

PREFACE

“Death snatches away many blooming children, the only hopes of their dotting parents: how many ... have been one day in the bloom of health and hope, and the next a prey?”

— MARY SHELLEY, *FRANKENSTEIN*

We had just finished the book *Crystal Mesh* — the unconscionable story of how women’s vital health concerns were routinely traded for increased profits by some of the world’s most well-known medical device makers, and woefully abetted by our broken medical regulatory review system here in the U.S. It was an exhausting project because as part of my work I had been watching up-close the physical and emotional carnage it had caused for women for eight years. Readers wrote to us and shared their profound sadness that it was all so unnecessary, that these women and their families did not need to be injured, that the system had failed them so miserably, and that it had happened in broad daylight right under all our noses, with the entire medical/technology ecosystem marching together in lock step, until finally the horror became clear to all.

And here we are again. The parallels are stunning and maddening. This time it is Big Tobacco – AGAIN – and other high-tech vaping purveyors, rather than the medical device makers at the heart of the vaginal mesh scandal. But the playbook is the same: Build seemingly attractive products which at their heart are untested and often downright dangerous, market them using huge financial resources and effective audience targeting techniques, and keep the FDA and legislators in the dark or on your side to make sure you don’t have any interference as you scale your business to massive revenue opportunities. And when the whole thing blows up (and it always eventually does), never admit guilt or say you are sorry, and never pay out the consumer early. Let them be so exhausted and in debt from medical bills that they’ll take anything. The huge losers in these stories of corporate greed and malpractice are always regular people (and taxpayers) who trusted the system and believed the hype, and end up hurt – and it is so painful to realize, sometimes even dead – in the end.

Like many others, I knew that vaping was akin to smoking cigarettes without the awful tar of tobacco, but no one seemed to realize, especially the child victims and their families, that in addition to the strong addictive elements, how the chemical vapors themselves can literally light your insides on fire like a wild arsonist on the loose inside your lungs. Such critical facts were conveniently ignored in the all-out marketing blitz. These new provocative vaping products are the Jeffrey Epstein of tobacco products- they prey on the underaged and the vulnerable.

When the reports of vape victims in the thousands starting surfacing, we met with experts like Dr. Wilson Tsai who really understood the scientific issues and the great danger at play for so many millions of consumers around the world.

These companies were shamelessly funding summer camps for elementary school kids, paying community and church groups to distribute their material to their members, and targeting veterans group and other vulnerable populations. They were using their huge financial resources to build a growing market, hooking their customers for life even as they shortened the lives of those very customers, eerily reminiscent of Big Tobacco's actions with cigarettes throughout the prior decades.

It has been predatory, it was premeditated as part of a business strategy, and the greatest harm has fallen to our most vulnerable – our children. It was certainly possible to focus entirely on the over-21 adult market and still have a huge potential marketplace, but the greed impulse was just too strong (again) and the children were such a huge and impressionable audience.

And now we as a society are paying that huge price – a public health crisis bigger than any our country has faced in decades, stealing children's health and youth and leaving families in despair.

Vaping Transmitted Diseases - VTDs are actually growing faster than STDs at an alarming rate in U.S children. But the public never really saw it coming until very recently when the many staggering stories of these vaping related illnesses literally exploded onto the scene.

Vaping is akin to setting your internal organs on fire the minute you do it – whether that's once, twice or many times. And BOOM – life as you and your family know it can be over immediately. Immediately. No warning. Boom. Just Boom.

And that is why I am writing this book. To help bring some perspective and information to this critical, still unfolding, and all-too-avoidable adolescent public

health crisis. Vaping is Smoking. Vaping is using Drugs. Vaping is Dangerous. Vaping could Kill you.

Stop being suckers. Parents protect your kids and kids, if you want to any kind of life – glamorous, meaningful or long, this popular pastime called vaping is going to rip that dream from you.