Silicon Processing For The Vlsi Era Vol 4

Silicon, as a single-crystal semiconductor, has sparked a revolution in the field of electronics and touched nearly every field of science and technology. Though available abundantly as silica and in various other forms in nature, silicon is difficult to separate from its chemical compounds because of its reactivity. As a solid, silicon is chemically inert and stable, but growing it as a single crystal creates many technological challenges. Crystal Growth and Evaluation of Silicon for VLSI and ULSI is one of the first books to cover the systematic growth of silicon single crystals and the complete evaluation of silicon, from sand to useful wafers for device fabrication. Written for engineers and researchers working in semiconductor fabrication industries, this practical text: Describes different techniques used to grow silicon single crystals Explains how grown single-crystal ingots become a complete silicon wafer for integrated-circuit fabrication Reviews different methods to evaluate silicon wafers to determine suitability for device applications Analyzes silicon wafers in terms of resistivity and impurity concentration mapping Examines the effect of intentional and unintentional impurities Explores the defects found in regular silicon-crystal lattice Discusses silicon wafer preparation for VLSI and ULSI processing Crystal Growth and Evaluation of Silicon for VLSI and ULSI is an essential reference for different approaches to the selection of the basic silicon-containing compound, separation of silicon as metallurgical-grade pure silicon, subsequent purification, single-crystal growth, and defects and evaluation of the deviations within the grown crystals.

This book presents the first comprehensive treatment of analog VLSI design for signal and information processing applications by blending the basic design concepts of both traditional and contemporary analog VLSI. The breadth and level of details of topics covered are unique, reflecting the birth of a new generation of analog VLSI circuits. Each chapter provides basic introductory material in a tutorial manner, with examples or case studies at the circuit and/or system level. Outstanding features of the text include coverage of the latest in analog VLSI putting students and practicing engineers on the cutting edge of this exciting field; thorough coverage of topics unique to this book including low-voltage, BiCMOS, current-mode and neural information processing, oversampled data converters, statistical design, analog testability, analog CAD, analog layout, and analog VLSI interconnects; avoids lengthy coverage of device physics and IC fabrication and goes straight to the design and applications of analog VLSI circuits; extensive use of SPICE in numerous examples and problem sets; worked examples (from a realistic-silicon chip) and end-of-chapter problems assist reader comprehension; and an instructor's manual containing a complete listing of problem solutions and SPICE netlists.

When comparing conventional computing architectures to the architectures of biological neural systems, we find several striking differences. Conventional computers use a low number of high performance computing elements that are programmed with algorithms to perform tasks in a time sequenced way; they are very successful in administrative applications, in scientific simulations, and in certain signal processing applications. However, the biological systems still significantly outperform conventional computers in perception tasks, sensory data processing and motory control. Biological systems use a completely dif ferent computing paradigm: a massive network of simple processors that are (adaptively) interconnected and operate in parallel. Exactly this massively parallel processing seems the key aspect to their success. On the other hand the development of VLSI technologies provide us with technological means to implement very complicated systems on a silicon die. Especially analog VLSI circuits in standard digital technologies open the way for the implement at ion of massively parallel analog signal processing systems for sensory signal processing applications and for perception tasks. In chapter 1 the motivations behind the emergence of the analog VLSI of massively parallel systems is discussed in detail together with the capabilities and !imitations of VLSI technologies and the required research and developments. Analog parallel signal processing drives for the development of very com pact, high speed and low power circuits. An important technologicallimitation in the reduction of the size of circuits and the improvement of the speed and power consumption performance is the device inaccuracies or device mismatch.

Modern VLSI Design

An Analog VLSI System for Stereoscopic Vision

Neural Information Processing and VLSI

VLSI Handbook

Signal and Information Processing

Three-dimensional Integrated Circuit Design

This book was written to arm engineers qualified and knowledgeable in the area of VLSI circuits with the essential knowledge they need to get into this exciting field and to help those already in it achieve a higher level of proficiency. Few people truly understand how a large chip is developed, but an understanding of the whole process is necessary to appreciate the importance of each part of it and to understand the process from concept to silicon. It will teach readers how to become better engineers through a practical approach of diagnosing and attacking real-world problems.

Design considerations for low-power operations and robustness with respect to variations typically impose contradictory requirements. Low-power design techniques such as voltage scaling, dual-threshold assignment and gate sizing can have large negative impact on parametric yield under process variations. This book focuses on circuit/architectural design techniques for achieving low power operation under parameter variations. We consider both logic and memory design aspects and cover modeling and analysis, as well as design methodology to achieve simultaneously low power and variation tolerance, while minimizing design overhead. This book will discuss current industrial practices and emerging challenges at future technology nodes.

Semiconductor Silicon Crystal Technology provides information pertinent to silicon, which is the dominant material in the semiconductor industry. This book discusses the technology of integrated circuits (ICs) in electronic materials manufacturer. Comprised of eight chapters, this book provides an

overview of the basic science, silicon materials, IC device fabrication processes, and their interaction for enhancing both the processes and materials. This text then proceeds with a discussion of the atomic structure and bonding mechanisms in order to understand the nature and formation of crystal structures, which are the fundamentals of material science. Other chapters consider the technological crystallography and classify natural crystal morphologies based on observation. The final chapter deals with the interrelationships among silicon material characteristics, circuit design, and IC fabrication in order to ensure the fabrication of very-large-scale-integration/ultra-large-scale-integration circuits. This book is a valuable resource for graduate students, physicists, engineers, materials scientists, and professionals involved in semiconductor industry.

Silicon Processing for the VLSI Era: Deep-submicron process technology

Microchip Manufacturing

VLSI Test Principles and Architectures

Process Technology for Silicon Carbide Devices

Materials to Vlsi

Silicon VLSI Technology

This book explains why SiC is so useful in electronics, gives clear guidance on the various processing steps (growth, doping, etching, contact formation, dielectrics etc) and describes how these are integrated in device manufacture.

This book has been written as part of a series of scientific books being published by Plenum Press. The scope of the series is to review a chosen topic in each volume. To supplement this information, the abstracts to the most important references cited in the text are reprinted, thus allowing the reader to find in-depth material without having to refer to many additional publications. This volume is dedicated to the field of dry (plasma) etching, as applied in silicon semiconductor processing. Although a number of books have appeared dealing with this area of physics and chemistry, these all deal with parts of the field. This book is unique in that it gives a compact, yet complete, in-depth overview of fundamentals, systems, processes, tools, and applications of etching with gas plasmas for VLSI. Examples are given throughout the fundamental sections, in order to give the reader a better insight in the meaning and magnitude of the many parameters relevant to dry etching. Electrical engineering concepts are emphasized to explain the pros and cons of reactor concepts and excitation frequency ranges. In the description of practical applications, extensive use is made of cross-referencing between processes and materials, as well as theory and practice. It is thus intended to provide a total model for understanding dry etching. The book has been written such that no previous knowledge of the subject is required. It is intended as a review of all aspects of dry etching for silicon semiconductor processing.

A totally new concept for clean surface processing of Si wafers is introduced in this book. Some fifty distinguished researchers and engineers from the leading Japanese semiconductor companies, such as NEC, Hitachi, Toshiba, Sony and Panasonic as well as from several universities reveal to us for the first time the secrets of these highly productive institutions. They describe the techniques and equipment necessary for the preparation of clean high-quality semiconductor surfaces as a first step in high-yield/high-quality device production. This book thus opens the door to the manufacturing of reliable nanoscale devices and will be extremely useful for every engineer, physicist and technician involved in the production of silicon semiconductor devices.

VLSI Circuits and Systems in Silicon

Plasma Processing for VLSI

Silicon Wafer Bonding Technology

Deep-submicron process technology

Silicon and Gallium Arsenide

With vastly increased complexity and functionality in the "nanometer era" (i.e. hundreds of millions of transistors on one chip), increasing the performance of integrated circuits has become a challenging task. Connecting effectively (interconnect design) all of these chip elements has become the greatest determining factor in overall performance. 3-D integrated circuit design may offer the best solutions in the near future. This is the first book on 3-D integrated circuit design, covering all of the technological and design aspects of this emerging design paradigm, while proposing effective solutions to specific challenging problems concerning the design of 3-D integrated circuits. A handy, comprehensive reference or a practical design guide, this book provides a sound foundation for the design of 3-D integrated circuits. * Demonstrates how to overcome "interconnect bottleneck" with 3-D integrated circuit design...leading edge design techniques offer solutions to problems (performance/power consumption/price) faced by all circuit designers * The FIRST book on 3-D integrated circuit design...provides up-to-date information that is otherwise difficult to find * Focuses on design issues key to the product development cycle...good design plays a major role in exploiting the implementation flexibilities offered in the 3-D * Provides broad coverage of 3-D integrated circuit design, including interconnect prediction models, thermal management techniques, and timing optimization...offers practical view of designing 3-D circuits

Silicon Processing for the VLSI Era: Process technologySilicon Processing for the VLSI EraSilicon Processing for the VLSI Era: Process integrationSilicon Processing for the VLSI EraSilicon Processing for the VLSI Era: Deep-submicron process technologySilicon Processing for the VLSI EraDeep-submicron process technologySilicon Processing for the VLSI EraSolutions Manual to Accompany Silicon Processing for the VLSI Era, Volume 1 : Process TechnologyUltraclean Surface Processing of Silicon WafersSecrets of

VLSI ManufacturingSpringer Science & Business Media

VLSI Electronics: Microstructure Science, Volume 8: Plasma Processing for VLSI (Very Large Scale Integration) discusses the utilization of plasmas for general semiconductor processing. It also includes expositions on advanced deposition of materials for metallization, lithographic methods that use plasmas as exposure sources and for multiple resist patterning, and device structures made possible by anisotropic etching. This volume is divided into four sections. It begins with the history of plasma processing, a discussion of some of the early developments and trends for VLSI. The second section, Deposition, discusses deposition techniques for VLSI such as sputtering metals for metallization and contacts, plasma-enhanced chemical vapor deposition of metals and suicides, and plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition of dielectrics. The part on Lithography presents the high-resolution trilayer resist system, pulsed x-ray sources for submicrometer x-ray lithography, and high-intensity deep-UV sources. The last part, Etching, provides methods in etching, like ion-beam etching using reactive gases, low-pressure reactive ion etching, and the uses of inert-gas ion milling. The theory and mechanisms of plasma etching are described and a number of new device structures made possible by anisotropic etching are enumerated as well. Scientists, engineers, researchers, device designers, and systems architects will find the book useful.

Silicon Processing for the VLSI Era: Process integration

Digital VLSI Design with Verilog

Circuits and Principles

Silicon-On-Insulator (SOI) Technology

Materials to VLSI

Electronic Materials

An introduction to the design of analog VLSI circuits. Neuromorphic engineers work to improve the performance of artificial systems through the development of chips and systems that process information collectively using primarily analog circuits. This book presents the central concepts required for the creative and successful design of analog VLSI circuits. The discussion is weighted toward novel circuits that emulate natural signal processing. Unlike most circuits in commercial or industrial applications, these circuits operate mainly in the subthreshold or weak inversion region. Moreover, their functionality is not limited to linear operations, but also encompasses many interesting nonlinear operations similar to those occurring in natural systems. Topics include device physics, linear and nonlinear circuit forms, translinear circuits, photodetectors, floating-gate devices, noise analysis, and process technology.

In some places, the order of presentation has been changed to fine-tune the book's effectiveness as a senior and graduate-level teaching text. Fabrication principles covered include those for such circuits as CMOS, BIPOLAR, BICMOS, FET, and more.

Neural Information Processing and VLSI provides a unified treatment of this important subject for use in classrooms, industry, and research laboratories, in order to develop advanced artificial and biologically-inspired neural networks using compact analog and digital VLSI parallel processing techniques. Neural Information Processing and VLSI systematically presents various neural network paradigms, computing architectures, and the associated electronic/optical implementations using efficient VLSI design methodologies. Conventional digital machines cannot perform computationally-intensive tasks with satisfactory performance in such areas as intelligent perception, including visual and auditory signal processing, recognition, understanding, and logical reasoning (where the human being and even a small living animal can do a superb job). Recent research advances in artificial and biological neural networks have established an important foundation for high-performance information processing with more efficient use of computing resources. The secret lies in the design optimization at various levels of computing and communication of intelligent machines. Each neural network system consists of massively paralleled and distributed signal processors with every processor performing very simple operations, thus consuming little power. Large computational capabilities of these systems in the range of some hundred giga to several tera operations per second are derived from collectively parallel processing and efficient data routing, through well-structured interconnection networks. Deep-submicron very large-scale integration (VLSI) technologies can integrate tens of millions of transistors in a single silicon chip for complex signal processing and information manipulation. The book is suitable for those interested in efficient neurocomputing as well as those curious about neural network system applications. It has been especially prepared for use as a text for advanced undergraduate and first year graduate students, and is an excellent reference book for researchers and scientists working in the fields covered.

VLSI Fabrication Principles

For VLSI and MEMS Applications

Science and Technology

Silicon Processing for the VLSI Era

Design for Testability

Fundamentals, Practice and Modeling

This book is a comprehensive guide to new DFT methods that will show the readers how to design a testable and quality product, drive down test cost, improve product quality and yield, and speed up time-to-market and time-to-volume. Most up-to-date coverage of design for testability. Coverage of industry practices commonly found in commercial DFT tools but not discussed in other books. Numerous, practical examples in each chapter illustrating basic VLSI test principles and DFT architectures.

The use of silicon-on-insulator (SOI) technology in microelectronics is proliferating and is ready to be applied in a growing number of IC fabrication situations. Bonding of single crystal Si to dielectrics, normally silicon dioxide, is a key method of producing SOI structures and this work is designed to assist engineers directly in applying emerging SOI technology in practice. Wafer bonding principles, grind and polish back, Smartcut, Eltran and wafer characterization are all explained and illustrated for the benefit of the process development engineer.

Silicon-on-Insulator Technology: Materials to VLSI, Third Edition, retraces the evolution of SOI materials, devices and circuits over a period of roughly twenty years. Twenty years of progress, research and development during which SOI material fabrication techniques have been born and abandoned, devices have been invented and forgotten, but, most importantly, twenty years during which SOI Technology has little by little proven it could outperform bulk silicon in every possible way. The turn of the century turned out to be a milestone for the semiconductor industry, as high-quality SOI wafers suddenly became available in large quantities. From then on, it took only a few years to witness the use of SOI technology in a wealth of applications ranging from audio amplifiers and wristwatches to 64-bit microprocessors. This book presents a complete and state-of-the-art review of SOI materials, devices and circuits. SOI fabrication and characterization techniques, SOI CMOS processing, and the physics of the SOI MOSFET receive an in-depth analysis.

Analog VLSI Integration of Massive Parallel Signal Processing Systems

Dry Etching for VLSI

VLSI Circuit Design Methodology Demystified

Rapid Thermal Processing

Silicon-on-Insulator Technology: Materials to VLSI

Secrets of VLSI Manufacturing

Learn the basic properties and designs of modern VLSI devices, as well as the factors affecting performance, with this thoroughly updated second edition. The first edition has been widely adopted as a standard textbook in microelectronics in many major US universities and worldwide. The internationally renowned authors highlight the intricate interdependencies and subtle trade-offs between various practically important device parameters, and provide an in-depth discussion of device scaling and scaling limits of CMOS and bipolar devices. Equations and parameters provided are checked continuously against the reality of silicon data, making the book equally useful in practical transistor design and in the classroom. Every chapter has been updated to include the latest developments, such as MOSFET scale length theory, high-field transport model and SiGe-base bipolar devices.

This book covers modern analog components, their characteristics, and interactions with process parameters. It serves as a comprehensive guide, addressing both the theoretical and practical aspects of modern silicon devices and the relationship between their electrical properties and processing conditions. Based on the authors extensive experience in the development of analog devices, this book is intended for engineers and scientists in semiconductor research, development and manufacturing. The problems at the end of each chapter and the numerous charts, figures and tables also make it appropriate for use as a text in graduate and advanced undergraduate courses in electrical engineering and materials science. Enables engineers to understand analog device physics, and discusses important relations between process integration, device design, component characteristics, and reliability; Describes in step-by-step fashion the components that are used in analog designs, the particular characteristics of analog components, while comparing them to digital applications; Explains the second-order effects in analog devices, and trade-offs between these effects when designing components and developing an integrated process for their manufacturing.

An Analog VLSI System for Stereoscopic Vision investigates the interaction of the physical medium and the computation in both biological and analog VLSI systems by synthesizing a functional neuromorphic system in silicon. In both the synthesis and analysis of the system, a point of view from within the system is adopted rather than that of an omniscient designer drawing a blueprint. This perspective projects the design and the designer into a living landscape. The motivation for a machine-centered perspective is explained in the first chapter. The second chapter describes the evolution of the silicon retina. The retina accurately encodes visual information over orders of magnitude of ambient illumination, using mismatched components that are calibrated as part of the encoding process. The visual abstraction created by the retina is suitable for transmission through a limited bandwidth channel. The third chapter introduces a general method for interchip communication, the address-event representation, which is used for transmission of retinal data. The address-event representation takes advantage of the speed of CMOS relative to biological neurons to preserve the information of biological action potentials using digital circuitry in place of axons. The fourth chapter describes a collective circuit that computes stereodisparity. In this circuit, the processing that corrects for imperfections in the hardware compensates for inherent ambiguity in the environment. The fifth chapter demonstrates a primitive working stereovision system. An Analog VLSI System for Stereoscopic Vision contributes to both computer engineering and neuroscience at a concrete level. Through the construction of a working analog of biological vision subsystems, new circuits for building brain-style analog computers have been developed. Specific neuropysiological and psychophysical results in terms of underlying electronic mechanisms are explained. These examples demonstrate the utility of using biological principles for building brain-style computers and the significance of building brain-style computers for understanding the nervous system.

Semiconductor Silicon Crystal Technology

Device Design, Process Integration, Characterization, and Reliability

Analog VLSI

A Conceptual Taxonomy

Solutions Manual to Accompany Silicon Processing for the VLSI Era, Volume 1 : Process Technology

Fundamentals of Modern VLSI Devices

For Electrical Engineering and Computer Engineering courses that cover the design and technology of very large scale integrated (VLSI) circuits and systems. May also be used as a VLSI reference for professional VLSI design engineers, VLSI design managers, and VLSI CAD engineers. Modern VSLI Design provides a comprehensive “bottom-up” guide to the design of VSLI systems, from the physical design of circuits through system architecture with focus on the latest solution for system-on-chip (SOC) design. Because VSLI system designers face a variety of challenges that include high performance, interconnect delays, low power, low cost, and fast design turnaround time, successful designers must understand the entire design process. The Third Edition also provides a much more thorough discussion of hardware description languages, with introduction to both Verilog and VHDL. For that reason, this book presents the entire VSLI design process in a single volume.

VLSI Handbook is a reference guide on very large scale integration (VLSI) microelectronics and its aspects such as circuits, fabrication, and systems applications. This handbook readily answers specific questions and presents a systematic compilation of information regarding the VLSI technology. There are a total of 52 chapters in this book and are grouped according to the fields of design, materials and processes, and examples of specific system applications. Some of the chapters under fields of design are design automation for integrated circuits and computer tools for integrated circuit design. For the materials and processes, there are many chapters that discuss this aspect. Some of them are manufacturing process technology for metal-oxide semiconductor (MOS) VLSI; MOS VLSI circuit technology; and facilities for VLSI circuit fabrication. Other concepts and materials discussed in the book are the use of silicon material in different processes of VLSI, nitrides, silicides, metallization, and plasma. This handbook is very useful to students of engineering and physics. Also, researchers (in physics and chemistry of materials and processes), device designers, and system designers can also benefit from this book.

This book is structured as a step-by-step course of study along the lines of a VLSI integrated circuit design project. The entire Verilog language is presented, from the basics to everything necessary for synthesis of an entire 70,000 transistor, full-duplex serializer-deserializer, including synthesizable PLLs. The author includes everything an engineer needs for in-depth understanding of the Verilog language: Syntax, synthesis semantics, simulation and test. Complete solutions for the 27 labs are provided in the downloadable files that accompany the book. For readers with access to appropriate electronic design tools, all solutions can be developed, simulated, and synthesized as described in the book. A partial list of design topics includes design partitioning, hierarchy decomposition, safe coding styles, back annotation, wrapper modules, concurrency, race conditions, assertion-based verification, clock synchronization, and design for test. A concluding presentation of special topics includes System Verilog and Verilog-AMS.

Manufacture and Applications

System-on-Chip Design

Crystal Growth and Evaluation of Silicon for VLSI and ULSI

Silicon Processing for the VLSI Era: Process technology

Silicon Analog Components

From Silicon to Organics

Silicon-on-Insulator Technology: Materials to VLSI, Third Edition, retraces the evolution of SOI materials, devices and circuits over a period of roughly twenty years. Twenty years of progress, research and development during which SOI material fabrication techniques have been born and abandoned, devices have been invented and forgotten, but, most importantly, twenty years during which SOI Technology has little by little proven it could outperform bulk silicon in every possible way. The turn of the century turned out to be a milestone for the semiconductor industry, as high-quality SOI wafers suddenly became available in large quantities. From then on, it took only a few years to witness the use of SOI technology in a wealth of applications ranging from audio amplifiers and wristwatches to 64-bit microprocessors. This book presents a complete and state-of-the-art review of SOI materials, devices and circuits. SOI fabrication and characterization techniques, SOI CMOS processing, and the physics of the SOI MOSFET receive an in-depth analysis. Silicon-on-Insulator Technology: Materials to VLSI, Third Edition, also describes the properties of other SOI devices, such as multiple gate MOSFETs, dynamic threshold devices and power MOSFETs. The advantages and performance of SOI circuits used in both niche and mainstream applications are discussed in detail. The SOI specialist will find this book invaluable as a source of compiled references covering the different aspects of SOI technology. For the non-specialist, the book serves an excellent introduction to the topic with detailed, yet simple and clear explanations. Silicon-on-Insulator Technology: Materials to VLSI, Third Edition is recommended for use as a textbook for classes on semiconductor device processing and physics at the graduate level.

Silicon-On-Insulator (SOI) Technology: Manufacture and Applications covers SOI transistors and circuits, manufacture, and reliability. The book also looks at applications such as memory, power devices, and photonics. The book is divided into two parts; part one covers SOI materials and manufacture, while part two covers SOI devices and applications. The book begins with chapters that introduce techniques for manufacturing SOI wafer technology, the electrical properties of advanced SOI materials, and modeling short-channel SOI semiconductor transistors. Both partially depleted and fully depleted SOI technologies are considered. Chapters 6 and 7 concern junctionless and fin-on-oxide field effect transistors. The challenges of variability and electrostatic discharge in CMOS devices are also addressed. Part two covers recent and established technologies. These include SOI transistors for radio frequency applications, SOI CMOS circuits for ultralow-power applications, and improving device performance by using 3D integration of SOI integrated circuits. Finally, chapters 13 and 14 consider SOI technology for photonic integrated circuits and for micro-electromechanical systems and nano-electromechanical sensors. The extensive coverage provided by Silicon-On-Insulator (SOI) Technology makes the book a central resource for those working in the semiconductor industry, for circuit design engineers, and for academics. It is also important for electrical engineers in the automotive and consumer electronics sectors. Covers SOI transistors and circuits, as well as manufacturing processes and reliability Looks at applications such as memory, power devices, and photonics

This is the first definitive book on rapid thermal processing (RTP), an essential namufacturing technology for single-wafer processing in highly controlled environments. Written and edited by nine experts in the field, this book covers a range of topics for academics and engineers alike, moving from basic theory to advanced technology for wafer manufacturing. The book also provides new information on the suitability or RTP for thin film deposition, junction formation, silicides, epitaxy, and in situ processing. Complete discussions on equipment designs and comparisons between RTP and other processing approaches also make this book useful for supplemental information on silicon processing, VLSI processing, and integrated circuit engineering.

Optical Aligners and Photomasks for Silicon Processing in VLSI.

Ultraclean Surface Processing of Silicon Wafers

A Textbook from Silicon Valley Polytechnic Institute

Low-Power Variation-Tolerant Design in Nanometer Silicon

Electronic materials are a dominant factor in many areas of modern technology. The need to understand'them is paramount; this book addresses that need. The main aim of this volume is to provide a broad unified view of electronic materials, including key aspects of their science and technology and also, in many cases, their commercial implications. It was considered important that much of the contents of such an overview should be intelligible

by a broad audience of graduates and industrial scientists, and relevant to advanced undergraduate studies. It should also be up to date and even looking forward to the future. Although more extensive, and written specifically as a text, the resulting book has much in common with a short course of the same name given at Coventry Polytechnic. The interpretation of the term "electronic materials" used in this volume is a very broad one, in line with the initial aim. The principal restriction is that, with one or two minor exceptions relating to aspects of device processing, for example, the materials dealt with are all active materials. Materials such as simple insulators or simple conductors, playing only a passive role, are not singled out for consider ation. Active materials might be defined as those involved in the processing of signals in a way that depends crucially on some specific property of those materials, and the immediate question then concerns the types of signals that might be considered.