

## Editorial

*Circumspectives*: Viewing a Topic From Multiple PerspectivesWilliam A Carlezon Jr\*<sup>1</sup><sup>1</sup>Department of Psychiatry and Neuroscience, Harvard Medical School, McLean Hospital, Belmont, MA, USA*Neuropsychopharmacology* (2014) 39, 253; doi:10.1038/npp.2013.266

'I've always believed that a lot of the troubles in the world would disappear if we were talking to each other instead of about each other.'

-Ronald Reagan

This month we introduce a new Feature called *Circumspectives*. These Features are designed to examine problems (scientific disagreements) of great importance to the field of *Neuropsychopharmacology*—and thus the readership of this journal—from more than one perspective. They resemble debates, but with a twist. The general format is to first have separate sections in which two thought leaders on the topic articulate their individual positions. The distinguishing element, however, is that the piece ends with a 'reconciliation' (or rapprochement) that is co-authored by both and includes ideas or experiments that will move the field forward. In terms of logistics, the target length is 2500 words and 2 figures, which will be drawn or perfected by Nature Publishing Group artists.

Our inaugural *Circumspectives* is entitled 'The development and maintenance of drug addiction', and authored by Roy A Wise and George F Koob (2014). The authors are eminent addiction researchers who have had a tremendous influence on the field, through both their research and generative spirits. For decades they have had a rather famous scientific disagreement, centered on their opposing views about what motivates addictive behavior. Dr Wise is a proponent of the idea that the positive (rewarding) effects of abused drugs are most important, whereas Dr Koob's theory is that it is the aversive effects of drug withdrawal (the 'Dark Side') that are critical. To someone whose formative years as a neurobiologist were spent immersed in the details of this debate and the nuances of their perspectives, the choice of the topic and authors was obvious.

In this piece, each author has included quotations to preface the description of their individual perspectives. For consistency, I followed suit (above) with a cold war-era quotation about the nature of disagreements. One of the things that makes science such a unique endeavor is the fact that disagreements are its lifeblood. Disagreements inspire creativity in experimental design, and demonstrate that there are often numerous valid ways to look at data sets. They reinforce the lesson to our students that looking for alternative interpretations can actually be fun, in addition to the fact that describing them is now an essential aspect of most grant applications. In this way, disagreements can be productive rather than destructive. However, even the most passionate and robust scientific disagreements should be collegial, as these authors deftly demonstrate, setting a perfect example for future installments. All *Circumspectives* pieces will have this same collegial spirit at their core, or they will not appear in these pages.

As Mr Reagan might have predicted, talking to one another in the context of writing this piece made it clear that the perspectives of Drs Wise and Koob are not as different as they may have originally seemed. This will not always be the case. We expect to feature a *Circumspectives* piece approximately once per year, by editorial invitation only. We will consider ideas and nominations; these should be brief and submitted to the senior editorial team via the managing editor (journal@acnp.org).

We hope that our readership enjoys this new feature!

## REFERENCES

Wise RA, Koob GF (2014). The development and maintenance of drug addiction. *Neuropsychopharmacology*, this issue.

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