

**Handbook of Bioengineering**, Richard Skalak and Shu Chien, Editors, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1987.

Reviewed by **R. E. Mates**

The *Handbook of Bioengineering* is an attempt to assemble, in a single volume, current reviews of the major topics of interest in bioengineering. The handbook comprises 41 chapters, each authored by recognized authorities in the subject. The Table of Contents is appended to this review.

The choice of subject matter for such a volume is difficult and inevitably reflects the interests of the editors. The emphasis in the Handbook is on biomechanics, and coverage of the mechanics of hard and soft tissues, cardiovascular, pulmonary and orthopedic mechanics is thorough and complete. In addition to these topics, the Handbook includes less familiar applications such as cochlear, uterine and vestibular mechanics.

This is not to imply that coverage is limited to biomechanical topics. There are several chapters devoted to artificial organs, measurement techniques and other topics not related to mechanics. Here, however, the range of topics is not as comprehensive. With respect to experimental and diagnostic measurements, for example, there are chapters on computerized tomography, blood pressure and flow measurements, and pulmonary function tests. There is minimal coverage of the use of ultrasound in medicine, and no discussion of the newer imaging techniques such as magnetic resonance imaging and positron emission tomography. Similarly, the field of rehabilitation engineering and aids to the handicapped are not included.

Most of the authors have provided comprehensive reviews and extensive bibliographies. In a few cases, the reviews tend to be concentrated on the authors' own work. The thoroughness of coverage of the material varies among the individual chapters. Many of the chapters contain extensive tabulations of published experimental data, while others are largely theoretical developments. For example, the chapter "Static Elastic Properties of Blood Vessels" includes considerable data as well as theoretical formulations. The following chapter, "Models of the Arterial System," which discusses dynamic effects including viscoelasticity, is largely theoretical. Data on the dynamic elastic properties of arteries receive little emphasis in either chapter.

The Handbook will be a valuable resource for a wide variety of individuals. It provides an excellent starting point for students as well as experienced engineers and scientists who

wish to pursue research within the field of bioengineering. It will provide a valuable reference for courses offered in bioengineering. Engineers designing medical devices will find the book useful, as will physicians and other health scientists with an interest in more quantitative approaches to biomedical problems.

The Handbook will be useful to workers with backgrounds in either the physical or biological sciences. Most of the chapters assume little prior knowledge of either engineering or biology. While individual readers may have difficulty with either the physiological or mathematical details, in most cases these are not essential to obtain an overview of the topic.

The editors have accomplished a monumental task in assembling the contributions of 62 individual authors. In spite of some limitations in its coverage, the Handbook is a unique resource. The field of bioengineering is so diverse that it would be possible to fill an additional volume with reviews of other topics. Hopefully the editors and publishers will continue to expand the coverage in future editions.

## Handbook of Bioengineering

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### Contents

*Contributors vii  
Preface xi*

- |                                     |   |     |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----|
| 1. <b>Mechanics of Soft Tissues</b> | <i>Y. C. Fung</i>                                       | 1.1 |
| 2. <b>Properties of Bone</b>        | <i>S. C. Cowin, W. C. Van Buskirk, and R. B. Ashman</i> | 2.1 |

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|  |   |      |   |   |      |
|--|---|------|---|---|------|
| 3. Electromechanical Effects in Bone                                       | <i>M. W. Johnson and J. L. Katz</i>                     | 3.1  | 23. Flow Through Collapsible Tubes                      | <i>R. D. Kamm</i>   | 23.1 |
| 4. Biomechanical Properties of Articular Cartilage                         | <i>S. L-Y. Woo, V. C. Mow, and W. M. Lai</i>            | 4.1  | 24. Elasticity of the Lung                              | <i>D. L. Vawter and J. D. Humphrey</i>                                  | 24.1 |
| 5. Lubrication of Diarthrodial Joints                                      | <i>V. C. Mow and A. F. Mak</i>                          | 5.1  | 25. Respiratory Control and Mechanics                   | <i>G. S. Longobardo, N. S. Cherniack, K. P. Strohl, and J. M. Fouke</i> | 25.1 |
| 6. Properties of Tendons and Ligaments                                     | <i>A. Viidik</i>  | 6.1  | 26. Respiratory Gas Exchange                            | <i>P. D. Wagner</i>   | 26.1 |
| 7. Muscle Mechanics  | <i>T. A. McMahon</i>                                    | 7.1  | 27. Artificial Lungs and Oxygenation Devices            | <i>P. D. Richardson</i>   | 27.1 |
| 8. Noninvasive Blood Pressure Recording and the Genesis of Korotkoff Sound | <i>G. M. Drzewiecki, J. Melbin, and A. Noordergraaf</i> | 8.1  | 28. Neural Conduction                                   | <i>D. Landowne</i>  | 28.1 |
| 9. Thermal Properties of Tissues   | <i>J. C. Chato</i>                                      | 9.1  | 29. Sensory Receptors                                   | <i>D. C. Mountain</i>   | 29.1 |
| 10. Mechanics of the Uterus in Pregnancy and Labor                         | <i>J. Mizrahi and Z. Karni</i>                          | 10.1 | 30. Cochlear Mechanics                                  | <i>C. R. Steele</i>   | 30.1 |
| 11. Skin Mechanics   | <i>Y. Lanir</i>   | 11.1 | 31. Vestibular Mechanics                                | <i>W. C. Van Buskirk and J. W. Grant</i>                                | 31.1 |
| 12. Properties of Red Blood Cells  | <i>R. M. Hochmuth</i>                                   | 12.1 | 32. Computed Tomography and 3-D Imaging                 | <i>L. D. Harris, E. L. Ritman, and R. A. Robb</i>                       | 32.1 |
| 13. Rheology of Leukocytes   | <i>G. W. Schmid-Schönbein</i>                           | 13.1 | 33. Blood Pressure and Flow Measurements                | <i>M. Intaglietta</i>   | 33.1 |
| 14. Rheology and Tube Flow of Blood  | <i>G. R. Cokelet</i>                                    | 14.1 | 34. Electrical Safety in Medicine                       | <i>A. Wald</i>  | 34.1 |
| 15. Mechanical Hemolysis   | <i>P. L. Blackshear and G. L. Blackshear</i>            | 15.1 | 35. Stereology  | <i>O. Mathieu-Costello</i>  | 35.1 |
| 16. Static Elastic Properties of Blood Vessels                             | <i>T. R. Canfield and P. B. Dobrin</i>                  | 16.1 | 36. Instrumentation for Pulmonary Function Tests        | <i>R. L. Pimmel</i>   | 36.1 |
| 17. Models of Arterial System  | <i>J. C. Stettler, P. Niederer, and M. Anliker</i>      | 17.1 | 37. Theory and Design of Implantable Cardiac Pacemakers | <i>W. Greatbatch and W. M. Chardack</i>                                 | 37.1 |
| 18. Mechanics of Blood Flow in the Microcirculation                        | <i>H. H. Lipowsky</i>                                   | 18.1 | 38. Circulatory Assist Devices                          | <i>H. M. Spotnitz</i>   | 38.1 |
| 19. Interstitial Fluid Pressure and Lymph Flow                             | <i>A. R. Hargens</i>                                    | 19.1 | 39. The Artificial Kidney                               | <i>A. Zelman</i>  | 39.1 |
| 20. Network Models of Peripheral Circulation                               | <i>A. S. Popel</i>                                      | 20.1 | 40. Bioengineering of Total Joint Replacement           | <i>J. L. Lewis and W. D. Lew</i>  | 40.1 |
| 21. Fluid Mechanics in Atherosclerosis                                     | <i>R. M. Nerem and M. J. Levesque</i>                   | 21.1 | 41. Biomechanics of the Human Spine and Trunk           | <i>A. B. Schultz</i>  | 41.1 |
| 22. Arterial Wall Oxygen Transport and its Relationship to Atherogenesis   | <i>T. K. Goldstick and P. B. Dobrin</i>                 | 22.1 | Index Follows Chapter 41                                |   |      |