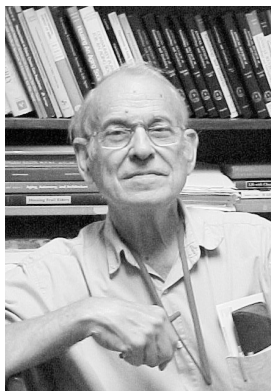


## In memoriam M. Powell Lawton

One of the country's leading figures in aging research and most prolific and visionary scientists, M. Powell Lawton, Ph.D., died as a result of a brain tumor on Monday, January 29, 2001. Dr. Lawton, a behavioral psychologist, was a pioneer in environmental psychology who contributed a legacy of seminal theories, multi-dimensional constructs and widely used scales and assessment tools. Chief among his contributions was his ecological theory of aging and the competence-environment press framework that lays the foundation for gerontechnology.

His intellectual energy and breadth and depth of scientific discovery were unmatched. Indubitably, of most importance was his unrelenting passion guided by his Quaker background, to improve the life quality of older people and their families through research and action, and his personal mandate for intellectual integrity and reflective growth. This is most evident in his continual refinements to his core constructs throughout his productive career and the application of his principles to design innovations in nursing homes, special dementia units, and community-based programs.

A recent book of insightful essays in honor of Dr. Lawton written by those who worked with or who were mentored by him, underscore the many dimensions of aging research that he either initiated, influenced, or to which he significantly contributed<sup>1</sup>. These critical dimensions include quality of life, environment and aging, affect, human development, care giving, community and program development, and end of life.



Dr. Lawton is deeply missed by his colleagues of the Polisher Research Institute of the Philadelphia Geriatric Center, where he was its first director 38 years ago and more recently a senior research scientist and director emeritus. He wrote many book chapters and peer reviewed journal articles and was the recipient of numerous grants from the National Institutes of Health and foundations. As an invited guest to numerous countries and international professional meetings, Dr. Lawton's ideas and research initiatives continue to live on in the many persons he mentored and the programs he influenced.

Laura Gitlin PhD  
Philadelphia, USA

## Reference

1. R. Rubenstein, Moss, M., Kleban M. (Eds.) 2000. *The Many Faces of Aging: Essays in Honor of M.P. Lawton*. Springer, New York

## Book Review

N. Charness, D.C. Parks, B.A. Sabel (eds.). 2001. *Communication, Technology and Aging. Opportunities and Challenges for the Future*. Springer Publishing Company, New York. ISBN 0-8261-1372-9. € 57,-

The book reflects a conference sponsored by the German-American Academic Council. The three editors and 21 other authors all work in Germany or the USA, most of them in university research, a few in industry. The title should be understood as communication issues for having technology (ICT) address needs and ambitions of older persons. The volume has three sections: (1) overview, (2) socio-cultural issues, and (3) training and compensation, with respectively four, three, and four papers. The book enables researchers, designers, and company directors of all countries to profit from the two-country conference.

Section 1 starts with a pragmatic view on the all-important human factors or ergonomic issues. Both functionality and user-interface of ICT are to be geared to the needs and