

Farewell Editorial

After Seventeen Years and 70 Issues ...

David B. Leake



Photo courtesy Kevin Sapp.

In 1998, AAAI Publications committee chair Ken Ford invited me to become the Editor-in-Chief of *AI Magazine*. After two issues as *Editor Elect*, I became *Editor-in-Chief* in spring 1999. Now, 70 issues and 17 years later, I am still deeply grateful for the opportunity to contribute to AAAI and to the AI community through the editorship.

It has been a privilege to guide the magazine's coverage and a treat to have the first look at exciting articles as they arrive. It has been an honor and pleasure to work with all those individuals — worldwide — whose efforts have made, and continue to make the magazine a success.

It has been a joy to edit this magazine. However, now that my administrative role at Indiana University has grown, I realize that the time has come for me to pass the torch and allow new leadership to build on the magazine's many strengths. I look forward to their accomplishments in the next chapter of publishing what has been called the "journal of record for the field of artificial intelligence."

Much has changed at *AI Magazine* during the past 17 years. Although it seems impossible to believe today, we were still receiving paper submissions when I began my editorship. The switch to electronic submissions, while not without its difficulties, marked a major early milestone for our publication.

At the beginning of my tenure, the AAAI website did not have downloadable versions of all the back issues. Today, with the aid of an electronic publications management system, we have been able to build a digital library of AAAI publications that includes every one of the tens

of thousands of papers that AAAI has published since its founding.

Early on, I established a formal editorial board, and instituted regular meetings at the annual AAAI conference. I am grateful for the cogent advice and suggestions from the many distinguished colleagues I have been privileged to work with. Their contributions have been instrumental in bringing to print many of the fine articles that have appeared in these pages.

We also published the first illustrated poster explaining artificial intelligence: *The AI Landscape*. AI's first half-century produced great accomplishments, but many of the field's successes had remained unsung beyond the AI community. AI's integration into the fabric of everyday life has had and continues to have tremendous impact, but the public has not always recognized its fundamental goals. The *AI Magazine* poster was published to help educate students, faculty, and the public about AI and to spur them to find out more about the field.

The introduction of Apple's iPad led, in 2010, to our efforts to create an electronic edition of the magazine. By 2012, those efforts had born fruit with the launch of the digital edition of *AI Magazine*. That early effort will, I hope, serve as a foundation to enable substantial advances in the magazine's future design. Color was the first advantage we exploited. Today, we routinely use it to enhance figures and create interest. I am certain that, over time, the magazine will increasingly make use of this benefit. Today, many AAAI members receive the magazine only in electronic form.

Finally, and in concert with the electronic edition, we launched the AAAI app for mobile devices. Today, regardless of your device, *AI Magazine* is available to you. I hope that in the future this feature will be utilized to a far greater degree.

Outside the magazine, those years have been transformative for the prevalence and impact of AI in everyday life. It is humbling to see the progress AI has achieved in less than two decades — much of which has been described, with insider insight, in *AI Magazine* — and thrilling to anticipate the next steps.

Despite these changes, the mission and importance of the magazine have not changed. *AI Magazine* still informs and bridges the AI community, keeping readers aware of the diversity of AI by presenting the most significant methods, research, and applications

from across the entire field of AI, with compelling articles crafted to be interesting and enriching across subdisciplines.

Many deserve thanks for the magazine's success. It is enabled by the contributions of a legion of volunteers — its authors, special issue editors, column editors, and reviewers, and the Editorial Board members who contribute to its broad vision. It is enabled by the support of the presidents and Executive Council of AAAI. It also owes a great debt to the unflagging support of Carol Hamilton, AAAI Executive Director, the AAAI staff, and especially to the central role of Mike Hamilton, Managing Editor. From the first days of *AI Magazine*, Mike has skillfully shepherded articles through production with the constant goal of producing a publication of the highest standard, has chosen and worked with printers, designers, and copyeditors, has interacted with the authors of every paper, and has handled with aplomb the challenges that arise. His sense of the magazine has made a great difference in every issue, and his vision and expertise have brought *AI Magazine* to the digital age. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to collaborate with him over all these years.

At this time of transition, *AI Magazine* is strong. At the close of 2015 there were more than 40 articles in production, more articles scheduled for publication at that time than there have ever been in the publication's 36 year history. This is a tribute, not only to the many talented and diligent volunteers who have worked to bring these articles to you, but also to the renewed interest in the field of AI, and the desire of more and more authors to publish in *AI Magazine*. The magazine continues to add new features: A new column, "AI in Industry," edited by Sven Koenig and Sandip Sen, will be launched in the next issue.

The next chapter in *AI Magazine's* history will be led by Ashok Goel, professor of computer and cognitive science at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Ashok, who now serves as Editor-in-Chief Elect, will assume the role of Editor-in-Chief as of the winter issue. I know he will do a wonderful job, and I look forward to introducing him more fully in an editorial in the Fall issue.

