



Obituary: Leading EMF expert Dr. Martin Blank, Ph.D

Dr. Martin Blank, Ph.D, who made many lasting contributions to the scientific community, has passed away of natural causes at the age of 85. As a leading expert on the health effects of electromagnetic radiation, Dr. Blank was a strong advocate for the use of science to create a better and healthier world.

Throughout his lengthy career, Dr. Blank published over 200 papers and reviews, authored numerous books, held appointments at 11 leading universities around the world and the US Office of Naval Research. He also organized and led many meetings, including two World Congresses on Electricity and Magnetism in Biology and Medicine, and he started the Gordon Research Conferences on Bioelectrochemistry. He has been Chairman of the Organic and Biological Division of the Electrochemical Society, President of the Bioelectrochemical Society, President of the Bioelectromagnetics Society, and has been on editorial boards of Journal of the Electrochemical Society, Bioelectrochemistry and Bioenergetics, Electromagnetic Medicine and Biology. In 2014 his book, “[Overpowered](#)” (7 Stories Press), which summarized his findings regarding the potential dangers of electromagnetic radiation, was published.

Through his work, Dr. Blank established himself as one of the strongest voices globally in the quest to better understand and regulate the health effects of electromagnetic fields.

Breaking new boundaries

Dr. Blank was born in New York in 1933 as the child of immigrants, Leon and Rebecca. English was the third of five languages in which he became fluent.

An early interest in science led him to be accepted to the Bronx High School of Science, after which he proceeded to complete two PhDs: one in physical chemistry from Columbia University, and a second in colloid science - an interdisciplinary field involving chemistry, physics and nanoscience - from Cambridge University.

In his early career he studied the biological membranes that encase living cells, and the effects of electric fields on such membranes. In 1987 he read a paper by Dr. Reba Goodman, a colleague at Columbia University, that suggested everyday EMFs like power lines and electrical appliances had an effect on living cells. At that time, only ionizing forms of radiation like X-rays were acknowledged as harmful to humans.

Intrigued, Dr. Blank approached Dr. Goodman about her findings and initiated what was to become a long and fruitful scientific partnership. Though their research contradicted the accepted paradigm of the day, they continued to push boundaries, demonstrating observable, repeatable health effects of EMF on living cells.

Their results were published in numerous peer-reviewed journals, and were subsequently confirmed by other independent scientists around the world.

Acting with conviction

Dr. Blank's research into EMFs repeatedly showed that non-ionizing radiation does affect human cells. He believed that it would be in our best interest to take stronger precautions, as a way of securing a healthier future, and that there would be nothing to lose by taking such action.

“You take a certain amount of precaution as a result of a risk that has been identified,” Dr. Blank said at the 1st public forum in the U.S. on EMF effects on Children, Fetuses and Fertility in 2013. “The risk can turn out to be a false alarm, in which case you haven't lost anything really; what you've done is prevented damage that might have occurred might it have been so.”

He wrote letters to schools, companies, and government bodies - ardent letters laying out solid research-backed reasons why they should take precautions around EMFs; not chiding them for their practices but giving them helpful council on what they could be doing to better protect the community.

In 2015 he led a publicized appeal to the United Nations and World Health Organization, calling for greater attention to the health risks of EMFs. 190 scientists from around the world took part in the appeal, unified in their beliefs that the scientific research around electromagnetic radiation was not only compelling, but urgent.

In conjunction with his conviction and willingness to act, Dr. Blank was also acutely and realistically aware of the world we've built for ourselves and of the advantages of technology. He didn't seek to eradicate wireless devices or take steps backwards, but rather to find a healthy balance between technological progress and human health.

“My message... is not to abandon gadgets—like most people I too love and utilize EMF-generating gadgets,” he wrote in his 2014 book, *Overpowered*. “Instead, I want you to realize that EMF poses a real risk to living creatures and that industrial and product safety standards must and can be reconsidered.”

Lasting impact

Throughout his career, Dr. Blank held many leadership roles — including terms as President of the Bioelectrochemical Society, and Chairman of the Organic and Biological Division of the Electrochemical Society — gave hundreds of speeches and lectures, edited various journals, and sat on the organizing committees of numerous conferences and world congresses.

Dr. Blank also had a knack for translating complex scientific concepts into a language anyone can understand. His rigorous research reports generally served the scientific community and his 2014 book *Overpowered* (7 Stories Press) offered all readers, in accessible and captivating prose, the information they needed to better protect their health.

In this way, his work has had a broad impact, reaching the general public as well as his many pupils, colleagues, and the scientific community.

He will be remembered as someone who fought against the private, profit-driven efforts of industries to obscure information from the public; and as someone who welcomed genuine discussion and criticism as catalysts for true scientific progress.

The goal of Dr. Blank's work was not to generate fear or cause alarm, but to use rigorous and objective research to get closer to the truth. And, ultimately, to use this truth to secure ourselves, and future generations, a healthier future.

Dr. Blank is survived by his wife, Marion, sons, Jonathan and Ari, daughter, Donna, and his siblings Esther and Efrom.

The family requests that, in lieu of flowers, donations shall be made to the [Electromagnetic Safety Alliance](https://emsafetyalliance.org/) <<https://emsafetyalliance.org/>>, for which Dr. Blank was an advisor.