

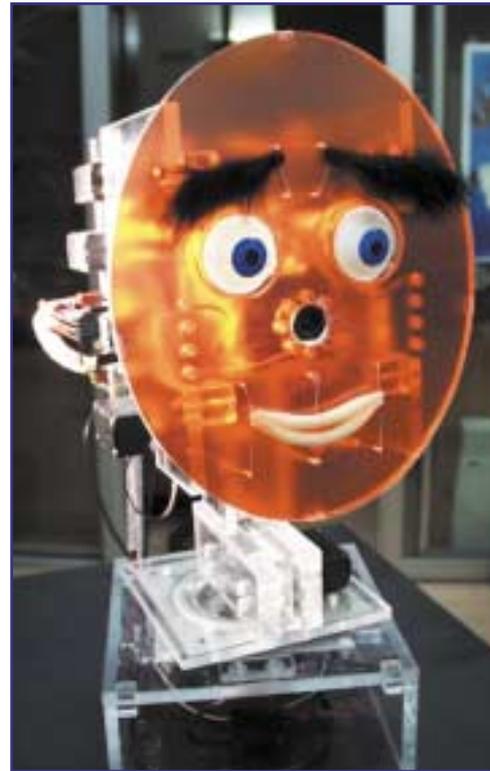
# AI Update By Douglas Blank

**NEWS** Welcome once again to AI Update! Here, I attempt to provide useful summary, occasional commentary, and sometimes practical pointers to some of the more interesting news items connected to the practice artificial intelligence. If you notice such a newsworthy item, please send me a note at [dblank@brynmawr.edu](mailto:dblank@brynmawr.edu). Otherwise, I'll have to make things up.

## New BlueEyes

As part of research concerning facial expression of emotion, IBM continues a series of studies under Project BlueEyes that attempts to address four major issues: 1. Do emotions occur naturally in Human Computer Interaction (HCI)? If so, how often, and which emotions? 2. Using the image of a person, can people assess emotions reliably? 3. What information do people use to assess emotions? 4. What HCI stimuli cause what emotion and what is the user's experience of the emotion? IBM's first two studies have provided evidence on the first two issues. They have found evidence that some affective states (like anxiety and happiness) do occur in HCI and that people can use visual information to assess these states. Of course, those familiar with certain operating systems know that emotions can pop up in HCI every once in a while. But I assume that IBM

is talking about visual clues more subtle than users pounding on monitors with their fists. In any event, people can visually detect emotions. IBM hopes that if people can perform this assessment reliably, so could a computer. To test out this hope, IBM has built Pong, a blue-eyed (of course) robo-head. Currently, Pong is a plastic and metal face that sits on a table and watches you with two ping pong-like eyes. Once it sees you, it smiles or frowns based on its interpretation of your mood. John Dvorak, computer pundit and AI hypemaster (see page 9), described interacting with Pong as "fascinating and creepy." IBM is apparently completing further studies. For more information, see [www.almaden.ibm.com/cs/blueeyes/](http://www.almaden.ibm.com/cs/blueeyes/).



With eyes like Paul Newman, and eyebrows like Groucho, IBM's Pong is happy to provide you with some face time. As part of Project BlueEyes, Pong's goal is to make eye contact, and then interpret one's mood. Photo by Paula K. Wirth.

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## Richard M. Shiffrin becomes Second Recipient of David E. Rumelhart Prize

The Glushko-Samuels Foundation and the Cognitive Science Society have announced that Richard M. Shiffrin has been chosen as the second recipient of the \$100,000 David E. Rumelhart Prize, awarded annually for an outstanding contribution to the formal analysis of human cognition. Shiffrin will receive this prize and give the Prize Lecture at the 2002 Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, at George Mason University, August 7-11, 2002.

Geoffrey Hinton won the first David E. Rumelhart Prize earlier this year.

Shiffrin has made many contributions to the modeling of human cognition in areas ranging from perception to attention to learning, but is best known for his long-standing

efforts to develop explicit models of human memory. His most recent models use Bayesian, adaptive approaches, building on previous work but extending it in a critical new manner, and carrying his theory beyond explicit memory to implicit learning and memory processes. The theory has been evolving for about 35 years, and as a result represents a progression similar to the best theories seen in any branch of science. Shiffrin received his Ph. D. from the Mathematical Psychology Program in the Department of Psychology at Stanford University in 1968, the year after Rumelhart received his degree from the same program. Since 1968 he has been on the faculty of the Department of Psychology at Indiana University, where he is now the Luther Dana

## AI HYPE WATCH

*Our eye on AI continues. As noted in previous columns, of all fields, it is probably easier for those in artificial intelligence to make claims that are just a little bit beyond reality. This section of the news is dedicated to keeping ourselves in check, and to keeping a watch on those news makers that have made extraordinary statements. Of course, sometimes hype is not our fault. Sometimes the media tends to exaggerate just a tad. Hype happens. In any case, we'll report what we find here. If you encounter a report in the press, or directly from the researcher's mouth that you think fits the bill, send us a note at [hypewatch@danger-mouse.brynmawr.edu](mailto:hypewatch@danger-mouse.brynmawr.edu).*

## AI's 20 Year Cycle?

This issue's Golden Hype Award goes to John Dvorak, uber commentator on all things digital. Although Dvorak usually gets the technical details just slightly askew (he has computer columns in every magazine, and television tech shows on every cable channel, I think) he recently has put forth an unusually stupid theory. Here it is, in his own words: "There seems to be an interest in A.I. that has a 20-

year cycle." His evidence. Well, there was a play in 1920 that introduced the term "robot." Then in 1940, McCulloch and Pitts designed an artificial neuron. In 1958 McCarthy (and others) coined the term "artificial intelligence." Finally, according to Dvorak, in the 1980's there was "a curious boom" in AI. Every 20 years. QED. Skeptical? Dvorak knew you would be. "While researchers may not like

the idea of a cycle since they are working on this science all the time, the fact is that A.I. comes in and out of vogue in the computer business about every twenty years. The time is once again coming..." Well, how can you argue with a business fact? You can see more of Dvorak's ramblings just about every place you look, but specifically at [www.forbes.com/2001/06/25/0625dvorak.html](http://www.forbes.com/2001/06/25/0625dvorak.html).

**Richard M. Shiffrin becomes Second Recipient of David E. Rumelhart Prize**  
*continued from page 8*

Waterman Professor of Psychology and Director of the Cognitive Science Program. Shiffrin has accumulated many honors, including membership in the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Howard Crosby Warren Award of the Society of Experimental Psychologists, and a MERIT Award from the National Institute of Mental Health. Shiffrin has served the field as editor of the *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning Memory and Cognition*, and as a member of the governing boards of several scientific societies.

## AI: The Movie Hype

To not make note of the hype generated by Spielberg-Kubrick's "A.I. Artificial Intelligence" movie would, I'm sure, seriously undermine your trust in me. If you didn't catch the movie this summer, you'll probably want to rent the DVD. Not necessarily because it is a good movie. Nor because it has anything to do with AI.

But because you'll want to be able to offer up your opinion the next time you run into other AI researchers. The movie was definitely the single most-talked-about topic in my scientific eavesdropping survey that I took at the International Joint Conference



Spielberg's movie had lots of Internet hype. This page was found on a Web server in New Zealand by following a trail of clues.

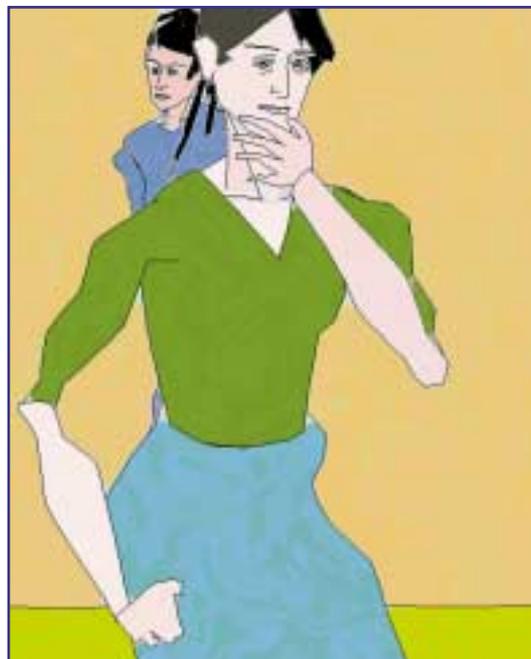
on Artificial Intelligence (IJCAI) this summer (more about that on page 12). In every line for food or beer, I heard the familiar "so, what did you think about THE movie?" Most people that I overheard liked the  
*continued on page 10*

## Cyberartists

We can forgive Dvorak and Spielberg somewhat: they have a product to sell. They aren't scientists, they are entertainers. Should we have higher expectations for one of our own? Ray Kurzweil is, by one of his many companies' humble admission, "a name synonymous with the potential of machine intelligence." He has a long list of accomplishments in artificial intelligence, and business. Recently he has been in the business of selling shareware. Kurzweil has two new products: the Cybernetic Poet, and AARON. Of course, AARON is the painting program that has been developed by Harold Cohen over the last few decades. It has been "productized" by Kurzweil and turned into a screen saver, and a Java applet. Both the Cybernetic Poet and AARON can be downloaded for free with registration fees paid on the honor system. I enjoy running AARON and the Poet (sorry, Windows required). But exactly what are they? "Harold's AI-based program actually creates original paintings on your computer's screen,

each one completely different. If a human created paintings like AARON, we would regard him or her as an acclaimed artist," says Kurzweil. That could probably also be said of a 3-D modeling engine too. If it rendered a scene from a random position, varied the shading and lighting, you'd have a unique "painting." Of course, AARON models brush strokes and theories of color too. Kurzweil claims the Poet is an artist as well. To prove it, he offers what he calls "a (kind of) Turing Test" at [www.kurzweilcyberart.com/poetry/rkcp\\_akindofturingtest.php3](http://www.kurzweilcyberart.com/poetry/rkcp_akindofturingtest.php3). Here is the test: given 28 "poems," can you tell which ones were created by computer, and which ones were created by humans? Here are a couple of examples:

Stanza 1: is beauty itself that they



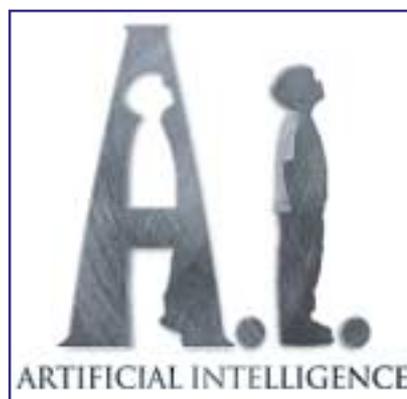
Kurzweil's productized AARON makes a great screen saver, but is it an artist? This image was created uses Cyberart's AARON Java Applet in about 15 seconds.

were walking there. All along the new world naked, cold, familiar wind -  
Stanza 2: Pink confused with white flowers and flowers reversed take and spill the shaded flame darting it back into the lamp's horn

## AI: The Movie Hype

*continued from page 9*

movie. I thought it was interesting, and I'm sure that this will give AI its 20-year boost in interest that it is due for this year. Unless you surf the Web hourly, you might have missed some of the pre-movie Internet hype. Apparently in one of the movie trailers, there was a subtle credit describing one Jeanine Salla as the movie's "Sentient Machine Therapist." A few people noticed this, and began digging up Web sites (and hype) sprinkled all over the



The movie.

World Wide Web referring to Dr. Salla. By clicking on hidden eyes that popped up every once in a while on

these Web pages, you could discover an entire collection of sites surrounding the mysterious Dr. Salla. There you will find sites on the Coalition for Robotic Freedom, the Bangalore World University, and Salla's entire family tree. All fictitious, created to hype the movie. By the way, the movie is based on a short story by Brian Aldiss, "Super-Toys Last All Summer Long." Although it originally appeared in Harper's Bazaar in 1969, it has also been available through WIRED's Web site since 1997 at [www.wired.com/wired/archive/5.01/ffsupertoys\\_pr.html](http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/5.01/ffsupertoys_pr.html).

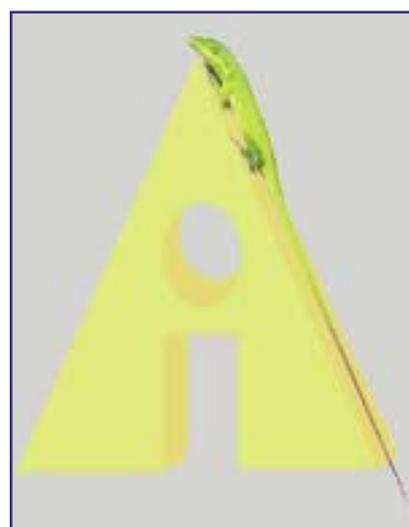
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## Concepts and Categorizations

The 15th International Florida Artificial Intelligence Research Society Conference (FLAIRS) will feature a special track titled "Categorization and Concept Representation: Models and Implications." This track seeks to bring together researchers working on issues related to categorization and concept representation in the areas of Artificial Intelligence and Cognitive Psychology. Categorization is the process by which distinct entities are treated

as equivalent, and is thought to be a fundamental and pervasive cognitive activity. The purpose of this track is to bring fresh insights concerning a perhaps revisited notion of similarity, the way goals of categorization influence this process, how the notion of the theory of a concept can be formalized and implemented in computational models of categorization and the implications those elements may have on the representation of concepts. The contributions to this

track may be situated in the symbolic or the connectionist frameworks. The organizers are looking for contributions in the following areas: Computational models of similarity, Computational models of theory-based categorization, Computational models of similarity-based categorization,



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### Cyberartists

*continued from page 10*

Which one is William Carlos Williams, and which one was created by a computer program after "reading" poems by William Carlos Williams? That is the question that makes up Kurzweil's Poetry Turing Test. I will reveal the answer shortly, but first I must object to calling either the Cybernetic Poet or AARON an artist. What's missing? In a word, perception. Neither of these programs (as far as I know) take a break from creating their work and examine what they have inked so far. No re-evaluation, no self-criticism. More importantly, who selected the computer-generated poems for the test? Who sifted through the random-sounding nonsense passages, and selected the more pleasing ones? Who selected the good paintings by AARON to hang in London's Tate Modern Gallery, Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Brooklyn Museum, and Washington Capital Children's Museum? Neither of these programs, I suspect, have a clue about which piece is better than

another. And that is exactly what it takes to be an artist in my book. Kurzweil claims that because some people can't tell the difference that "we can conclude that this domain-specific Turing test has achieved some level of success in tricking human judges in its poetry-writing ability." I don't believe we should conclude this at all, at least not until he removes the human from the selection process. Kurzweil has even more ambitious goals: to create a program that can write multiple stanzas that make thematic, syntactic, and poetic sense. "A future version of the Kurzweil Cybernetic Poet is contemplated that attempts this more difficult task. To be successful, the models created by the Cybernetic Poet will require a richer understanding of the syntactic and poetic function of each word." Good luck, and don't forget perception! You can download both of these entertaining programs at [www.kurzweilcyberart.com](http://www.kurzweilcyberart.com). And by the way, Stanza 1 was written by the Kurzweil Cybernetic Poet after scanning poems by William Carlos Williams, and Stanza 2 was written by William Carlos Williams.

rization, Computational models of human categorization, Models of concept representation which are relevant as regards to the process of categorization, Models of concept representation and elicitation, Formalization of the notion of theory which underlies a category, Formalization of the context of occurrence of the entities to categorize and its influence on the categorization process. The paper submission deadline is November 15, 2001, with the conference taking place May 16-18, 2002, in Pensacola, Florida. For more information see the track Web site at [perso.wanadoo.fr/colette.faucher/categorization.html](http://perso.wanadoo.fr/colette.faucher/categorization.html), or the FLAIRS 2002 Web site at [altair.coginst.uwf.edu/~jkolen/Flairs2002/intro.php3](http://altair.coginst.uwf.edu/~jkolen/Flairs2002/intro.php3).

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## IJCAI/AAAI-01

As I write this, IJCAI-01 has just ended. The seven-day conference in Seattle brought together leading researchers in many of the sub-fields that comprise AI.

It was a huge event! And had huge proceedings! In addition to the 1500-page proceedings, attendees could also get the 100-page Proceedings of the Innovative Applications of Artificial Intelligence Conference (IAAI), a selection of very many interesting tutorials and workshops, a host of AI-talks, and a keynote address from a fellow named Bill Gates.

IJCAI-01 was sponsored by the International Joint Conferences on

Artificial Intelligence, Inc., the American Association for Artificial Intelligence, AT&T Labs, Boeing,

SemanticEdge Technologies, Microsoft, and NEC Research.

This year Hector Levesque was the

conference chair, Bernhard Nebel was the program chair, Ron Brachman was the IJCAI Secretary-Treasurer, and James Hoard took care of local arrangements. It truly was a huge event. The diversity and depth of the program can best be seen by scanning the conference Web site at [www.ijcai-01.org](http://www.ijcai-01.org).

If you need to shop for AI-related books, software, or robotics, the vendor exhibition at the conference is always well worth a visit.

There were more robots at the conference than people this year, I think. As AAAI and IJCAI combined their robot competitions, there were a plethora of robot games of all kinds, with contestants ranging from junior high to PhD's. Watching the competitions was a nice break from the talks, and seemed to be enjoyed by participants and observers alike.

Four teams attempted the Robo-Rescue (Swarthmore College, Sharif University of Technology in Tehran, the University of Edinburgh and Utah State University); however, none of the teams met the grueling challenge to find four victims in the allotted time of 25 minutes.

The Robot Exhibition was interesting as usual. There were demos by air-hockey-playing robots, robots that were to be shot through the air, swarms of robots, and even robot art. You can see the full gamut of robots that were exhibited at [www.cs.cmu.edu/~aaairobot/](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~aaairobot/). Tucker Balch and Holly Yanco again did wonderful jobs organizing the competition and exhibitions.

Before the conference began, I attended a workshop on "Effective Interactive AI Resources." We discussed many ideas on creating the dream Web site of the future for AI. ➡

There were more robots  
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## Genetic and Evolutionary Computation Conference

You can now see the latest research in your favorite branch of Evolutionary Computation, and explore developments in other, related tracks. The Genetic and Evolutionary Computation Conference (GECCO-2002) promises to continue the tradition of presenting the latest high-quality results in the growing field of genetic and evolutionary computation. Papers are now being invited with manuscripts to be received for review no later than January 23, 2002. Each paper submitted to GECCO-01 will be rigorously reviewed, in a blind review process, by one of at least seven separate and independent program committees specializing in various aspects of genetic and evolutionary computation. Topics sought include, but are not limited to, genetic algorithms (GA); genetic programming (GP); evolution strategies (ES); evolutionary

programming (EP); evolvable hardware (EH); evolutionary robotics (ER); real-world applications (RWA); classifier systems (CS); DNA and molecular computing (DNA); artificial life, adaptive behavior, agents, and ant colony optimization (AAAA); optimal design of engineered structures; methodology, pedagogy, and philosophy (MPP); genetic scheduling and routing (GS); and other areas to be announced. The conference is co-sponsored by the American Association for Artificial Intelligence (AAAI), and will be held July 9-13, 2002 in New York City, New York. For information concerning hotel reservations, travel discounts, student housing, student travel grants, graduate student workshop, proposals for workshops, proposals for tutorials, late-breaking papers, and other matters, visit [www.isgec.org/GECCO-2002](http://www.isgec.org/GECCO-2002).

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## Machine Learning Competition

The Second Annual NIPS\*2001 Unlabeled Data Competition and Workshop will be held in Whistler, British Columbia, Canada, Dec 7-8, 2001. This competition is a challenge to the machine learning community to develop and demonstrate methods to use unlabeled data to improve supervised learning. They have created a Web site where participants can download problem sets, submit problem sets, and compete head-to-head with other contestants in a series of challenging

unlabeled-data, supervised-learning problems.

Recently, there has been much interest in applying techniques that incorporate knowledge from unlabeled data into systems performing supervised learning. The potential advantages of such techniques are obvious in domains where labeled data is expensive and unlabeled data is cheap. Many such techniques have been proposed, but only recently has any effort been made to compare the effectiveness of different approaches

on real world problems.

This contest presents a challenge to the proponents of methods to incorporate unlabeled data into supervised learning. Can one really use unlabeled data to help train a supervised classification (or regression) system? Do recent (and not so recent) theories stand up to the data test?

At the end of the contest the organizers will release the results and find out who really knows something about using unlabeled data, and if unlabeled data are really useful. Are you (and your theory) up to the challenge?

For more details on the competition or the workshop and to sign up for the Unlabeled Data Mailing List, visit [q.cis.uoguelph.ca/~skremer/NIPS2001/](http://q.cis.uoguelph.ca/~skremer/NIPS2001/).

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### ICJAI/AAAI-01

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One example site is AAAI's AI-Topics. If you haven't seen it, visit it at [www.aaai.org/aitopics/](http://www.aaai.org/aitopics/). Check out future issues of *intelligence* magazine to see where these ideas are headed. If you would like to participate in this project visit [mainline.brynmawr.edu/EIAIR/](http://mainline.brynmawr.edu/EIAIR/), or drop me a note.

Bill Gates' keynote ("AI in the Computing Experience: Challenges and Opportunities") was actually enjoyable, although not necessarily for the reasons Bill had wished. Bill had a few of his people show off future products that they are working on. Let's just say that I have seen the future of computing, and it has larger, prettier, more colorful error messages.

They showed off a Bayesian trouble shooter, real-time continuous speech recognition system running on a hand-held, data mining tools, an auto prioritizing system, and an intelligent search tool. Of course, they were all beta software, so we expected some bugs and were not disappointed. I think they were beta.

My favorite quotation from Bill

came when someone asked about that stupid paper clip character that would pop up and wink at you. Bill said something to the effect that "Yes, it was obnoxious. We don't do intelligent avatars very well yet, but we are committed to the concept." A reasonable answer.

The co-located IAAI-01 presented five awards for Deployed applications. This year's award winners included:

- IBM for their Natural Language Sales Assistant, a Web-based Dialog System for Online Sales
- Administrative Office of U.S. Courts et al, for their CARMA: A Case-Based Range Management Adviser (for grasshopper pest management in Wyoming)
- Australian Department of Defense, for their Interchanging Agents and Humans in Military Simulation
- DCS, for their Automated Load Planning System (for the U.S. Marine Corps)
- NASA, for their Automated Mission Planner (for Antarctic satellite) IJCAI-03 is slated for Acapulco, Mexico.

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## OpenBayes Discussion Group

Richard Dybowski formed the OpenBayes discussion group/email list this year. The goal is to discuss the development of an open source library for probabilistic graphical models. They had their first meeting at the recent UAI conference in Seattle. The only concrete decision reached was that they should advertise the existence of this group more widely. And they are!

For more details on the OpenBayes project, please see [HTTP.CS.Berkeley.EDU/~murphyk/OpenBayes/index.html](http://HTTP.CS.Berkeley.EDU/~murphyk/OpenBayes/index.html) This page includes a list of people who attended the meeting, more details on the project's goals, achievements to date, ways you can subscribe to the list and/or contribute code, etc.

## Back to School Specials

Interesting course spotted this fall: Special Topics in Robotics and Animation to be taught by Stephen Lane of soVoz and formerly of Katnix, at the University of Pennsylvania.

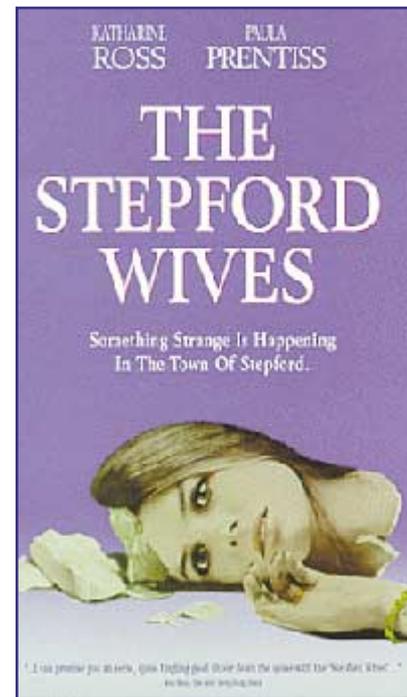
“This course will cover core subject matter common to the fields of robotics, character animation and



embodied intelligent agents. Topics include: coordinate systems and transformations; forward and inverse kinematics; dynamic systems and control; computer simulation; keyframe, motion data and procedural animation; sensors and actuators; behavior-based animation and control.” Sounds fun!

Going back to school, and need a copy of “Forbidden Planet” (or most any movie that features a robot or an alien)? Only \$6.99 at Mondotronics’ Robot Store! Visit [www.robotstore.com](http://www.robotstore.com). Can you name the robot movie that goes with these descriptions?

- Woody Allen goes from political fugitive, to wacky household android, to reluctant rebel leader.
- Programming errors send amusement park androids running wild and killing all the guests.
- Silent robot Gort and his alien master visit Washington D.C. and warn of atomic doom.
- Classic 1926 motion picture about a future society and the



dangers of machines. A mad scientist creates a seductive female robot to incite workers to revolt.

If you can name all four movie titles, you will win an AI-Robotics Geek t-shirt. Actually, you’ll just win a marker to write “AI-Robotics Geek” on your own t-shirt. And then send me your marker back.

## Computing and the Law: Updates

Thanks to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), there are now three legal cases pending in the U.S. courts, and I fear many more to follow. I bring you an update on these cases because I believe that the DMCA has some problems, and we should try to fix them as soon as possible.

The DMCA is a complex piece of legislation, but the part of interest here is the provision that makes certain computer programs illegal. The crime isn’t copyright infringement itself, but the writing of computer programs that could be used for copyright infringement. Even though a program might have been written to allow legal, fair use actions, if it can be used for pirating then the DMCA makes writing, using, and distributing such a

program a crime.

Here is the scenario where the DMCA is being used: A company wants to distribute some media (say DVD movies, music files, or PDF documents). However, the company wants to control how you access the material. Maybe the company wants to allow you to view the document, but not allow you to print it out. Or maybe they want to allow you to play a DVD in a certified player, but not allow you to make a backup copy of it. So, they create an encryption scheme to implement the access control.

The problem with all three of these situations is that there will always be a method to circumvent it. You could simply hold a microphone up to a speaker and re-record a music file. Or you could video tape the playing of a DVD. ➡

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## Computing and the Law: Updates

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Or even photograph a PDF, and then do whatever you want to with it.

Of course, as these scenarios are all digital, there are more effective ways of circumventing the encryption technology, usually without even suffering any data loss from the original media. So, the DMCA has made the writing of these circumventing programs illegal. The three cases involve programs that illegally access DVDs, music files, and PDFs, respectively.

The DVD case, in which programmers created a tool that could decode movie DVDs by removing the Contents Scramble System (CSS), is under appeal and is currently winding its way through the U.S. courts. The initial ruling upheld the DMCA and even made it illegal to link to Web sites that contain the program. These programmers are being pursued by the Motion Picture Association of

America (MPAA) and defended by the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF).

Ed Felten of Princeton successfully disabled an encryption scheme on a music control system, and thus won a letter from some lawyers. Lawyers from the Secure Digital Music Initiative Foundation (SDMI), the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), and Verance Corporation threatened to sue if he published his results.

After the issue became quite publicized, the pursuing lawyers said “never mind.” But Felten and the EFF are going ahead with their suit to make it legal to do such research, regardless of the DMCA. The Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) has declared their support for Professor Felten (see [www.acm.org/usacm/copyright/felten\\_declaration.html](http://www.acm.org/usacm/copyright/felten_declaration.html)). As this article goes to press, Felten has finally presented his research at the USENIX conference on August 16, 2001, but awaits the trial.

As I write this, Russian program-

mer Dmitry Sklyarov will appear in a California federal court next week for an arraignment on charges of trafficking in a copyright circumvention device. Sklyarov has written a program that allows fair use actions on Adobe’s PDF and eBook documents. However in doing so, it breaks the DMCA. Sklyarov, who is currently out of jail on \$50,000 bail, faces a potential prison term of five years and a \$500,000 fine.

After he presented a paper at DEF CON, Sklyarov spent three weeks in prison. When released Sklyarov said, “This experience is going to change me in a profound way that I cannot even appreciate fully as yet.” I think we should all feel the same way. To read more on on Dmitry’s story, see [www.eff.org/IP/DMCA/US\\_v\\_Sklyarov/](http://www.eff.org/IP/DMCA/US_v_Sklyarov/).

For a very detailed white paper on why the DMCA is flawed, see Pamela Samuelson’s report at [www.sims.berkeley.edu/~pam/papers/Samuelson\\_IP\\_dig\\_eco\\_htm.htm](http://www.sims.berkeley.edu/~pam/papers/Samuelson_IP_dig_eco_htm.htm). To help fight the fight, visit [www.eff.org/support/](http://www.eff.org/support/).