

**DR. BENJAMIN J. SCHERLAG**



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**AWARD OF MERIT RECIPIENT**  
**FOR 1983**

The recipient of the 1983 Oklahoma Academy of Science, Award of Merit is Dr. Benjamin J. Scherlag, Department of Medicine, Division of Cardiology of the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. Dr. Scherlag is also a cardiovascular physiologist and Medical Investigator at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. This Award of Merit cites the research that led to the development of the His bundle recording technique first in experimental animals and then in man. The technique utilizes an electrode catheter introduced into the heart, during cardiac catheterization, to record from a specific portion of the heart's conduction system. This technique, which is now a standard procedure worldwide, has been used for the analysis and diagnosis of many complex disordered rhythms of the heart beat and has served as the cornerstone of a new sub-science called clinical electrophysiology of the heart.

In 1980, *Current Contents* published a Citation Classic in which the story behind the development of the His bundle recording technique was reported by Dr. Scherlag. At this time this paper was cited 720 times. Dr. Scherlag is now listed as one of the 1,000 most cited authors in the *Science Citation Index*.

In recent years Dr. Scherlag and his colleagues have been involved in demonstrating the basic mechanisms underlying cardiac arrhythmias causing sudden death during myocardial infarction, i.e., heart attacks. His group was the first to consistently document the reentrant nature of these arrhythmias although reentry was postulated as the cause 70 years previously.

Dr. Scherlag was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1932 and received his undergraduate and graduate training at the City University of New York before obtaining his Ph.D. from the Downstate Medical Center of the State University of New York. His training in cardiac electrophysiology was under the tutelage of Dr. Brian F. Hoffman. He worked at the Staten Island, New York, Public Health Service Hospital for three years before moving to Miami, Florida to continue his research at the Mount Sinai Medical Center for six years and the Veterans Administration Medical Center for four years. At present Dr. Scherlag holds joint appointments at the Oklahoma University Health Sciences Center as Professor of Medicine and at the Veterans Administration Medical Center as a Medical Investigator. He also has an adjunct professorship in the Department of Physiology and Biophysics. His tenure at the University of Oklahoma has continued for the past six years.