Preface

This volume contains papers presented at the Third International Workshop on Multistrategy Learning (MSL-96), held in Harpers Ferry, WV, May 23-25, 1996. The workshop was organized by the Machine Learning and Inference Laboratory at George Mason University, with the collaboration of the International Joint Conferences on Artificial Intelligence, Inc. Support for the workshop was provided by the National Science Foundation, Office of Naval Research and American Association for Artificial Intelligence.

The theme of the workshop, multistrategy learning, concerns theoretical and empirical issues in the development of learning systems that employ multiple inferential and/or computational strategies. The study of such systems draws upon the achievements in all other research subareas of machine learning, and constitutes a major new research challenge for this field. As humans are multistrategy learners, multistrategy learning has a natural connection to cognitive studies of learning, and provides an excellent opportunity for cross-fertilization of these two areas. Due to their versatility and the ability to integrate complementary strategies, multistrategy learning systems have a potential for solving more complex learning problems than monostrategy systems, which have so far been the main focus of machine learning research. Multistrategy learning workshops serve as a forum for presenting and discussing research progress in this area. MSL-96 is a sequel to the previous workshops, MSL-91 and MSL-93, also organized by the GMU Machine Learning and Inference Laboratory.

Papers in this volume present a sample of the recent research on multistrategy learning conducted at major research laboratories in Australia, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Poland, and the United States. This indicates a truly international research interest in this area. Major topics of the workshop include: the study of interrelationships among learning strategies and paradigms, cognitive models of learning and their relationships to methods and paradigms of machine learning, the development of multistrategy learning systems, and their practical applications. The papers have been grouped into four categories, according to their primary themes:

- *Theoretical Issues*
- *Cognitive Models*
- *Methods and Systems*
- *Special Topics and Applications.*

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We present these *Proceedings* to the reader with the hope that they will contribute in a meaningful manner to the dissemination of ideas and further progress in this highly challenging and important research direction.

– Ryszard S. Michalski
Janusz Wnek