The dilemma of ignorance
To my colleagues from all over the world!

For a long time now I have kept my feelings silent regarding the progress of implant dentistry.

When Dean Edward Kaufman was still alive he created the first and only endowed chair in implant dentistry which he named the Leonard I. Linkow Professorship of Implant Dentistry in perpetuity with me as the recipient. It was to be for the very first time in the world when all implant modalities and devices would be explored, used and evaluated. Did this ever happen?? Never!!!

All the academia around the world is “screw” happy. That’s all they know and that’s all they know and the multimillion “dollar screw companies compensate some of them very well. So, why should they not promote these screw companies?

Students today are only taught root form implants so are the practicing dentists.

I just came back from lecturing at one of the maxi courses held in Portland Oregon. I lectured for two days – the first one I spoke for seven hours. The students were amazed, stunned and frustrated that they never heard a lecture from anyone on blade/plate form implants and subperiosteal implants.

What a crime – what a disgrace to implant dentistry – what a disaster that the academia continues to ignore these incredibly magnificent implants, their procedures and their longtime successes. Why has this been an ongoing secret? Because very few of the academia know the first thing about them.

Secondly, because the multimillion dollar root form companies from their very beginning were feeding the universities with much of their armamentarium and some of their many “presents”. So why should the universities not use them and report mostly positively as to their values.

Since there were very few blade/plate form implant companies in business that were “rich” enough to donate their kits etc. to the universities they were ignored and overlooked and hushed to silence or looked upon with negative remarks.

Then again, isn’t it easier to give a weekend course on screws and then sell ten to twelve screws per edentulous jaw to the students for an excellent profit and much easier than if they had to teach in the same week-end how to place blade implants and then only have to sell three or four for an edentulous jaw at even a cheaper price per implant?

Unfortunately however, the dentists would rather place in ten to twelve screws rather than three or four blades which would accomplish the same results but these dentists would make much more money placing in the screws.

What about subperiosteal implants? These are some of the most magnificent and helpful implants ever used especially the triiodal mandibular subperiosteal implant that I introduced to the profession in 1984, twenty five years ago. But why would these “non-shelf” implants be popularized by these screw companies?

Because there is no way that they can make one penny because they cannot sell them. These are implants that have to be designed by dentists and then cast in vitallium or titanium by technicians.
I remember in the late 1960s, when none of the dental universities invited me to lecture on implants. I was very fortunate to be given that chance at the Institute for Graduate Dentists which was situated on West 67th Street and Broadway in NYC.

There was only room for 50 seats but there existed a sliding back wall that allowed another 15 seats. I gave three to five courses each year for about five years and the dentists were breaking down the doors to take my courses.

Strangely enough no oral surgeons ever appeared which lead to their demise. The general practitioners took these courses and did many implants which eventually gave them the courage to do apicoectomies, third molars extractions and many more of the surgical procedures that they would originally refer out to the oral surgeons. So for a good number of years they were hurting financially pretty good.

Then came the savior! Branemark and Noble Pharma did some brilliant research which led them to realize that the oral surgeons were starving. So they did a two-fold move.

They first downplayed all screw, blade and subperiosteal implants claiming they were no good and then presented their “Osseo integrated” root form implant that must first be buried in bone for three to six months and be placed into bone with slow running contrangles and it came off a great success and they only allowed these starving oral surgeons to use their implants and naturally they all jumped on this bandwagon.

Today, of course Noble Pharma is pushing immediate loaded implants which were my procedures from the very beginning.

So this tells just a small part of the story. For one not to do blade/plate form implants or subperiosteal implants is like telling a patient who is blind that there are no ways to restore his site when there are.

Dentists who teach implant dentistry in universities or to study groups or congresses that continually ignore the benefits of these other implants are not only short changing themselves but also even more importantly short changing their patients.

You all have been brainwashed (Branewashed) by the multimillion dollar marketing companies and you all fell for it. You should be ashamed of yourselves – all of you.

To continually push the envelope beyond its limitations so bone augmentations can be used anywhere, just so they could create an arena for the placement of some root form screw rather than place a properly designed implant type to fit the unusual bone remains is going way out of line.

I was always hoping that the tremendous amount of pioneering work I have done in implant dentistry would someday allow the future field to fall on fertile ground. It’s still not too late.

Just to add another flame to the fire I want to say emphatically that Dr. Marco Pasqualini and Dr. GianCarlo Cortese are eons ahead in implant dentistry than you political demons can ever reach...

Leonard Linkow