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Science unites a troubled world: Lessons from the pandemic

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ABSTRACT

In response to the ongoing pandemic, European Journal of Pharmacology has published a special issue entitled Therapeutic targets and pharmacological treatment of COVID-19 that contains more than 30 manuscripts. Scientists from around the world contributed both review articles and original manuscripts that are remarkable in their diversity. Each contribution offers a unique perspective on the current approaches of the discipline called pharmacology. Yet the contributions share an enthusiasm to put forward a fresh viewpoint and make a positive difference by the exchange of ideas during the troubled times of this pandemic. What other enterprise but science can unite so many diverse cultures and nationalities in global uncertainty and discord, and mobilize an effective response against a common enemy. The efforts of science are in stark contrast to those of populism that has introduced division and a self-serving attitude that are not simply ill-matched to tackle the pandemic, but foster its spread and severity. We trust that the readers of European Journal of Pharmacology will discover new ideas and concepts in our special COVID-19 series as members of the scientific community and shared world.
The last several years has seen the growth of populism among many counties in the world, partly as a response to globalization. Unfortunately, a common good is no longer in the national interest; rather, self-interest is now paramount. The alliances and structures that were erected on the hard lessons of the last world war are given short shrift or even cast aside in the name of what is sold as national expediency. It is within that context that the COVID-19 pandemic ought to be viewed.

The pandemic that originated in Wuhan, China is caused by the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2 (Liu et al., 2020). It rapidly spread around the world, causing great distress and death and wreaking havoc on all societies. Ironically, the pandemic has revealed the fallacy and insipid intellectual underpinnings of populism (McKee et al., 2020), as the virus is not deterred by any physical or rhetorical barriers that populist may try to erect, even within the same country. A common enemy has revealed the need to marshal a common response, and no one is safe unless everyone is safe. With that said, science has become the world’s common voice with scientists of diverse backgrounds and economic resources, from developed and less developed countries, sharing their thoughts and ideas on tackling this staggering challenge. Unlike populism, science is dependent upon a respectful exchange and critical appraisal of ideas.

We trust that the readers of European Journal of Pharmacology will discover new ideas and concepts in our special COVID-19 series. This collection of both review articles and original research exhibits a broad breadth of coverage. Yet, the contributions share an enthusiasm in a breadth of coverage. There is no miracle drugs or cures for the pandemic, but rather the promise of drugs or cures that are grounded in the guiding principles of solid scientific effort. That is not to discount the importance of individual faith as a motivating force for some in science, or the lack of faith in others. Unlike populism, science respects our differences, while individual faith as a motivating force for some in science, or the lack of faith in others. Unlike populism, science respects our differences, while

Dedication

This special issue is dedicated to Dr. Mirella Iskandar, a gentle, loving, caring, and gifted Intensivist and Pulmonologist, who is risking and dedicating her life in serving the most vulnerable of the Lebanese community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Author agreement

Our work is original and is being submitted only to European Journal of Pharmacology, has not been published already, and is not under consideration for publication or in press elsewhere. All authors agree to the submission of the manuscript.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

George W. Booz: contributes to the, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing. Fouad A. Zouein: contributes to the, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing of the manuscript.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.
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