Welcome to AI Magazine

As Allen Newell points out in his AAAI President's Message on the following pages, the field of Artificial Intelligence is already richly served by a number of excellent technical journals. Because of this, the issue arises as to whether or not the AAAI really needs a major publication of its own and, if so, what its proper role should be. Clearly, as a scientific society, the AAAI needs an official organ, at the very least to report its activities to its members, but there are good reasons for expanding the scope of the publication to include more than what a newsletter would contain.

As a major scientific society, the AAAI has a responsibility for *promoting* its field as well as informing its members of the latest technical developments. Since the latter function is adequately performed by the several journals and conference proceedings already mentioned, the editorial committee chose to assign to *AI Magazine* the task of providing AAAI members and the public as well with a broader perspective on the research activities within AI.

How is this to be done? A look at the contents of this issue should give a fairly good idea of the approach we intend to take: informative expository and survey articles designed not so much for those working within a particular problem domain but for those outside it who would like to gain a better understanding of the issues and methods currently being studied without having to cull all the technical literature.

Granted, some active researchers would prefer to read something other than a piece that tells them what they are doing, but it is apparent that, as the field continues to grow, the need and demand for such material will grow with it. We cite such magazines as the IEEE's *Spectrum* and *Computer* as examples that support this assertion as well as serving, perhaps, as models of the role that this publication might ultimately fulfill. For this reason, too, we selected the name *AI Magazine* in recognition of the particular perspective we intend to provide.

Like any other magazine or journal, the quality of *AI* will depend upon that of the contributions we receive, just as its content will evolve in response to the demands of its readers. Please send us your contributions and suggestions either by mail or by net (AAAI@USC-ECL). We request that, at the very least, each research group should submit a description of its activities for our *Research in Progress* section.

Finally, we wish to thank the contributors, the volunteers, and the staff members of Robotics Publishing Corporation whose efforts have contributed to this excellent first issue of what we hope will grow to be the major publication that the AAAI deserves.

A.M.T.