



Lesley J. Anderson, MD

## AAOS Now

Published 12/1/2019 | Lesley J. Anderson, MD, FAAOS

Commentary

Diversity

# Starting the Diversity Conversation

*Editor's note: The following letter is in response to the article "[Are We Inclusive or Exclusive?](#)" which was written by Julie Balch Samora, MD, PhD, FAAOS, and Lisa Cannada, MD, FAAOS, and published in the October issue of AAOS Now.*

I can honestly say after being a member of AAOS for 32 years that I was overwhelmed by the article on the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer [or questioning]) community in AAOS Now. Thank you so much to AAOS for publishing the article and to those who were courageous enough to be interviewed for the article.

As the first and only woman at the University of California, Los Angeles in 1979–1983, as well as a lesbian who hid my identity until the fear of retribution passed, it is heartening that there is a new openness to real diversity.

I remember when I came out to one of my coresidents when I was a chief; my spouse was having a baby, and I needed call coverage so I could be at the delivery, but no one knew. He said, “I always figured any woman who went into orthopaedics had to be gay.” That was then, and, fortunately, this stereotype no longer exists.

I have been “out” since I went into practice in San Francisco and am the incoming president of the California Orthopaedic Association, where I have always felt included and mentored. However, as one of the interviewees pointed out, my work and career should be the focus of my value in orthopaedics, not my sexual identity.

*Lesley J. Anderson, MD, FAAOS, is an assistant clinical professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of California, San Francisco and works in private practice in San Francisco.*

© 1995-2021 by the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. "All Rights Reserved." This website and its contents may not be reproduced in whole or in part without written permission. "American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons" and its associated seal and "American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons" and its logo are all registered U.S. trademarks and may not be used without written permission.