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Second Edition

JOHN GOWAR

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John Gowar

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Consultant editors: John Midwinter, University College London, UK
Alan Snyder, Australian National University
Bernard Weiss, University of Surrey, UK

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Preface to the second edition

In the decade since the first edition was drafted, optical fiber communication systems have more than fulfilled everything that was then expected of them. A world-wide industry has developed. Interest has focussed mainly on single-mode fiber systems, which have come to dominate all types of high capacity, point-to-point telecommunication in all parts of the world. Not surprisingly, the literature has expanded together with the activity. There are now several journals and many conferences devoted exclusively to the subject. Notable among them are the *IEEE Journal of Lightwave Technology*, the annual Optical Fiber Conference (OFC) in the US and the European Conference on Optical Communication (ECOC). Many thousands of papers are published every year. It is not surprising that revising the first edition has been quite as difficult and time-consuming as writing it was in the first place.

Clearly, a textbook prepared today cannot attempt to treat the subject with the same level of detail and comprehensiveness that was possible ten years ago. Fortunately, the fundamentals have not altered. Very little of the material of the first edition is irrelevant today but some new topics and many new examples have had to be added and some changes of emphasis have been necessary.

As before, the book breaks clearly into an introduction and three parts. The first part deals with the fiber, the second with the components used for the optical source and the detector, and the third with the receiver and general system considerations. I have taken the opportunity to break down the chapters into smaller units and to reorganize some of the material. There is a new chapter (Chapter 6) on inelastic scattering and non-linear propagation and one on coherent systems (Chapter 24). The section on fiber measurements has also been expanded into a new chapter (Chapter 12).

There are certain topics that I have wished to retain, even though they are not essential to the optical fiber systems that dominate current telecommunications. Thus, Chapter 17 takes a broad view of the principles of laser action and Chapter 25 looks specifically at free space transmission. Although this is not of great significance in the context of today's communication systems, the basic ideas apply to several other important applications such as remote sensing and range-finding and I think they are worthy of inclusion.

Superficial treatments of several topics which are normally dealt with rigorously in foundation courses have also been retained. Some of these courses may well be considered to be pre-requisites to a course on optical communications, but it seems right to me, while it still can be done, to gather into a single volume as much as possible of the fundamental material relating to the key aspects and components of

the optical communication system. So, the semiclassical approach to the propagation of radiation through matter, the development of semiconductor theory directed from the beginning towards III–V semiconductors and opto-electronic components, some elementary theory of communications, are all included. I hope that readers whose backgrounds mean that they have not dealt with these topics previously find this useful and that those who have find the revision interesting.

My intention was to make the book as self-contained as possible. I have therefore strictly limited the references cited to those where pre-requisite or supportive material may be found and to a few classic and easily accessible papers and texts which lead the reader on to more advanced treatments and topics. When specific data have been taken from a particular source, reference is given in the text. Readers wishing to keep up with the latest developments will find that *Electronics Letters* and the *IEEE Journal of Lightwave Technology* cover the subject particularly well. In the latter, look out for the special issues on particular topics, such as the March 1990 issue on 'Coherent systems' or the February 1991 issue on 'Fiber amplifiers'. Two other IEEE journals which often devote special issues to subjects related to optical communications are the *Journal on Selected Areas in Communications* (e.g. the August 1990 issue on 'Dense wavelength division multiplexing techniques for high capacity and multiple access communication systems') and the *Journal of Quantum Electronics* (mainly on semiconductor laser progress). The invited review papers often provide an excellent introduction to the literature for those wishing to make a more detailed study.

Once again there are many people I have to thank either for their help on specific matters or for their general support. In particular, may I single out my colleagues Dr D. T. Bickley, Dr C. J. Railton and the late Professor K. F. Sander for assistance with various mathematical aspects and my wife Ann for providing the support that makes authorship possible.

J. Gowar
Bristol
June 1992

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