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# BOOK REVIEW

## **Paul Zoll, MD: The Pioneer Whose Discoveries Prevent Sudden Death**

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Stafford Cohen, MD. 196 pages. Salem (NH): Free People Publishing; 2014. Hardcover: US \$26.95; ISBN: 978-0-9838131-6-3. Trade paperback: US \$19.95; ISBN: 978-09838131-7-0. Available from Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble.

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**Field of Medicine:** Cardiology; medical history.

**Format:** Hardcover and paperback book. Trim size: 6 × 9 inches.

**Recommended Readership:** Cardiologists, internists, medical historians, trained first responders, and patients with implanted pacemakers or defibrillators.

**Purpose:** To present a wide-ranging view of Paul Maurice Zoll (1911–99) through a detailed and exceedingly well-referenced analysis of the man himself, his discoveries and innovations, and the scientific evidence that secures his position as the leading pioneer in preventing and treating life-threatening cardiac arrhythmias.

**Content:** 146 pages of text containing 18 chapters, 17 photographs, 5 tables, and 5 diagrams. The book also has a 2-page table of contents, a 1-page list of photos, tables, and diagrams, an acknowledgment page, a 3-page foreword, and a 3-page prologue. At the back is a 2-page epilogue; a 6-page appendix on the history of reanimation by electric shock to jump-start the heart; a 1-page appendix on Zoll's major awards and honors; a 3-page appendix on "the gift that keeps on giving" (closed-chest cardiac defibrillation); a 4-page glossary, primarily for the lay reader; 27 pages of end notes; 2 pages about Stafford Cohen (the author, who was a medical resident under Zoll and later his cardiology colleague, office mate, and friend); and a 4-page index.

**Strengths:** The writing is good, and lay readers should have no difficulty understanding the book. Although the author's admiration, respect, and love for Zoll are evident throughout the book, he remains patently honest and objective in his evaluation of Zoll as a physician-scientist and as a person at play. He also fully credits the contributions made by an international cast of physicians, basic scientists, and engineers who joined Zoll or competed with him in the race to control rhythm disturbances of the heart.



Paul Zoll, MD

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The end notes deserve special praise. They forcefully indicate the extraordinary amount of time and effort that the author spent documenting in detail every aspect of Zoll's life, including attention to his predecessors and contemporaries.

**Weaknesses:** Tighter editing might have prevented a scattering of misspelled words, notably *Forward* instead of *Foreword*. In addition, a few of the photographs—all in black and white—are of low quality, having been copied from other publications. Finally, the book would have been more "reader friendly" had the end notes followed the chapters to which they pertain, rather than appeared in a separate section at the back of the book.

Herbert L. Fred, MD, MACP,  
Houston

**Overall Grade:** ♥♥♥♥

### Grading Key

♥♥♥♥ = outstanding; ♥♥♥♥ = excellent;  
♥♥♥ = good; ♥♥ = fair; ♥ = poor