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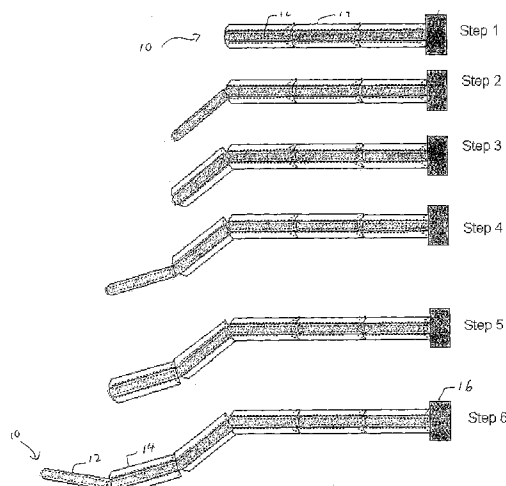
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(54) Title: STEERABLE, FOLLOW THE LEADER DEVICE



(57) Abstract: A highly articulated robotic probe (HARP) is comprised of a first mechanism and a second mechanism, one or both of which can be steered in desired directions. Each mechanism can alternate between being rigid and limp. In limp mode the mechanism is highly flexible. When one mechanism is limp, the other is rigid. The limp mechanism is then pushed or pulled along the rigid mechanism. The limp mechanism is made rigid, thereby assuming the shape of the rigid mechanism. The rigid mechanism is made limp and the process repeats. These innovations allow the device to drive anywhere in three dimensions. The device can "remember" its previous configurations, and can go anywhere in a body or other structure (e.g. jet engine). When used in medical applications, once the device arrives at a desired location, the inner core mechanism can be removed and another functional device such as a scalpel, clamp or other tool slid through the rigid sleeve to perform. Because of the rules governing abstracts, this abstract should not be used to construe the claims.



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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
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B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
 U.S. : 600/117, 143-146, 150-152; 604/95.01

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 20020062062 A1 (Belson et al.) 23 May 2002 (23.05.2002) entire document	1-41
X	US 20020161281 A1 (Jaffe et al.) 31 October 2002 (31.10.2002) entire document	1-41
X	US 5,251,611 (Zehel et al.) 12 October 1993 (12.10.1993) entire document	1-41

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