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**The Vanishing Mind: A Practical Guide to Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias.** Leonard L. Heston and June A. White. New York: W.H. Freeman, 1991, 191 pages, \$13.95 paper.

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This book is deceptively titled. Until I noticed the subtitle and senior author, I thought that this might be something about American education or philosophy. The subtitle accurately describes this book. Indeed, this book represents an update of a 1983 book, which had the more accurate title, *Dementia*.

The target readership is a lay audience, especially family of Alzheimer's patients. The strength of this book is that it clearly describes the symptoms and course of dementia, different etiologies (Alzheimer's, Pick's, Hydrocephalus, Huntington's, AIDS, Cerebral Vascular), how dementia is diagnosed in the laboratory and with psychometric tests, possible causes of Alzheimer's (e.g., aluminum, viruses, genetics), experimental medications for treating Alzheimer's, and practical psycho-social aspects of management. The appendixes are the biggest update to this book, including addresses of Alzheimer associations.

In evaluating this book, it is important to identify one's reference point or intended market. Scholars will be disappointed because of the lay level of explanation (and lack of references). They would be better off with the 1992 edition of *Dementia: A clinical approach*, by J.L. Cummings and D.F. Benson (Butterworth-Heinemann). While this book will be informative to the general public, it is probably not as "hands on" as *The 36 Hour Day* by Mace and Rabins (Johns Hopkins University Press).