



NOT THE FIRST... NOR YET THE LAST

EDITOR'S CORNER

By Neil McLeod BDS, LDSRCS, DDS

We are literally inundated with new products and ideas relating to every conceivable aspect of dental practice. Everything from a “new” design for extraction forceps, surveys on the type of laser “with which you are having success” within your office, to how to promote your web presence better on Bing rather than Google, and of course training courses in Las Vegas which will catapult you to the next level of success in aggressive professional marketing using a new technique. It is giddy! Yet every time a new idea or concept crosses our desks we have to ask ourselves – is this for me now?

Over a hundred years before the first dental college opened its doors in

Baltimore, Alexander Pope, the English poet, gave us this great maxim: **“Be not the first by whom the new are tried, Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.”** I remember Peter K. Thomas, that remarkable if bombastic teacher of Gnathology, used to quote this line in his courses. In our bones, we have the sense that, while many of our colleagues are rushing to embrace new technology, and profiting from it, they may also have lowered their critical standard and are not really offering better care. Really, it is all about the standard of care. We still see and replace silver fillings, asking ourselves who placed these restorations, when we personally may not have inserted an alloy since 1977. By the same token, the gold onlay, so long touted as the premiere restoration, seems to be infrequently placed today in the face of demand for

the “white” alternatives. Is the gold onlay going the way of the gold foil?

There is a pressure upon each of us to try new products or ideas. It comes in the form of compelling arguments provided by a sophisticated and well funded sales force. They are only too pleased to acquaint us with what we did not yet know, which our patients come into our offices and ask us about. You know, questions like, “Can you fit me with the Zirconium non-metal implants, because I don’t want metal in my body?” They have read about it on the Internet or in a popular magazine. Then, of course, there is the elaborate promotional material on the latest one-step bonding agent which will shave thirty seconds off the time it takes to place a filling. We, on the other hand, have yet to be instructed by a reliable academy on whether such additions to our armory of abilities are really efficacious. We have a professional responsibility to be cautious in adopting the “new” while maintaining a respect for the tried and true. When you have questions and concerns, bring them to us at the Los Angeles Dental Society. We are here to help you and represent your best professional interests. ■

1 Alexander Pope, An Essay on Criticism, 1711

Welcome to the first issue of Los Angeles Dental Society’s (LADS) redesigned *Explorer*, officially launching the new logo and look of LADS! Not only does this mark the roll-out of the Society’s new brand, but we also like to think that it represents our new “personality” as well – professional, vibrant, and open to change!

LADS has always strived to serve its members, but times change and so do our members. One size simply does not fit all. Within LADS alone, you represent the various ethnicities, stages of practice, territories and practice models that make diversity a feature of dentistry. So why would our programs be the same across the board?

We have already made our Practice Management educational series a regular part of new dentist and dental staff curriculum. We have established a

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Mentorship Program that is getting noticed in Texas. We are creating more intimate networking environments for diverse groups of dentists through our Dinner With 10 Docs (aka D10). We sincerely want our members to succeed, because your success is our success

So what else is in the horizon? We know looking for a job or someone you trust to take over your practice is not easy, regardless of the condition of the economy. That is why LADS is currently working with USC’s Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry to bring you a robust online career and practice

development resource. With the goal of making this resource available to you this summer, we expect this will make it easier for you to search for that coveted job, network with those looking to hire, or find out where different practice models are popping up.

We are excited for this and other new developments in the works. LADS is in the business to support you. So what else can we help you with?

Teresa Chien
Executive Director

P.S. Save the date for the next shredding event! May 16 is the only day LADS is providing shredding and e-waste service this year, so lock down that date.

