By Dennis J. Tartakow, DMD, MED, EdD, PhD, Editor in Chief

Fallen heroes of orthodontics

‘In order for any of us to know where we are going, we must know where we came from.’

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There are many outstanding clini-
cians, researchers, teachers, mentors
and leaders who have been referred to as
the pillars of modern-day orthodontics.
Many of these individuals are like fallen
heroes of other walks of life — gone and
forgotten, and that is a shame.

Quite possibly it is because of the
digital generation, where the literature
has not been able to cite these men and
women, but why is that? Could it be that
our educational programs are not pro-
viding residents with the historical and
evolutionary data necessary to recog-
nize these individuals who were really
the pioneers of modern-day orthodon-
tics? That is really too bad and too sad.

Case in point: it has been more than 50
years since Drs. Maxwell Fogel and Jack
Magill first introduced their original
“Combination Technique” and yet they
are hardly ever cited in any article, refer-
ce or bibliographic list on self-ligating
bracket systems. Now one is an island unto
himself or herself … “We are [all] merely
pigmies on the shoulders of giants” (Dr.
Maxwell S. Fogel, 1974).

Hindsight provides us with an un-
equivocal opportunity to review and re-
fect upon our own experiences. “It is at
the end of a man’s life when he realizes
how important his decisions were in the

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