The final chapter is a fitting one about the quality and the end of life. Sadly, the author M. Powell Lawton died after completing this contribution, but will be remembered as a distinguished scientist, and as one who has greatly enriched our thinking about the social and personal implications of aging. The chapter bears a clear testimony of this and is required reading.

What is missing in this book, despite all efforts that went into compiling it?
While some authors discuss motivational issues, there is a lack of research on choice and decision making by elderly. Both Leventhal et al. and Powell Lawton mention personal choice as important constructs but a more general treatment, backed by strong theory and empirical findings is lacking. This is partly due to the relative lack of attention of decision theorists to consider aging effects, but systematic research into the wants and desires of older people would be a proper reflection of how seriously this group of people is taken.

There is also a relatively limited coverage of cognitive issues in this handbook. Reasoning, prospective memory, planning, everyday memory get only fleeting references, if at all. One hopes that this may be picked up in the next edition of the handbook, which, based on its history, is due to appear in four years from now.
A final lack, which is of some heart-wrenching relevance to the readers of this journal, is the total lack of the concept of Gerontechnology. Only very few authors mention technology at all, but never as a topic that deserves scientific attention. This is the more surprising, as many authors of the handbook have been very active in furthering gerontechnology. The fact that the authors of the introductory chapter on the history and the status of geropsychology fail to mention the origin of the term geropsychology is one thing, but that they omit any reference to gerontechnology is a more serious point that certainly ought to be remedied in the next edition.

On the one hand, then, this handbook is an essential volume that any student of the field of gerontology and developmental psychology should have; on the other, it shows omissions that limit its value. Finally, if this handbook is to take a truly universal position in the field of the study of aging, it should shed its narrow national focus for those topics that require a more general and diversified cultural treatment.

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NEWS IN SHORT

Competing for Alzheimer's Research
Andrew Sixsmith has been involved in research in technology and ageing for a number of years. I am also a keen triathlete. Over the summer I have a schedule of 7 triathlons, two half-marathons and a full marathon. These include 2 Olympic distance triathlons (1.5 km swim, 40km bike, 10k run) and the final event of the season, the UK Half-Ironman in Wales (1.9km swim, 90km bike, 21km run). This season I am hoping to raise money on behalf of Alzheimer's Disease Research. If you would like to sponsor me, please contact me by e-mail. Any amount however large or small is welcomed.

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Breaking Barriers Awards
For the occasion of the European Day of Disabled People 2001, the European Commission in collaboration with the European Disability Forum (EDF) has invited organisations to take part in a 'Design-for-All competition. 54 Organisations from all over Europe have entered 80 entries for the Breaking Barrier Award. The Jury has selected 38 nominees for the 3 categories of the award. Over 1200 people have also voted for the e-user award. The winners of the

awards were announced in Brussels on December 3, 2001. The Jury of the Breaking Barriers Award met in Brussels on 16 November 2001 to select the nominees and winners for the Award. It consisted of Alberto Alessi, CEO Alessi Design Factory, Gilbert Huyberechts, Vice President European Disability Forum, Christian Bühler, President of the Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe, Inmaculada Placencia-Porrero, European Commission, Päivi Tahkokallio, President, European Institute for Design and Disability, Pete Kercher, Director for Italy, Bureau of European Designers Associations, Sarah Burton, CSR Europe. The winner in the category **'Home & Daily Living'** is a City Toilet. Designer: Prof. Josef Paul Kleihues. The toilet is meant for persons with impaired mobility, visual impairments or accompanied by babies, and for wheelchair users. Detailed information: Wall AG, Berlin, Germany, e-mail: stoffers@wall.de . Winner in the category **'Travel and Leisure'** is an interactive website for public transport by both bus and rail within Northern Ireland, launched in March 2001 (www.translink.co.uk/accessibility). Detailed information: Translink, Belfast, Northern-Ireland, United Kingdom, e-mail: norman.maynes@translink.co.uk.

Winner in the category **'Work & the Work Place'** is a lift-control system offering an improved user interface with input of destination via keypad, activation of voice announcement, extended door open time, additional space requirements via button with wheelchair symbol, and operation with individually programmed key cards. Detailed information: Schindler, Brussels, Belgium, e-mail: philippe_casteleyn@be.schindler.com. The e-user award also went to this innovation.

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Europe discussed the aging problem

The vice-president of the European Parliament Guido Podestà (FI-PPE/DE), closely working with AGE, the European Older People's Platform, and HelpAge International, succeeded in inserting the proposal for a resolution on the ageing issue into the agenda of the EP plenary session 8-11 April 2002. The discussion took place and the resolution was adopted on April 11th in Strasbourg in parallel with the Second United Nations World Assembly on Ageing which takes place in Madrid form 8 to 12 April. 'Ageing is an issue in society that concerns both developed and developing countries, but what I care most about is to find a good solution in order to guarantee a good standard of living for old people all over the world. My opinion is that the EP should take an official position in order to protect the life and dignity of all these persons and that it should open a discussion about the problems linked to the future of the third and the fourth ages. It is important to distinguish between those who belong to the former group, who are still fully active and who have the right of not being excluded from social, cultural, economic and political life; from those belonging to the latter group who, although not self-sufficient, have the right to live in dignity'. These words were pronounced by Guido Podestà, president of the Third Age Intergroup, who for years at the EP has sustained political initiatives in the defence of the aged. The Assembly of the United Nations adopted a long-term strategy on the ageing problem. It aims to solve ageing problems such as the safeguards of ageing fundamental rights, society involvement, health, and solidarity between generations. As a result of the demographic increase of older population all over the world, the United Nations strategy must foresee all those measures that are necessary to create a society for all ages.

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AGE platform expands and launches new program

AGE, the European Older People's Platform (www.age-platform.be), held its first General Assembly in Brussels on March 22, 2002. Founded as a European platform in January 2001, AGE opened up to membership by national and regional organizations active in the area of ageing and older people at the start of this year.AGE launched an ambitious two-year work programme to put older people's viewpoints on the EU agenda, and welcomed 96 new members and observers. These are organizations representing older people, NGOs working with older people and relevant professional organisations from all over the EU. The Assembly also elected a new Board, consisting of representatives of the EU Member States and EU wide organisations. AGE is working to influence EU policies on a wide range of issues so that they take the views and interests of older people into account. Areas covered include age discrimination, pensions, social exclusion, health, employment and lifelong learning. Position statements are available on several of these issues. Outgoing President Albert Magarian (France) stressed that "Older people's organizations are part of European civil society, with the right and responsibility to make their voice heard". Steen Langebaek (Denmark), who takes over from him in June, added that "Older people need strong, independent and united representation at EU level and AGE will meet that need. This is shown by the fact that so many organizations have joined in so short a time".

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USO-BUILT shaping the Civic Knowledge-Based Society

User-Oriented Built Environments (USO-BUILT) aims at Building for Health and Social Welfare in the Knowledge-Based Society, and includes innovative urban structures that stress European identity, support inter-citizen communication, public and personal health, vitality and productivity, and be focused on needs and aspirations of the citizen in our aging society. Innovative built environments govern opportunities and risks by informed citizens and their democratic representatives in the shaping of a new European civic space. In this endeavour Architecture, Civil and Environmental Engineering meet and cooperate, supported by the Social Sciences; since 1990 under the CLUSTER umbrella (www.cluster.org). In the new USO-BUILT initiative: a European-wide graduate research and design school, relationships will be elucidated, needed concepts produced and propagated, while engineers and architects are trained (www.uso-tue.nl). Currently 10 Institutes of Higher Learning from 7 different European Countries take part in the initiative, including about 100 students and research fellows and 70 senior staff. A growth to participants of 12-14 European countries is foreseen. Research Institutes and universities from other parts of the world may join as associate-partners. Please mail your interest to j.e.m.h.v.bronswijk@tue.nl. Partners agree to jointly plan and execute research and to formulate international course programs for MSc, MPhil level and PhD degrees with the planning-aid of the Meta-University (www.metauniversity.tue.nl).

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European Year of People with Disabilities 2003

The zero version of the website of people with disabilities was launched on 20 March 2002 during the Madrid Congress on people with disabilities. The European Commission, in partnership with the Member States and the disability movement, has begun preparations for the Year. But the success of the Year will depend on the active participation and commitment of organisations and individuals throughout Europe. A full, completely accessible website is under construction. Sign in

now, join the campaign community and win a trip to the official opening of the European year in Greece in January 2003. Go to: www.eypd2003.org

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Calendar of Events

May 17, 2002
Universal Design Education Brussels, Belgium
Organizer: Three Belgian Schools of Architecture
Info: www.design-for-all.org/default.asp?nav=40&main=main_calendar.asp

June 1, 2002
Closure of HB Foundation travel grant application for the 4th International Congress on Gerontechnology in Miami, November 2002
Info: www.gerontechnology.nl/grants.htm

June 9-12, 2002
18th Annual Meeting of the International Society of Technology Assessment in Health Care (ISTAHC): 'The Challenge of Collaboration', Berlin, Germany
Organizer: International Society of Technology Assessment in Health Care
Info: www.istahc2002.de/

June 16-18, 2002
EASYTEX 2002, 1st International Conference on Clothing and Textiles for Disabled and Elderly People, Tampere, Finland
Organizer: Technical Research Centre of Finland VTT in cooperation with the Textile Institute TI
Info: www.vtt.fi/ket/new/easytex.pdf

June 27 - July 1, 2002
RESNA 25th International Conference on Technology & Disability: Research, Design, Practice, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA
Organizer: Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America
Info: www.resna.org/conferences/

July 8-10, 2002
5th International ACM SIGCAPH Conference on Assistive Technologies (Assets 2002), Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom
Organizer: Association for Computing Machinery
Info: www1.acm.org/sigs/sigcaph/assets02/

July 15 - 20, 2002
8th International Conference on Computers Helping People with Special Needs, Johannes Kepler University of Linz, Linz, Austria (ICCHP 2002)
Organizer: prof. Harry J. Murphy BA MSc EdD
Info: www.icchp.at/

July 20 - 25, 2002
8th International Conference on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders, Stockholm, Sweden
Organizer: Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Association, Inc., USA
Info: www.alz.org/internationalconference/respite.htm

July 21-25, 2002
7th International Congress on Low Vision (Vision 2002), Göteborg, Sweden
Organizer: International Society for Low-vision, Research and Rehabilitation ISLRR
Info: www.congrex.com/vision2002/

September 9, 2002
Elderly / Disability aspects in standardisation Copenhagen, Denmark