

## CORRESPONDENCE

An Internet listmail discussion forum hosted by the International Society of Gerontechnology is available to promote free exchange of information and views about the subject of gerontechnology. The forum welcomes comment and questions relating to ISG activities, gerontechnology research and development, user needs and acceptance, technology delivery, ethics, quality and standards, and more. It is administrated by Lawrence R. Normie and moderated by Lauren E. Storck. To subscribe, visit [www.jdc.org.il/mailman/listinfo/isg\\_discussion](http://www.jdc.org.il/mailman/listinfo/isg_discussion). Subscription is free and open to ISG members and non-members alike.

**Motivation is a process**

In a recent editorial, Bronswijk<sup>1</sup> related motivation in gerontechnology to the needs of Maslow as published in 1943<sup>2</sup>. Recent trends indicate that functionality issues are increasingly occupying the field of human-technology interaction, making it move beyond the traditional issues of usability, which have not lost their importance, but cannot suffice in guiding technological design. Asking to make products useful sounds almost trivial. Obviously, the editorial plea of asking attention for motivational issues in technological design is timely and important. After all, what else could be the reason to create new systems and products? Yet, it is clear that many products fail in the market and do not seem to meet the expectations of potential users. Designers and producers may be unaware of needs of potential users. Products may be rather based on one's personal feelings and experiences instead of those in the target market. Understanding people's motives and starting from there might greatly help to build systems and products that are used contentedly. This is not only true for gerontechnology but for technology in general. Perhaps, discrepancies may be felt stronger among senior consumers as this category may (partially) deviate in its needs for technology from the mainstream market for which products are often designed.

In this comment I will highlight two issues. First, I will briefly discuss Maslow's need theory, which was discussed in the editorial. Then, I will turn to the question how to conceptualize motivation as a process. Finally, some conclusions will be drawn on the role of motivation in technological design in general and gerontechno-

logy in particular.

Maslow's need theory<sup>2</sup> has attracted the attention of many practitioners on the search for a conceptualization of human needs. Its hierarchical structure has an intuitive appeal and the humanistic idea that people have an internal force to strive for self-actualization, by striving to reach the highest levels of their capability, reflects an attractive, optimistic perspective on human functioning. Maslow deserves merit for pointing to the complexity of the human needs. Probably the most important contribution of this model is that it offered an alternative to earlier models that explained human motivation as a function of unconscious forces and biological principles like instinct and drive. I happily underline van Bronswijk's suggestion that Maslow's needs hierarchy may help designers to scrutinize their designs. However, Maslow's ideas are not uncontested. Evidence is lacking that the proposed needs system is valid. Maslow's hierarchy has not been supported by solid research. For example, how do we explain the scientist's drive, who is untiringly working to prove his theory, while ignoring his biological and social needs? Nor are we able to say when someone is self-actualized. For example, is the individual who is a couch potato a model of self-actualization? What if he truly believes that he is using his channel-changing talents to the best of his ability?<sup>3</sup> For Maslow, however, self-actualization is more stringent and seems to be preserved to a rare breed of world celebrities like Einstein or Lincoln.

Maslow's model identifies needs but does not specify explicitly how people deal with need satisfaction. Instead of a static concept, motivation can be conceived of as a process instigating and sustaining goal-directed activity. Considering the process may reveal insights on the relation between needs and actions. Needs are not necessarily followed by action. Cognitive models of motivation, like the group of expectancy-value models<sup>4</sup> suggest that people form attitudes and make choices on the basis of their *salient* expected consequences. Non-recognized consequences will not be included.

Furthermore, people are willing to make trade-offs between incompatible consequences that are perceived, and accept drawbacks if necessary. Persons may have to deal with ambivalence for example when a conflict arises between utilitarian

and emotional goals. Need-fulfillment may be frustrated because of perceived inefficacy, for example, when a person does not feel able to conduct a certain action or anticipates contextual constraints. These expectations may also feedback to subjective need appraisal and goal setting. For example, a person, who is unfamiliar to the Internet may believe that it does not contain important information.

Social considerations will also come into play, when a person decides to act. Individual motives, for example being able to shop, may be thwarted by social identity considerations like 'I look old with this vehicle', by social norms like 'my children may not like it' or by social comparisons ('I could be in a worse situation'). Finally, a fast growing literature shows how cognitive processes are closely intertwined with affect<sup>5</sup>. Reasoning involves effort and cognitive capacity. Many judgments and decisions are based on feelings, moods and intuitions that come to mind, often triggered by contextual factors and situational cues, which also points to the temporal and situational nature of many needs, goals and actions. As pointed out motivations cannot be understood as an internal process alone. Situational factors create opportunities and offer feedback and incentives, structures that mold human behavior, goal pursuit and need fulfillment.

Obviously, this brief comment is not the place to explore in detail all the socio-cognitive processes that underlie motivation<sup>6</sup>. However, the analysis of technological needs of consumers might clearly benefit from a closer look at these processes as they allow for a more detailed understanding of the emergence and effectuation of needs. Technology does not only help satisfying clear-cut needs, but may offer opportunities that encourage persons for setting new, perhaps more ambitious goals, help the exploration of alternative options and offer incentives and feedback procedures that stimulate continued goal pursuit<sup>7</sup>. Technology may help more if it can be sensitive to the cognitive, social, and affective processes that underlie people's motivations and behavioral choices.

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### BOOK REVIEW

**H. Mollenkopf, F. Marcellini, I. Ruopila, M. Tacken, Ageing and outdoor mobility. A European study. Volume 13, Assistive Technology Research Series. Amsterdam: IOS Press. ISBN 1 58603 401 4. US\$105 / €90 / £63**

'Ageing and outdoor mobility' presents the results of an international cooperative project entitled 'Keeping the Elderly Mobile - Technology to Meet Their Mobility Needs'. This international study focuses on the outdoor mobility behaviour of elderly persons and their motives, needs, satisfaction levels and corresponding complicating factors. To do so, the movements of 2172 persons over 55 years of age were studied in five European cities: Jyväskylä (Finland), Chemnitz (eastern Germany), Mannheim (western Germany), Ancona (Italy), and Zoetermeer (the Netherlands).

Chapter 1 starts by linking mobility and the use of the transport system with maintaining quality of life. Mobility is seen as a fundamental prerequisite for the maintenance of an autonomous lifestyle as well as for the involvement in social relationships and the pursuit of everyday activities. The project intends to facilitate the mobility of elderly people in order to help them participate in society and thereby maintaining the quality of life in old age. For each investigated country, Chapter 2 provides background information on demographics (age, gender, marital status, size of the

household, and unemployment rate), the housing situation (ownership and percentage living in an old people's home), and the mobility and transportation system (km travelled and traffic accidents). Chapter 3 describes the methodology of the study and compares the characteristics of the five cities. The findings were based on a survey containing face-to-face interviews by standardised questionnaires and a diary in which the respondents had written down the circumstances of the trips they realised. Except for the Netherlands, the survey was followed by comprehensive case studies.

Chapters 4 through 7 present the results of the survey. People being more mobile outdoors, indicated by the number of trips made, were more satisfied with their health than those remaining at home and vice versa. This correlation is higher for people over 75 (Chapter 4). Walking is the most common mode of travel for the elderly. The older people are, the more likely they are walking only. Most trips are made outside rush hours, with peaks late in the morning and in the middle of the afternoon (Chapter 5). The food store is found to be the most important surrounding facility, followed by the pharmacy and the doctor. For 80% to more than 90% of the respondents, these services could easily be reached within 15 minutes. The level of satisfaction with the services was subsequently quite high (Chapter 6). The network of relationships decreases among people of highly advanced age. This is expressed in a lower outdoor mobility. The most important difficulties in reaching friends and relatives are the elderly people's health status or the long distances they have to overcome (Chapter 7). Using the case studies, Chapter 8 analyses the most important problems of outdoor mobility in old age. People who are constantly impaired in their mobility and who feel that their physical mobility is poor or very poor, the very old people, the men and women who do not drive a car and those whose activities diminished compared to previous years, are less satisfied with their possibilities for participating in leisure activities. The final chapter (9) presents the overall conclusions of the study, and briefly discusses its expected consequences for the future.

The project depicted in this book was set up as an interdisciplinary, international comparative study to investigate the contribution that technologies can make to main-

tain quality of life for older adults, and of the structural conditions and cultural differences important in that context. To do so, the quality of life of elderly people had to be linked to their self-rated mobility. Although a direct relationship is not established, the connection is made plausible by various satisfaction measurements. The international nature of the study, unfortunately, did not add anything significant to the results. If anything, it provided more variations thus reducing any extremes. Knowledge of the general situation in more cities within the investigated countries could help a more comprehensive analysis, making it possible to compare the findings for cultural differences as well as the effects of age on mobility. However, it will always be difficult to investigate the effect of culture as this will require more, and therefore different, cities. The deviating methodology in the Dutch situation did not help, as it reduced the number of comparable categories. Although the study regrettably omits the type of impairments, analysis of the problems associated with different modes of transport does show an important role of sight in mobility. For instance, the main reason for no longer driving a car seems to be the general health situation, which includes poor sight. Furthermore, when possible, the elderly tend to avoid cycling during dusk or at night. Also elderly pedestrians try to avoid crossing roads in bad sight conditions and without crossovers. Despite these missed opportunities, this book will be a welcome addition for anyone interested in the elderly or transportation related issues. The results give a clear indication about the general mobility related behaviour of people over 55 years of age.

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## PEOPLE

**Robert A. Weale BSc MSc MPhil PhD DSc, Professor emeritus of visual science**

Robert Alexander Weale (1922) has a particularly attractive intellect, since he combines a rigorous scientific mind with a far-reaching understanding and love of art and culture. One colleague described him as 'our best travel agent' and it certainly pays to ask him about going places since he is widely travelled and immensely knowledgeable about architecture, museums and galleries. On a recent visit to Eindhoven (the Netherlands), I hired a bi-

cycle and spent a happy day in Nuenen – all thanks to Robert, who had told me about the Van Gogh archive there.

Robert began academic life with a degree in physics during the war and started his career as a lecturer in 1947 at the SW Essex Technical College (London). His career in ophthalmology began soon after when he joined the Medical Research Council Vision and Ophthalmological Research Units in 1948. While there he studied for a PhD in Biophysics, followed by a further doctorate (DSc) in the Biophysics of Vision (University of London). He joined the staff of the Institute of Ophthalmology (University of London) in 1959. My rough calculations suggest that during this time he published the equivalent of one research paper every six weeks. He became Head of the Department of Physiological Optics in the Institute of Ophthalmology in 1960. His classic text, 'The ageing eye', was published three years later, making him Reader in Physiological Optics in 1964. He became Professor of Physiological Optics and Head of the Institute of Ophthalmology in 1971 and remained there until his retirement (1987). In 1978 he was appointed Professor of Visual Science.

His interests included the photochemistry of the retina, biophysics of the lens, optical illusions, colour vision etc. He spent several stints in the USA as visiting professor, and was for eight years a consultant for WHO, when he visited a large number of developing countries. More recently, he has held an appointment as a consultant at Moorfields Eye Hospital. At present he is a senior research fellow at both the Institute of Gerontology at King's College London, and in the Eye Department of University College Hospital. He has published over 300 scientific papers and contributions to books.

Since retirement, he has continued to be an active researcher with a wide span of interests. According to his home page ([www.kcl.ac.uk/pgp06/staffinfo/231](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/pgp06/staffinfo/231)) his current research interests cover visual physiology and senescence of the eye and vision, the epidemiology of ophthalmic conditions, new diagnostic procedures, biological functions and mortality, and age and art. Robert continues to publish prolifically. He suggests that Rembrandt developed cataracts in his later years in a cur-



rent article (in the *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*) on the impact of ageing on artists' eyes.

The foreword of his classic text 'The ageing eye' (1963) accurately expresses in Robert's own words both his scientific interest in and sensitive perceptions about getting older: "At present, youth is the fashion and age without honour. But when the two are compared as objects of inquiry, youth is a non-starter. Gerontology, the study of senescence, is distinguished from geriatrics, the care of the aged. It defies definition because senescence does. Rousseau is not the first to have observed we start dying the moment we are born, and the seven ages of man have barely poetic licence. How, it may be asked, can we evince any interest in something which cannot be defined? A biological organism reveals changes with time, which, though not always leading to deterioration, render it more and more difficult to obey all four conditions which stamp it as biological: namely reproduction, sensitivity to environmental changes, locomotion and nutrition. It is the integration of various differential changes which mark the body as senescent. A similar argument can be applied to the eye and vision. A premature arcus senilis, an early senile cataract, some deterioration in visual resolving power, none of these, taken singly, will betoken aging. But let them appear in combination: a delicate reference to 'anno domini' will follow as surely as night follows day". It is no surprise to find that the frontispiece to the book is a self portrait of Leonardo da Vinci, beard flowing, mouth rather grimly set, but eyes looking out piercingly to see beyond what is immediately before them. His updated and revised version of 'The ageing eye' was published in 1982, under the new title 'A biography of the eye: development, growth, age'.

Despite having a young family, significant departmental responsibilities, contributing to learnt bodies and publishing numerous research papers, Robert pursued his interest in the fine arts. He studied art history under Sir Ernst Gombrich, gaining a diploma in the history of art in the early seventies and a MPhil (University of London) three years later. For a number of years (1971-1978) he was art critic for the journal, the *New Scientist*.

He holds the Livery of the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers, London, United-

Kingdom, an organisation founded in 1629, having received their Senior Award in 1963. His other awards include the Newton Medal (1981) and Honorary Membership of the Colour Group of Great Britain, and the Freedom of the City of London.

**Some major publications by Robert A. Weale**

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**Who is who: editorial board (6)**

*Luiz R. Ramos MD, PhD*

Luiz Roberto Ramos graduated in medicine at the São Paulo School of Medicine (1976), and completed medical residencies in Paediatrics (1977-1978) and Preventive Medicine (79) at the same institution. He started his career as a sanitary physician at the State Secretariat of Health in 1980. In 1982 he earned his MSc in Community Medicine at the London School and Tropical Medicine and Hygiene. In 1984, he started to teach Epidemiology at the Department of Preventive Medicine of the São Paulo School of Medicine. Finally in 1987,



he obtained his PhD in Gerontology from the University of London, with the first population study on the aged in Brazil. In 1989, he took a position at the Department of Medicine to start a Geriatrics group that was officially recognized in 1994. Since 1991, he leads the Center of Studies of the Aging and co-ordinates the first Brazilian cohort study with aged residents in the community (Epidoso Project). In 1996, he obtained a post-doctoral fellowship in neuropsychogeriatrics at Harvard University. In 1997, he started to teach geriatrics at the Federal University of São Paulo (UNIFESP), while leading this department from 1997 to 2002. The full professorship in Preventive Medicine was bestowed upon him in 2004. Since 2005 he has been leading this department with 38 master students and 12 doctor students obtaining their titles. Dr. Ramos published 71 scientific journal articles, one book and 19 book chapters.

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**Who is who: a new assistant-editor**

*Joost van Hoof MSc, assistant-editor*

Joost van Hoof (1980, Eindhoven) currently serves as a researcher in the field of technology and care, within the Faculty Chair of Demand Driven Care at Hogeschool Utrecht, the Netherlands. His work includes investigating user preferences of technological living environments for special groups of older adults. After completing bilingual secondary education, he started his study Architecture, Building and Planning at Technische Universiteit Eindhoven, the Netherlands, in 1998. In 2004, he obtained his Master's degree with a differentiation in Building Physics, by a thesis on thermal comfort standards. His interests include indoor environmental quality and supportive living environments for older adults with dementia. The latter topic is subject of his PhD study at Technische Universiteit Eindhoven, under supervision of ISG members prof.dr. J.E.M.H. van Bronswijk and dr. H.S.M. Kort.  
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**Who is who: ISG board (1)**

Below is a (re-)introduction of the members of ISG Board and secretariat with short bios:



Herman Bouma  
 President, also editor, see: *Gerontechnology* 2003;2(3):278-279

Mitsuo Nagamachi  
 Vice-president, biographic information not yet available

Paolo Dario  
 Vice-president, see below

Annelies (J.E.M.H.) van Bronswijk  
 Editor-in-chief of the Journal, see: *Gerontechnology* 2003;2(3):278

Jan Ekberg  
 Secretary General, see below

Giuseppe Anerdi  
 Associate Secretary, see below

Jeroen Knies  
 Assistant Secretary (not a board member), see below

Wiet Koren  
 Treasurer, see below

Tamara Derksen  
 Assistant Treasurer (not a board member), see below

Francesco Franchimon  
 Advertisement Officer, see below

Neil Charness  
 Chair person of the editorial board, see: *Gerontechnology* 2003;2(4):344

Roger Coleman  
 Member, biographic information not yet available

Ramon M. Gutmann  
 Member, also member of the editorial board, see: *Gerontechnology* 2006;5(2):122-123

Kazuo Yamaba  
 Member (2<sup>nd</sup> term), biographic information not yet available

Hans-Werner Wahl  
 Member, also member of the editorial board, see: *Gerontechnology* 2004;3(2):118

**Paolo Dario PhD, Vice-president**

Paolo Dario received his Dr. Eng. Degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Pisa, Italy, in 1977. He is currently professor of Biomedical Robotics at the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna in Pisa, and also teaches courses at the School of Engineering of the University of Pisa and at the Campus Biomedico University in Rome. He has been a visiting professor in the USA, Switzerland, Japan, France, and China. He was the founder of the ARTS (Advanced Robotics Technologies and Systems) Laborat-



ory and is currently the coordinator of the CRIM (Center for the Research in Microengineering) Laboratory of the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna, where he supervises a team of about 70 researchers and PhD students. In addition he directs the Polo Sant'Anna Valdera of the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna. His main research interests are in the fields of medical robotics, bio-robotics, mechatronics and micro/nanoengineering, and specifically in sensors and actuators for the above applications, and in robotics for rehabilitation. He is the coordinator of many national and European projects, the editor of two books on the subject of robotics, and the author of more than 200 scientific papers (more than 100 on ISI journals). He is editor-in-chief, associate editor and member of the editorial board of international journals, and has been a plenary invited speaker in international conferences. Prof. Dario is an IEEE Fellow, a Fellow of the European Society on Medical and Biological Engineering, and a recipient of the Joseph Engelberger Award. He is also a member of the Board of the International Foundation of Robotics Research (IFRR), and has served as president of the IEEE Robotics and Automation Society (2002-2003). He has been the General Chair of the IEEE RAS-EMBS BioRob'06 Conference, and he will chair both the ICRA 2007 Conference, and the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the International Society for Gerontechnology (ISG08).  
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**Jan Ekberg PhD, general secretary**

Prof. Jan Ekberg, Doctor of Technology, Research Professor, has an almost 30 years background in the telecommunications research field (at the Technical Research Centre of Finland) and a 10 years experience of telecommunications applications for disabled and elderly people (National Research and Development centre for Welfare and Health, STAKES). In addition to that he has lectured Information Theory at the Technical University of Helsinki for 20 years. He has been chairman of big research projects like COST219 bis 'Telecommunications: Access for disabled people and elderly', and INCLUDE 'Inclusion of disabled and elderly people in telematics'. He has also chaired work packages in many projects as for instance WP1 in the MORE rescue



telephone project. He has during the years written more than 100 publications in the field. His own research has lately been mostly targeted on policy issues and on technical guidelines and technology watch in projects like SeniorWatch, Sport4All and D4ALLNET.  
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*Giuseppe Anerdi PhD, Associate Secretary*

Giuseppe Anerdi holds a Laurea degree (MSc) and a Perfezionamento (PhD) degree in Nuclear Engineering from the Polytechnic University of Turin (Italy) and a MA degree in Cognitive Sciences from the University of Genoa. He served as assistant professor of Nuclear Technologies at the Polytechnic University of Turin and as researcher in Biomedical Engineering at the Clinical Physiology Institute of the National Research Council in Pisa (Italy).



From 1976 to 2001 he ran through a career in industry covering different positions, both technical and managerial, focusing on innovation and new product development. After retirement in 2001, he joined the Scuola Superiore S.Anna in Pisa and founded, together with Professor Paolo Dario, E - Z Lab a Research Centre for the study and the development of technologies for an easier and safer longevity. He is serving as coordinator of E-Z Lab (from 2006 onward in association with Silvestro Micera). His main interests are in the fields of ergonomics for special categories of users, human machine interaction, cognitive aging processes and robotic supports for MCI.

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*Jeroen Knies, Assistant Secretary*

Jeroen Knies (1981) is a Master student at the Department of Architecture, Building and Planning at Technische Universiteit Eindhoven (the Netherlands), who followed part of his academic education at the Strathclyde University, Glasgow, United Kingdom (2003-2004). In 2004 he also took an internship at Willems-VandenBrink Architects (Eindhoven). He is currently finishing his MSc thesis on dwelling design for independently living older



adults with and without health-related restrictions, and intends to follow a research career in that domain.

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*Wiet (L.G.H.) Koren, treasurer*

Wiet Koren (1961) was born in Utrecht in the central part of the Netherlands. He studied chemistry at Utrecht University, graduating as MSc in 1988 with a focus on biochemistry and food chemistry. In the next 17 years he was employed as university researcher and teacher (Utrecht University: 1989-1995; Technische Universiteit Eindhoven: 1996-2006), as senior researcher and technical director of Allergo-Consult BV (1996-2005), while also teaching allergen and irritant avoidance against asthma and COPD at the Foundation for Specific Schooling of Nurses (since 2001). His research concentrated on quality of indoor environments, chemical and biological agents in the living environment, assessment of health risks in built environments and the technical measures that should be taken in the domains of architecture and building services to reduce health risks up to a high age. In 1995 he obtained his PhD at the Technische Universiteit Eindhoven on a thesis, entitled, 'Allergen avoidance in the home environment; A laboratory evaluation of measures against mite, fungal and cat allergens'. He took part in European research programs (such as HOPE), and devised a health classification system for dwellings at the request of the Netherlands Ministry of Housing. Starting November 1, 2006 he is employed by Statistics Netherlands for research on the aging society.



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*Tamara Derksen MSc, Assistant Treasurer*

Tamara Derksen (1981) recently earned her MSc degree in Architecture, Building and Planning at Technische Universiteit Eindhoven (the Netherlands), with a thesis entitled 'The impact of stress on perceived thermal comfort'. To learn the trade, she served as a trainee at Jansen Raadgevend Ingenieursbureau ('s-Hertogenbosch, the



Netherlands), and spent twice her summer holidays as a volunteer on building projects in Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina (organized by the International Building Association). As an intermezzo, before she starts her PhD research projects aimed at older adults, she is finishing a project on upgraded earth building in Bloemfontein (South-Africa).

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## Francesco Franchimon, Advertisements

Francesco Franchimon MSc (1975) obtained his master degree in Building Services at Technische Universiteit Eindhoven (the Netherlands) in 2003. Earlier, he completed traineeships in nationally and internationally operating building-services companies, and is currently a board member of the Dutch building services society (TVVL), and member of an international task force of the International Society for Indoor Air Quality (ISIAQ). In addition he has been active in public relations support of academic BSc and MSc programs. He is currently active in a PhD research project, entitled 'Healthy Building Services for the 21st century'



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## ISG BUSINESS

### News from Pisa

The organization of the 2008 ISG conference in Pisa is well under way, officers have been appointed and a global program has been drafted.

#### Conference theme:

Intelligent technologies for an active longevity

#### Date and venue:

May 21-23, 2008 at the Palazzo dei Congressi, Pisa, Italy

#### Attendance fee:

€ 350 (ISG members), € 500 (non members), reduced fee for students not yet set

#### Chair: Paolo Dario

#### Honorary chair:

Herman Bouma

#### Program chairs:

Silvestro Micera (Europe & Africa), Ken Sagawa (Asia & Australia), James L. Fozard (the Americas)

#### Communication:

Dario Bracco

#### Finance:

Eugenio Guglielmelli

#### Proceedings:

Patrizia Mecocci

#### SIGG/ISG Workshop:

Niccolò Marchionni,

Giuseppe Anerdi

#### International Scientific Committee:

will be included in Gerontechnology 2007;6(1)

#### Local Program Committee Chair:

Giuseppe Anerdi,

#### Members:

Alberto Baroni,

Clinician, Montedomini Hospital, Florence

Patrizia Mecocci, Professor of Gerontology, University of Perugia

Dario Bracco, journalist, Turin

Roberta Annicchiarico, S.Lucia Neuro-rehabilitation and neuro-geriatrics institute

Francesco Benvenuti, Clinician, Empoli Hospital

Fabrizio Astrua, Professor of Architecture, Polytechnic, Turin

Romano Del Nord, Professor of Architecture, University of Florence

Eugenio Guglielmelli, Professor of Biomedical Robotics, Campus Biomedico University, Rome

Barbara Henry, Professor of Political Sciences, Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna

Ettore Bergamini, Professor of Bio-Gerontology, University of Pisa

Luigi G. Mezzana, President of the Italian Society of Clinical Geriatrists

Guido Rodriguez, Professor of Neuro-geriatric, University of Genova

Annalisa Morini, Architect, Italian National Research Council

Francesca Tosi, Professor Ergonomics, Polytechnic, Milan

Maria Rosaria Motolese, Rehabilitation Engineer, PTE Expo

Renzo Andrich, Biomedical Engineer, Don Gnocchi Foundation

Aurelio Capozzo, Professor Biomedical Engineering, Motor Sciences University, Rome

#### A selection of the sessions planned

AAL - Ambient Assisted Living

Access to information and communication technologies

Active ageing

Biomechanics of aging and rehabilitation

Cognitive aging: new models and intervention practices



Pisa 2008



Public and private mobility  
 Robotics and mechatronics for autonomy support  
 Supporting productivity  
*Symposia already planned*  
 Biomedical engineering for the aging society  
 Financial management for a secure longevity  
 Geragogia: to teach and learn to age  
 Technotica: to age in a technological society  
 The aging society and its future cities  
 Characteristics of the older consumer  
 The identity of older adults in the ICT society  
 The needed convergence of geriatrics, gerontology and gerontechnology  
*Workshops*  
 SIGG/ISG on Italian Gerontechnology  
 Please submit proposals for other dedicated workshops to the undersigned.  
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### Regional Chapters

Article 15 of the articles of association of the ISG mentions a board of at least 12 members representing different countries. The ISG byelaws need an extra article to follow up on this issue. The following addition to the byelaws is being proposed:

#### ARTICLE 13: REGIONAL CHAPTERS

Regional chapters of ISG may be formed as soon as a certain country or region has 25 or more individual ISG members. The aim is to organize national or regional events under the tutelage of the ISG. Juridical speaking they are covered by the ISG Articles of association. Regional chapters choose a president, secretary and treasurer, and draw up chapter-byelaws describing their organisation and activities. Chapter-byelaws need the approval of ISG council before the chapter can be instituted; they should be submitted to the ISG-council as both the original and an English translation (if applicable). The chapter president serves as ISG board member representing his/her region after approval by the General Assembly (Article 15 of the Articles of Association). Regional chapters do not ask additional membership fees from their members. They may, however, negotiate keeping a portion of the ISG membership fee for their activities, in case the total amount due by their members is transferred to the ISG in one instalment each year.'

This article has a provisional status until it is approved by the Council and by the General assembly in Pisa, May 2008.  
*Herman Bouma PhD, ISG president*  
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### WORLD NEWS

#### RNIB also age-related

RNIB (Royal National Institute of the Blind) is a society which –under different names– has supported persons with restricted vision in the United Kingdom since 1868, with her Majesty Queen Victoria becoming its first patron in 1875. It all started with the promotion of braille for the younger persons, but has expanded to services that are also useful to older adults suffering from recently diminished eyesight. This includes a talking book service (since 1935), audio description (a verbal commentary describing environment, body language, facial expressions and action during silent parts of video, film, television and theatre, since 1992), a helpline offering information, support and advice to people with a sight problem, their families and their friends (since 1997), and more recently: 'Talk and Support' with Tele Befriending (social groups) and Tele Support (information groups), both telephone-based. The last two mentioned services enhance opportunities to socialise, learn, share information and support each other, and are much used by older adults. RNIB is active in defining and spreading guidelines for good (inclusive) design, focussing on accessibility of products and services, including eAccessibility. Working towards independence for blind and partially sighted people is the main aim of the society. 'Helping you live with sight loss' is the suitable heading of its website.  
*Info: [www.rnib.org.uk/](http://www.rnib.org.uk/)*

#### AMD Alliance International

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) affects approximately 25-30 million people. The AMD Alliance International is a global coalition of vision and seniors' organizations dedicated to raising awareness of AMD and the options available for prevention, early detection, treatment, rehabilitation and support services. It addresses AMD sufferers, their informal and professional carers, and even journalists in the Americas, Asia, South Pacific, Europe, South Africa, and the Middle East. Both basic information and practical guidance are delivered in workshops, training, in the form of dedicated printed matter,

as well as through freely available Internet information.

Info: [www.amdalliance.org/](http://www.amdalliance.org/)

### Lighthouse International

Established in 1905, Lighthouse International is helping people of all ages all over the world to overcome the challenges of vision loss as a result of cataract, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma or macular degeneration. Its Arlene R. Gordon Research Institute follows three different research tracks: (i) Vision function in individuals with normal and impaired vision, vision assessment techniques, strategies for maximizing visual functioning, and issues related to accessibility and environmental interventions; (ii) Psychosocial research investigating the consequences of vision impairment for functional and psychosocial well-being, processes of adaptation to vision impairment, and social and psychological factors that influence adaptation and rehabilitation outcomes, and (iii) Evaluation research investigating processes, outcomes and effectiveness of rehabilitation, community outreach and education programs. Research is always performed in multidisciplinary teams consisting of experimental psychologists, developmental psychologists, computer scientists, and social welfare researchers. The chosen multidisciplinary approach recognizes the complex interrelationships among biophysical, social and psychological processes that influence the functioning and adaptation of people of all ages who are visually impaired. The research institute offers a visiting scholars program, providing (international) professionals with on-site research opportunities. In addition to its research activities Lighthouse International supplies information, education and vision-rehabilitation services. Scholarships and career awards are also offered to honour outstanding students and employed individuals who are blind or partially sighted. Aging & Vision is Lighthouse's free online journal for professionals in aging, vision, health and human services.

Info: [www.lighthouse.org/](http://www.lighthouse.org/)

### Aging research career

The Paul B. Beeson Career Development Awards in aging research aim at developing leaders in aging research, teaching and practice. Awards are administered by the National Institute of Aging (USA) and amount from US\$ 600,000 to US\$ 800,000 for a mentored time period of 3

to 5 years. Candidates should be living in the USA and having earned a clinical doctoral degree.

Info: [www.afar.org/beeson.html](http://www.afar.org/beeson.html)

### PhD student designs clearing house

Gero-Tech.net (<http://gero-tech.net/>) was created January 31, 2005 to handle the many research links I encountered completing my Master's Capstone on gerontology in 2005. I trace the birth of my interest in Gerontechnology to adapting computers and programs for my wife's special education class to accommodate the variety of ages and mental/physical abilities of her students and comparing that to my gerontology related interest in telehealth technologies, in the late 1990s. In 2001 I started looking for aging and technology related information. By 2003 we had the Center for Aging Services Technologies (CAST - [www.agingtech.org](http://www.agingtech.org)).

By 2004 I was hooked on Gerontechnology. After reading a short article by Jan Rietsema<sup>1</sup> I knew what my Master Capstone would look like. The article gave me clues as to how I can communicate what gerontechnology is and why and how we need to and can understand it. I started to collect all information available to present it at [gero-tech.net](http://gero-tech.net) for all to use. Some of the Web links come from the Center for Aging Services Technologies (CAST), others from the Center for Research and Education on Aging and Technology - (CREATE), the Center for Universal Design, Universal Design Education Online, the Foresight Intelligent Infrastructure Systems Project, the Gerontechnology Education Network in Europe (GENIE), the International Society for Gerontechnology (ISG), the National Resource Center on Supportive Housing and Home Modification (NRCSHHM), the Western Michigan University Project AGE website, Technology for Long Term Care, and the Trace Research & Development Center (TRACE). In addition to my PhD work I continue to work on further developing Gero-Tech.net. It seems every time I present in a class, we end up on that site, my fellow students always want to learn more about gerontechnology, and how it applies to their areas of interest. I hope you do too!

### Reference

1. Rietsema J. Gerontechnology in Higher Engineering Education. In: Graafmans J, Taipale V, Charness N, editors. Gerontechnology A Sustainable Investment in the Future. Amsterdam: IOS Press; 1998;

pp 385-389

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### Gerontechnology websites

In addition to <http://gero-tech.net>, a number of websites offer links and information on aspects of gerontechnology. A selection follows for the readers' convenience.

- [www.gerontechnology.info](http://www.gerontechnology.info) - the website of the Society
- <http://faculty.cua.edu/tran/gsa-tag/> - Formal Interest Group on Technology & Aging of the Gerontological Society of America
- <http://web.mit.edu/agelab/index.shtml> - AgeLab of Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- [www.gerontotechnik.de/home.php](http://www.gerontotechnik.de/home.php) - GGT Deutsche Gesellschaft für Gerontechnik (in German)
- [www.gerontechnology.nl/english.htm](http://www.gerontechnology.nl/english.htm) - Herman Bouma fund for gerontechnology
- [www.iaps-association.org/index.html](http://www.iaps-association.org/index.html) - IAPS - International association for people-environment studies
- [www.jointnet.org.il/gerontech/](http://www.jointnet.org.il/gerontech/) - Gerontech - The Israel Center for Assistive Technology and Aging
- [www.ageing.ox.ac.uk/](http://www.ageing.ox.ac.uk/) - The Oxford Institute of Ageing: addressing global ageing
- [www.ageingtech.org/index.aspx](http://www.ageingtech.org/index.aspx) - CAST - Center for aging services technologies
- [www.d-sciencelab.be/agetree/index.htm](http://www.d-sciencelab.be/agetree/index.htm) - AGETree design guide
- [www.ppecc.org/](http://www.ppecc.org/) - PPECC - Professionals with personal experience in chronic care
- [www.sfgg.fr/index.php?id=32](http://www.sfgg.fr/index.php?id=32) - Gerontechnology task group of the SFGG (Société Française de Gériatrie et Gérologie) (in French)
- [www.sfu.ca/livinglab/](http://www.sfu.ca/livinglab/) - The Dr. Tong Louie Living Laboratory
- [www2.aahsa.org/about\\_aahsa/default.asp](http://www2.aahsa.org/about_aahsa/default.asp) - AAHSA - American association of homes and services for the aging
- <http://gaggio.blogspot.com> - Positive Technology Journal (ISSN 1825-1501) on mind, brain, and emerging technologies - with free access on-line journals and conference reports

J.E.M.H. van Bronswijk

E: [j.e.m.h.v.bronswijk@gerontechnology.info](mailto:j.e.m.h.v.bronswijk@gerontechnology.info)

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 5-8, 2006

AAHSA 2006 Annual meeting & exposition: Live your story, Tell your story  
San Francisco, California, USA

Organizer: American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA)  
Info: [http://aahsa.org/conferences/annual\\_meeting/default.asp](http://aahsa.org/conferences/annual_meeting/default.asp)

November 16-17, 2006

Universal design of buildings: Tools and policy  
Brugge and Gits, Belgium  
Organizer: CSTC / WTCB, Brussels, Belgium  
Info: [www.polis-ubd.net/index.cfm?cat=conference](http://www.polis-ubd.net/index.cfm?cat=conference)

November 17, 2006

GSA-Tag Symposium at the 59<sup>th</sup> Annual scientific meeting of Gerontological Society of America: Issues of ethics and privacy in technology research involving older people and people with dementia  
Dallas, Texas, USA  
Organizer: Gerontological Society of America  
Info: [www.ageingconference.com/e\\_pop\\_profiles.cfm?session=1&session\\_id=69311&class\\_id=64581](http://www.ageingconference.com/e_pop_profiles.cfm?session=1&session_id=69311&class_id=64581)

March 7-10, 2007

2007 NCOA-ASA Joint Conference: Let's rethink aging  
Chicago, Illinois, USA  
Organizer: American Society on Aging (ASA) and the National Council on Aging (NCOA)  
Info: [www.ageingconference.org/asav2/conf/jc/jc07/theme.cfm?submenu1=generalinfo](http://www.ageingconference.org/asav2/conf/jc/jc07/theme.cfm?submenu1=generalinfo)

April 2007

First East Africa policy-research dialogue on ageing  
Venue not yet known  
Organizer: AFRAN, a standing committee of the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics  
Info: [www.ageing.ox.ac.uk/aftran/conferences.htm](http://www.ageing.ox.ac.uk/aftran/conferences.htm)

April 17-21, 2007

Geographies of practice and the urban outdoors  
San Francisco, California, USA  
Organizer: Association of American Geographers  
Info: [www.aag.org/annualmeetings/SF2007/index.cfm](http://www.aag.org/annualmeetings/SF2007/index.cfm)

April 18-20, 2007

The International Educational and Networking Forum for eHealth, Telemedicine and Health ICT (Med @Tel)

Luxembourg, Luxembourg  
Organizer: Luxexpo SA  
Info: [www.medetel.lu/index.php](http://www.medetel.lu/index.php)

*May 13-15, 2007*  
American Telemedicine Association 2007  
Annual Meeting  
Nashville, Tennessee, USA  
Organizer: American Telemedicine Association  
Info: [www.americantelemed.org/abstracts2007/CallMain.asp](http://www.americantelemed.org/abstracts2007/CallMain.asp)

*May 14-15, 2007*  
2<sup>nd</sup> ISG Master class for PhD students in Gerontechnology  
Eindhoven, the Netherlands  
Organizer: Chair 'Public health engineering for built environments', Technische Universiteit Eindhoven  
Info: [www.phe.tue.nl](http://www.phe.tue.nl)

*May 24-25, 2007*  
The 5<sup>th</sup> European Interactive TV Conference (EuroITV 2007): Interactive TV: a Shared Experience  
Amsterdam, the Netherlands  
Organizer: National Research Institute for Mathematics and Computer Science in the Netherlands  
Info: [www.cwi.nl/events/2007/euroitv2007](http://www.cwi.nl/events/2007/euroitv2007)

*June 16 - 19, 2007*  
Festival of international conferences on caregiving, disability, aging and technology (FICCDAT)  
Toronto, Canada  
Organizer: Smart Move Training and Development Inc, Toronto, Canada  
Info: [www.ficcdat.ca](http://www.ficcdat.ca)

*June 18 - 20, 2007*  
7<sup>th</sup> International conference of IAHSa: The global ageing network: Leading change, sharing innovation, enhancing life  
St. Julian's, Malta  
Organizer: International Association for Homes and Services for the Ageing (IAHSa)  
Info: <http://www.iahsa.net/malta/>

*June 18-21, 2007*  
11<sup>th</sup> International conference on mobility and transport for elderly and disabled persons (TRANSED 2007/COMOTRED 2007): Benchmarking, evaluation and vision for the future

Montreal, Canada  
Organizer: Canada Transport  
Info: [www.tc.gc.ca/transed2007](http://www.tc.gc.ca/transed2007)

*July 22-27, 2007*  
The 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction  
Beijing, China  
Organizer: HCI International  
Info: [www.hcii2007.org/home.html](http://www.hcii2007.org/home.html)

*September 6-8, 2007*  
Realities of Ageing: Research into action  
Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, United Kingdom  
Organizer: British Society of Gerontology  
Info: [www.bsg2007.org.uk/](http://www.bsg2007.org.uk/)

*October 11-12, 2007*  
Housing and environmental conditions in post-communist countries  
Gliwice, Poland  
Organizer: The Silesian University of Technology  
Info: <http://konferencje.polsl.pl/iaps/default.aspx>

*October 22-25, 2007*  
8<sup>th</sup> Asia / Oceania Regional Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics: Aging diversity in Asia and Oceania region: Health, participation, security & sharing  
Beijing, China  
Organizer: Gerontological Society of China  
Info: [www.aog2007.org/](http://www.aog2007.org/)

*May 21-23, 2008*  
6<sup>th</sup> International conference on gerontechnology: Intelligent technologies for an active longevity  
Pisa, Italy  
Organizer: Scuola Superiore Sant' Anna in collaboration with the Italian Chapter of the ISG  
Info: [www.arts.sssup.it/isg08/](http://www.arts.sssup.it/isg08/)

Announcements of meetings and other events for the Gerontechnology calendar should be submitted by e-mail to: [j.e.m.h.v.bronswijk@gerontechnology.info](mailto:j.e.m.h.v.bronswijk@gerontechnology.info). The editors decide to include or not include the announcement of a certain event.

The most up-to-date forthcoming list may be found at [www.gerontechjournal.net](http://www.gerontechjournal.net)