
Editorial Introduction

I have had the great honor of serving as editor in chief of *Evolutionary Computation* for the past 7 years and I would like to express here, in this last Editorial Introduction, many thanks, one regret, and a great hope.

Many people helped me during this experience and without their support, I could never have done this job.

Nathalie Gaudechoux was the first production manager, when I was with INRIA-Rocquencourt at the Fractales project, and she showed me how to handle very urgent matters with calmness and efficiency.

Lise Fontaine has been edition manager from the very beginning until 2007 when MIT Press decided to change their production workflow. I learned a lot about English usage with her, and so did many authors: I received some explicit compliments by some authors about the way Lise had copy-edited their papers. Indeed, the finesse with which she guessed the authors' thought without knowing anything about our research domain was really impressive.

Marie-Carol Lopes became production manager in 2004, when she joined us at TAO, at INRIA-Saclay. In no time, she took over more than I could have expected, including the recompilation in LaTeX that she had never heard of before.

Karie Kirkpatrick was my "daily" contact at MIT Press and it has always been a pleasure to deal with her. June McCaull was in charge of all financial aspects and I am indebted to her for her many kind reminders that indeed counteracted my poor efficiency in this domain.

Emmanuel Cayla kindly designed the cover images for all volumes since Volume 13, using the ArtieFract software developed with Evelyne Lutton in the Fractales team, and valorized through the *Studio Cetoine* start-up company.

A number of associate editors have helped to maintain the high quality of all papers published in *Evolutionary Computation* over the last 7 years. Thomas Bäck, Hans-Georg Beyer, Jürgen Branke, Carlos Coello Coello, Kalanmoy Deb, Thomas Jansen, Natalio Krasnogor, and Pier Luca Lanzi, David Montana, Ben Paechter, Riccardo Poli, Gunter Raidl, Colin Reeves, Peter Ross, David Schaffer, and Robert Smith have done all the hard job, I knew I only had to send them the papers, and that was it. But of course, we should not forget that the quality of published papers ultimately depends on the anonymous reviewers, too. Thank you all for your time and efforts.

Last but not least, it is my pleasure to thank Hans-Georg Beyer, who will from now on serve as editor in chief, after being elected by ECJ boards last July. The readers of *Evolutionary Computation* all know Hans-Georg's scientific achievements. You also all know that Hans-Georg was serving as an associate editor for our journal before 2003, and he has always been tremendously efficient in the way he devoted himself to his duties. So I know our journal will be in very good hands, and that Hans-Georg will continue the work started by Ken DeJong, the founding editor, pursued by Darrell Whitley with such a great success, and that I did my best to keep up with.

My regret is that I will step down from editorship before the journal officially joins the ACM Digital Library. Most of you will remember this never-ending story, which

started when the ISGEC (International Society on Genetic and Evolutionary Computation) became the ACM SIGEVO (Special Interest Group on Genetic and Evolutionary Computation). In fact, I was kept in the dark about the details of the agreement, and was convinced that the negotiations were going very well, though slowly, as I wrote it in several past Editorial Introductions. But we recently discovered that no agreement had been reached about the most crucial of all issues in such situation, the financial issue. And I want here to salute Darrell Whitley (former EiC, and presently serving as chair of SIGEVO), Bernard Rous, new electronic publishing program director at ACM, and, more particularly, Nick Lindsay, the recently nominated journal manager at MIT Press, who first re-opened the discussion in a transparent manner, and from this point on we were able to rapidly reach an agreement that I am now sure everybody is happy with.

My great hope builds on this last news.

Some of you might remember Darrell Whitley's last Editorial Introduction, when he stepped down from editorship in 2002, rightly proud of the impact factor and ranking of *Evolutionary Computation* amongst other journals and conferences of *Computer Science* field. Well, in 2008, *Evolutionary Computation* was ranked 13th out of 94 *Computer Science*, *Artificial Intelligence* journals tracked by Thomson (ISI Web of Science), and also 5th out of 85 *Computer Science*, *Theory and Method* journals.

It should be kept in mind, though, that bibliometric measures are not reliable, and in any case they should not be the only way to judge a publication. For instance, we were very worried in the past 3 years when our impact factor went down from more than 3 to 1.5 – and very happy to see it back to 3 again this year. A probable explanation for those ups-and-downs may be related to the fact that we discovered that GECCO proceedings were not taken into account for a few years.

However, even though a citation index is just one indicator of the wealth of a journal, we have to face it: as fuzzy as it can be, the impact factor of a journal is very often the only visible part of the iceberg, and thus highly impacts on the image of a journal to the outside world.

So my great hope is that, with the continuing efforts of all contributing actors (starting with our new editor in chief), and thanks to our inclusion in ACM Digital Library that will undoubtedly contribute greatly to a better dissemination, we will eventually catch up with our colleague journal from IEEE, clearly demonstrating together to the whole scientific world the quality and vitality of our field.

But back to this issue: By a lucky coincidence, this issue also contains a Special Issue about another ending story—the 12 years of evolutionary computation in Dortmund. This has also been a testament to the high-quality output that our field can produce. So I am glad to now leave the floor to the guest editors of this special issue, Hans-Paul Schwefel and Uwe Schwiegelshohn, and to definitely leave the floor to Hans-Georg Beyer.

Marc Schoenauer
October 18, 2009