

Antiviral Activity of Hederin

A recent communication by G. S. Rao *et al.*¹ mentioned that antiviral activity has not been previously reported for the triterpenoid saponins. However, an article, "La Hederina, Un Nuevo Antibiotico" (Hederin, A New Antibiotic), by A. I. Calabrese was published in 1949² and is listed in the *Quarterly Cumulative Index Medicus* (1949, p. 233). Hederin was the subject of my thesis for the Professor degree in toxicology at the University of Buenos Aires, Faculty of Medicine, in which I described its pharmacological, bactericidal, virostatic, antitumor, and toxicological activity.

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¹G. S. Rao, J. E. Sinsheimer, and K. W. Cochran, *J. Pharm. Sci.*, **63**, 471(1974).

²A. I. Calabrese, *Semana Med.*, **1**, 116(1949).

Bioequivalency and Noise

The September 1974 issue of the *Journal* includes an editorial by the Managing Editor emphasizing his "shock and dismay" upon reading the Report of the Drug Bioequivalence Study Panel to the

Office of Technology Assessment. The symptoms of shock are quite evident in the absence of encephalographic tracings by simply noting the extensive choice of such melodramatic expressions as "blast," "frenzy," "vicious," *etc.* Since editors suffer a great deal from the abuse of language by contributors, we need not pay too much attention to this emotional display except for the inclusion of a speculation to the effect that the members of the Panel conspired to attack the official compendia as a strategic means of undermining the general (*sic*) assessment of drug equivalency as expressed by the HEW Task Force on Prescription Drugs and others—not omitting the author of the editorial himself.

Perhaps the conspiratorial climate of the nation's capital, amplified by the continuing Watergate scenario, has managed to penetrate the pharmaceutical bastion on Constitution Avenue. The members of the Panel are all distinguished medical and pharmaceutical scientists who, no matter how faulty or correct their recommendations will prove to be, are blatantly slandered by such speculation—and all the more so since it appears in a reputable scientific journal.

One issue later, in October, the same editorialist provides a welcome touch of wry amusement in a *Journal* that rarely raises a smile when he informs us that the APhA has complained about the Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences "speaking the wrong language and shouting besides." Time will inevitably tell us who was speaking the wrong language concerning the important issue of bioequivalency but as to who was guilty of shouting, we no longer need to wait.

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