



# **The Struggles of a Medical Innovator: Cochlear Implants and Other Ear Surgeries: A Memoir by William F. House, D.D.S., M.D.**

*M.D., William F. House D.D.S.*

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William F. House D.D.S., M.D. is called “the Father of Neurotology”—the treatment of inner ear disorders. In this fascinating memoir, he describes his struggles to introduce new ideas to ear surgery and how medical professionals were always slow to accept his “radical” approaches. He tells of dental school, time as a dental officer in the U.S. Navy and his medical training, including time at Los Angeles County Hospital. Seven chapters each describe a problem in the treatment of ear disease and hearing loss and how he went about finding solutions. These chapters give insight into the thought processes of this giant in his field; including his use of the operating microscope for ear surgery, development of surgical approaches to remove tumors on the hearing nerve without killing the patient, and a surgical treatment for Ménière’s disease that enabled one of his patients, the astronaut Alan Shepard, to fly to the moon. Perhaps his greatest achievement was the first cochlear implant, allowing so many to leave their silent worlds. Dr. House gives readers an inside look at his development of this revolutionary device and the significant opposition he faced in trying to make it a clinical reality. The controversy, struggles and ultimate success of this work is a story of commitment and dedication. He also tells of his experiences with the entertainment industry, the legal system, his world travels, and more. Finally, we hear from many of the doctors he helped to train and grateful cochlear implant patients, among others. An Appendix discusses in technical detail Dr. House’s theory about how cochlear implants work.

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