overall quality of the education of pharmacy students would be significantly enhanced by developing an appreciation of the profession's rich history. Dr. Tekiner's commentary reminds us that the history of our profession is inherent in every aspect of our professional curricula. Accordingly, we may have been remiss in not mentioning, at least in passing, the concept of "history across the curriculum" wherein every course should pay tribute to our rich heritage, from pharmacology to pharmaceuticals to professional practice.

Although it was not the focus of our article to identify the many specific benefits that accrue from the knowledge of the history of pharmacy, we certainly agree that such study will enable students to develop cultural sensitivity, leadership skills, ethical perspective, ability to deal positively with change, and the other benefits mentioned by Dr. Tekiner. Cultural sensitivity is particularly noteworthy in view of the increasingly multicultural composition of our student population, as well as the patients they will serve in many areas of the United States. The

specific benefits of the study of the history of pharmacy, as summarized by Dr. Tekiner, are certainly essential components of the process of professionalization, which is an important goal of the ACPE standards.

Dr. Tekiner points out the need to advance the teaching of the history of pharmacy beyond the mere listing of dates and facts that can lead to the misperception that historical studies are necessarily "dry." As our article notes, there is a desire expressed by the respondents to our survey for pedagogical assistance, and the American Institute of the History of Pharmacy and others are striving to develop a menu of history of pharmacy instructional materials that will provide faculty with the tools they need to incorporate modern technology that will forcefully demonstrate the need, values, and the many benefits of quality instruction in the history of pharmacy.

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REFERENCE

1. Baker DM, Colaizzi JL, Leite K, et al. The teaching of history of pharmacy in U.S. pharmacy schools. *Am J Pharm Educ*. <http://www.ajpe.org/doi/pdf/10.5688/ajpe6500>. Publication ahead of print. Accessed March 31, 2018.