

Professor Brian Leonard: Former Editor-in-Chief of *Human Psychopharmacology*

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'*Ní bheidh a leithéid ann arís*' ('we won't see his like again'). Thus concluded the warm tribute to Professor Brian Leonard, posted on the British Association for Psychopharmacology website, on the sad news of his passing, after a short illness, in the final week of 2023 (see www.bap.org.uk). Brian was a former President of both the BAP and the Collegium Internationale Neuropsychopharmacologicum (CINP) and served as Editor-in-Chief of *Human Psychopharmacology* between 1994 and 1999 (succeeding the Founding Editor Guy Edwards, whose obituary was published last year: see Cowen, 2023). During his Editorship, the journal flourished in terms of its scientific content, international contributors, readership and impact.

Born in 1936, Brian became a leading figure in psychopharmacological research, education and training, over 50 years. After working at Nottingham University (1962–1968), and in the pharmaceutical industry (1968–1974, first at ICI Ltd, then Organon Laboratories), he became Founding Professor and Head of the Department of Pharmacology at University College Galway in 1974, continuing there until 1999, when he 'retired'. He held Professor Emeritus status at the University of Galway, and a Visiting Professorship at the University of Maastricht from 2002, and an Honorary Professorship at Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich since 2007. He continued publishing scientific articles until the final months of 2023. His wide-ranging and influential research encompassed studies of anxiolytic and antidepressant compounds, the neurobiology of affective disorders, alcohol use disorders, and dementia, and he was an early pioneer in the realm of psychoneuroimmunology.

His former colleagues draw attention to his pioneering research in the development and characterisation of animal models of depression (most notably the olfactory bulbectomy model), and in

preclinical studies of the pharmacology of antidepressants, anxiolytics, and other psychotropics: and his major contributions to investigating biomarkers of major psychiatric disorders, the metabolic syndrome in depression and schizophrenia, and in psychoneuroimmunology, where he was one of the first to recognise, investigate, and promote the importance of the brain-immune axis in depression and schizophrenia. He received the BAP Lifetime Achievement Award in 2008.

Brian was a truly inspirational lecturer, combining his extensive knowledge of pharmacology with panache and cheeky humour, encouraging many to pursue careers in clinical and experimental psychopharmacology and translational and applied neuroscience. After notional 'retirement' he travelled widely, in particular to low and middle income countries in Africa and Asia, lecturing to international colleagues and inspiring the emerging generations of academic and clinical researchers. He received the CINP Arvid Carlsson medal for education in 2012. In addition, Brian had a lifelong passion for challenging socioeconomic disadvantage, discrimination and other societal injustices, and would engage in insightful and lively political discussions whenever needed.

Brian kindly supported my research and clinical interests in anxiety and depression at a pivotal career stage; and later encouraged me to become Editor of this journal. He also invited me to contribute to his periodic psychopharmacology masterclasses in Dublin, and his lively and interactive CINP seminars in Athens, Cape Town, and Colombo, Sri Lanka. It has been wonderful to hear from many attendees at these events how they were captivated and inspired by Brian's social commitment, engaging delivery, and compendious knowledge. Indeed, he will be missed.

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