

TOYS!

William Bricken

January 1987

DEDICATION:

to the depth of expertise of the toy makers and players.

Toys! The future of AI is in toys. Not automated generals or automated doctors or automated teachers, but intelligent playthings.

We need diversification; we are dabbling with the commercial marketplace; we are gearing up to productize. The place to focus our skills is in teddy-bear-robots, in trivia-wizard-systems, strategic-command-and-control-board-games, hypothesis-generating-kaleidoscopes, image-understanding-doormats, and signal-detecting-dress-up-clothes.

The perfect marriage: national defense and pleasure from
Advanced Decision & Frivolity Systems.

We know these facts:

Yuppies have free cash and what their kids don't spend, they spend on adult toys.

The kids spend their share on toys.

America is bored, bored, bored.

Megabucks ride on every fad. Fads capture imagination. Imagination is the slave of entertainment. Toys entertain.

Marginally responsive toys like Teddy Rumble-something-or-another and Petsters are Christmas hits.

Saturday morning kid shows are experimenting with toy control via television broadcast signals. We can port code to intelligent toys over the air-waves!

Nothing is more delightful than an inanimate object that acts human. It reminds us of our superiority. And its our corporate field of expertise.

Programmers do their best work coding something they want in their own library.

We do toy demos.

The word TOYS got you to read this message.

Star Wars was once a good movie.

Transients and people living in apartments can't own pets. They can own toys.

Educational institutions are in disarray. Learning is moving into the electronic home. People learn through play.

AI works in toy domains. AI technology grew up on games.

We are actually all trying to find play in work.

So, what this country needs is an intelligent plaything.

Imagine the Santa's Helper Division of our company. Cheerful elves cleverly hiding planning programs in the Mega-Transformatron so that it traverses the living-room more efficiently next time.

Imagine placing image-recognition programs as listeners to the airwaves and controllers of the VCR, so that they recognize your favorite shows and record without setting the time.

Imagine fractal color TV images that dance whenever Joy to the World is played, learn the tune, and then elaborate a visual harmonic.

Imagine the secret and intricate delights of the Erotorobote that can model your personal preferences and arbitrary desires.

Imagine the joys of parallel, distributed, autonomous checkers who can make their own moves.

Imagine sending the Autonomous Land-and-Bathtub Vehicle on a soap hunt, having the Pilot's Associate-and-Buddy guide you through the complexities of navigating your home entertainment unit, and letting the Battle Management-and-Making-Up Expert System advise you on strategic and tactical plans to have your way and still get laid.

All doable. All fun. All within our expertise.

EDITORIAL

The challenging problems are in toys. The national contribution is in toys. The personal fulfillment is in toys. The tractable domains are in toys. The future of AI is toys!

Arty "if we're so smart, let's act that way" Fischell