

designs that are available as intense light sources tunable over a wide range of optical frequencies.

Of narrower scope but equally important for specific applications are William H. Steier's theoretical section on the operation of unstable resonators for high power lasers, Richard L. Abrams's discussion of design for waveguide CO₂ lasers, Walter Koechner's description of designs and applications for pulsed holography, and David Hon's article on high-power second-harmonic generation.

Some of the articles, by their inclusion, point out gaps in the description that were not included, but might have been. The detailed description of electrically-excited CO lasers by R. E. Center could have included CO₂ and HF lasers and could have been generalized into a discussion of all high electrically excited infrared lasers. William F. Krupke, E. Victor George and Roger A. Hass describe the laser requirements for practical laser fusion and summarize experiments in progress on possible advanced lasers. Given the nature of the *Handbook* format, the description of the current glass, CO₂ and iodine fusion laser construction, design and experimental results should have received more emphasis.

Two articles delve much more deeply into their subject than is usual for a handbook: the theoretical aspects of laser-induced chemistry by C. D. Cantrell, S. M. Freund and J. L. Lyman, and those of continuous picosecond spectroscopy of dyes by H. E. Lessing, E. V. George and A. von Jena. In general, however, the tenor of Volume III is on the practical aspects of laser technology and applications. Each article contains an extensive reference list for more detailed aspects of each subject.

An unfortunate limitation of the handbook format is the long lead-time in writing and publication. For this reason the volume lacks the recent important advances in semiconductor lasers, color-center lasers, free-electron lasers, and new host solid-state lasers. One hopes for an additional volume to cover these technologies now entering maturity. The list of possible applications is growing endlessly and will challenge the skill of the editor to identify the most significant.

At its steep price, who should buy the *Laser Handbook, Vol. III*? A scientist interested in depth in any of the topics included will probably find more up-to-date material in specialized monographs or review articles. However, for a scientist who wants a basic understanding of a broad range of lasers and laser applications, the three volumes of the *Laser Handbook* provide valuable source material. As expected for a good handbook, the first two volumes

remain useful even now, ten years after their writing. One suspects that Volume III will likewise have a long and useful life. Every research group in quantum electronics should have access to this set of references and yet another volume would be welcome to cover those topics missed in Volume III.

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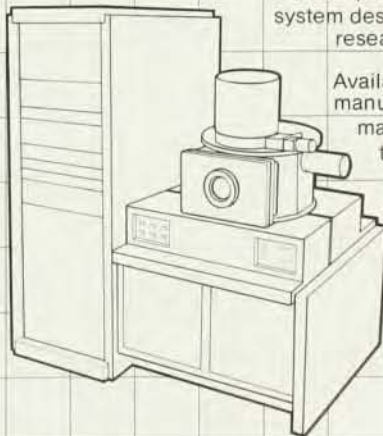
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