

Selmer Bringsjord

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12/31/18

Selmer Bringsjord specializes in the logico-mathematical and philosophical foundations of artificial intelligence (AI) and cognitive science (CogSci), in collaboratively building AI systems on the basis of computational logic, and in the logic-based modeling and simulation of rational, human-level-and-above cognition. Though he spends considerable engineering time in pursuit of ever-smarter computing machines, he claims that “armchair” reasoning time has enabled him to deduce that the human mind will forever be superior to such machines.

Bringsjord received the bachelor’s degree from the University of Pennsylvania, where he was heavily influenced by James Ross, and the PhD from Brown University, where he studied under Roderick Chisholm (as did Ross himself). Bringsjord is not unhappy about the apparent fact that he is through Chisholm an intellectual descendant of Leibniz, many of whose views to a high degree align with his own, and whose interest in a rather wide range of intellectual matters matches his own trans-disciplinary *modus operandi*. Bringsjord has discovered what Leibniz sought for throughout his life: the universal cognitive calculus for all rational reasoning.

Bringsjord has long been on faculty at America’s oldest technological university: Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) in Troy NY; where he currently holds appointments in the Department of Cognitive Science, the Department of Computer Science, and the Lally School of Management, and where as a Full Professor he teaches AI, formal logic, formal human and machine reasoning and decision-making (and applications thereof, e.g. in nuclear strategy and micro-economics), and philosophy of AI and CogSci. In a break from things technical, he also teaches the intellectual history of New York City and the Hudson Valley, whose Occidental basis grounds out in Grotius. Funding for Bringsjord’s r&d has come from the Luce Foundation, the National Science Foundation, the Templeton Foundation, AT&T, IBM, Apple, AFRL, ARDA/DTO/IARPA, ONR, DARPA, AFOSR, and other sponsors. Bringsjord has consulted to and advised many companies in the general realm of intelligent systems, and continues to do so.

Bringsjord is author of *What Robots Can & Can’t Be* (1992, Kluwer), concerned with the future of attempts to create robots that behave as humans, and also *Superminds: People Harness Hypercomputation, and More* (2003, Kluwer). Before the second of these books he wrote, with Bridgewater’s David Ferrucci, *Artificial Intelligence and Literary Creativity: Inside the Mind of Brutus, A Storytelling Machine*, published by Erlbaum. He is the author of *Abortion: A Dialogue*, published by Hackett. Bringsjord’s first novel, *Soft Wars*, was published by Penguin USA. A forthcoming book, from Oxford University Press, is *Gödel’s Great Theorems*, the current manuscript of which is in use in his pedagogy at RPI. Dr. Bringsjord is the author of papers and essays ranging in approach from the mathematical to the informal, and covering such areas as AI, logic, gaming, philosophy of mind, philosophy of religion, robotics, and human/machine/robot ethics — and he has of late begun to move into the area of computational economics, for which he has invented a new paradigm, one based (unsurprisingly) on formal logic: **logicist agent-based economics**. A paper that sets out this paradigm is available here. An early paper in this paradigm, devoted to the modeling and simulation of bi-pay auctions, is available here.

Most of Bringsjord’s publications are unpublished; for example, he has written the play *Calculi of Death*. (Many of his writings, including some unpublished ones, are available directly through hotlinks in his vitae, available at <http://www.rpi.edu/~brings>.)

Bringsjord enjoys travel, and has lectured and interviewed in person across just about all of the 50 United States, and in many other countries, but alas not yet all. Bringsjord has interviewed and lectured on television, radio, and the internet in many additional countries.

Though following e.g. Leibniz, Descartes, and Paul in rejecting physicalism, Bringsjord is happy to admit that as an avid athlete not particularly thrilled with losing, he takes the life of the body rather seriously. He has skied since Christmas Day at the age of four, and has been a ski patroller for many years at Jiminy Peak in the Taconic Mountains near his home; he continues to play decent tennis as long as his son is there to help in doubles; and every now and then he still plays a form of golf which, though filled with fun, doesn’t exactly produce scores in line with even such lukewarm descriptors as “solid.”