BOO K REVIEWS


This paperback monograph constitutes, in essence, the proceedings of a conference entitled "Advances in Cardiac Pacemakers" sponsored by the New York Academy of Sciences in November 1968. Despite the year elapsing between the conference and publication, the monograph should become a standard reference on developments in electronic cardiac pacemakers over the previous decade. There are 59 pages divided into nine sections, which are followed by comments by a number of discussers. The "Table of Contents" lists the various parts:

Part I. Indications for Cardiac Pacing
Part II. Emergency Pacing Techniques
Part III. Energy Sources and Pacer Longevity
Part IV. Threshold of Cardiac Stimulation
Part V. Technical and Clinical Aspects
Part VI. Engineering Considerations of Asynchronous Pacing
Part VII. Engineering Considerations of Triggered Pacing
Part VIII. Rhythm Disturbances and Pacing
Part IX. Clinical Results of Various Pacing Techniques.

Possibly the most novel presentation from the clinician's viewpoint would be "Nuclear Energy Sources" by Hursen and Kolenik. In perusing the monograph, questions naturally come to mind as to whether there have been developments in the past year that are not covered. Basically the same problems persist, namely: When should the battery pack be changed? Are there any methods which can reveal reliable harbingers of failure? What are the actual problems of oversensing and undersensing in demand pacemakers? What are the indications for transthoracic implantation of electrodes versus transvenous route? What are the actual dangers of competing pacemakers and the categorization of such dangers related to the time of the electrode placement, the underlying disease process, and the type of pacemaker utilized? Even as of this date, these questions do not have final answers.

This monograph should be on the shelf of any cardiologist, cardiologic surgeon, or clinical investigator who has a special interest in the use of electronic pacemakers. Requests for the monographs should be addressed to the Publications Department, New York Academy of Sciences, 2 East 63rd Street, New York, New York 10021. This office has advised us that the price is $30.00 plus mailing costs.

HOWARD B. BURCHELL, M.D.


This book is intended for physicians in general practice and specialties other than cardiology, and for interns, residents, and nurses in intensive coronary care units. It is organized in outline form and the author's aim is "to present simply and accurately the basic knowledge essential to the interpretation of commonly seen electrocardiograms." It contains 17 chapters and an index. The following topics are discussed: technical and mechanical considerations, the normal electrocardiogram, plotting the electrical axis, sinus rhythms and atrial arrhythmias, premature ventricular systoles, bundle-branch blocks, ventricular hypertrophy, nodal rhythm, heart block, acute pericarditis, myocardial infarction, angina pectoris, the Master's-Rosenfeld test, cardiopulmonary disease, digitals and the electrocardiogram, the electrolytes and the electrolytes, and ventricular tachycardia, flutter, and fibrillation. The topics are discussed superficially. Conditions causing various electrocardiographic abnormalities are enumerated, but the lists are incomplete and at times misleading. There are errors in the text and in some of the illustrations (in pages 4, 8, 9, 13, 14, 16, 19, 29, and 71). The electrocardiograms and the illustrations provided are, in general, excellent. The reasons for including a relatively lengthy discussion of the historical, epidemiologic, and clinical aspects of myocardial infarction and a brief and incomplete discussion of the treatment of ventricular tachycardia are not clear. This reviewer believes that the book may reach its objectives if the necessary alterations are made and the errors corrected.

NAIP TUNA, M.D.