

Uncertainty and adaptability, science and consciousness, in ophthalmology and in the experimental

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OCE's editor

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Oftalmol Clin Exp (ISSNe 1851-2658)
2023; 16(4): e317-e319.

The context in which we practice and the environment in which we create knowledge

Being in December means that time has passed, that the end of another year is approaching and that we are in the last issue of *OCE* of 2023. A year where the world continues to watch the chronification of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, where it continues not to see the decomposition of the castaways of thousands of boats, a year where Hamas perpetrated its worst attack on Israel and it seems that not everyone gives it the terrible importance it should. But although many do not feel that this is happening (and it is happening to them too) it is our context.

The world is round (terraplanners notwithstanding) and what goes one way affects the other in some way. Our body is full of sensors. We have to sense and feel. It has to hurt us and we have to react because we are also in a year in which Argentina once again put us to the test of how to live and survive. So much science and knowledge should help us to understand how our context is and to do something about it. Therefore, it is not a mistake to start the editorial of the scientific publication of the Argentine Council of Ophthalmology talking about this. This is how we are practicing medicine and developing research projects, with uncertainty but with adaptability. This is our situation. It is what we have to do, in Argentina, in Latin America and in the world.

Will we really be much better than we show?

I think so, but we have to prove it. With effort, study and perseverance we want to give and leave examples for the new generations to surpass us, because merit really exists. Actions and reactions. Science is the trench where we can take refuge from mediocrity and greed. Research is the passage that allows us to step into a reality parallel to clinical practice, a reality that finally merges, creating physicians who become better and researchers who, working as a team, synergize beyond their personal qualities. Multidisciplinary teams yield results of greater impact. The methodology helps us to think on solid engrams, which, although they seem strict and rigorous, actually give us the space to free ourselves as far as our imagination and originality can take us. Everything is possible, really, but the evidence of the facts is unforgiving and will always end up dictating the most just sentence. And what is the role of our *OCE* journal? It is a place where we exercise the scientific method and evidence-based medicine in the context of the reality of a part of the world that has its peculiarities, so that many times what is published in other continents and even in other regions of our great America does not apply to us at all, even in this present globalization.

Why make the effort, is it worth it?

Our current medicine is based on evidence that arises from using the scientific method and is here to protect us from social security, prepayment and systems that corrupt and speculate with our work. Health systems, public and private, to which we will have to teach with great patience the reason for our actions. But actions that must be backed up with accurate data and transparent information. Scientific evidence allows us to detect acts and practices that cannot be justified and should therefore not be accepted. We can say it without fear: we are not all the same and there are professionals who have fallen into one or more of these obstacles: monotony, disillusionment, leveling down, conformism and/

or a position. Capitals that decapitate honor and honesty. But we do not generalize, because there are systems that go well and fulfill their function and others that should no longer have a place in the context of an evidence-based world. It is part of the heterogeneity of human beings. And what is *OCE* for? To validate unbiased scientific work on topics related to vision science. Validated work that goes on to be published is exposed forever, to be confirmed or refuted. These are the rules of the “market” of science.

Is this editorial a complaint?

No, it is just a description of situations that only enhance the satisfaction we have from the *OCE* journal to see the growth of our peers, those who make the effort to always do a little more regardless of the context. We wish to highlight those who have made their scientific contribution to the community since 2007 and especially in this 2023. We find diverse authors and from different realities. Seeing where we are and where we started from obliges me to express special thanks to Dr. Jorge Croxatto, first editor of the journal and to Dr. Javier Casiraghi who later delegated this responsibility to me, in addition to extending my gratitude to the entire editorial committee and the team of professionals who help us in all details, writing, editing, design and dissemination of content.

This is already over, but it will continue

I am finishing writing this editorial with hope and a lot of optimism because I recently had the pleasure of participating in the last edition of the CAO Regional Conferences (the Buenos Aires ones) held jointly with REBECOS, which is “the” congress of the residents. Days later I enjoyed being part of the congress of Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology of Argentina (AIVO), international chapter of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO); scientific events that have allowed me to know that there are more

and more great young people who receive training and give back a mobilizing energy. Seeing disciples surpassing their teachers is exciting. But I also saw not so young professionals teaching in many ways, but mostly with examples of their education and respect for their peers. I was moved on many occasions over the past few days (perhaps an expression of the passage of time) to see academic tutors silently taking pride as they expounded on their students.

As the end of the year is approaching I will express wishes. I want physicians and researchers who decide their future out of passion and not because of pressure. I want them to enjoy and feel what they do. I want there to be no shortage of resources to carry out healthcare practice with excellence and basic, translational and clinical research activities with the highest quality. Above all, I want there to be no lack of desire to do more

than what others have done before. We must set the bar higher for the next generations because we are all expendable and that is good.

This issue of *OCE* closes a difficult year for the whole world, not only for Argentina, but we are trying to overcome it to start a great 2024. Until then and on behalf of the entire editorial board I extend my thanks to the reviewers who collaborated throughout the year, to all the authors and we leave you with a great issue with “clinical” and “experimental” ophthalmology papers from multidisciplinary groups from different countries. Until the next volume 17 of our beloved journal and everyone to work hard to be better, because 2024 is coming with many novelties and motivating challenges. We are waiting for your best effort: we are waiting for your best work. Happy holidays!