

Introduction

Emily M. Weitzenboeck¹ · Tobias Mahler² ·
Andrew J. I. Jones³

Published online: 15 September 2015
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This special issue of Artificial Intelligence and Law is dedicated to the memory of *Jon Bing*, who passed away on January 15th, 2014, at the age of 69. He was professor of legal informatics and co-founder of the Norwegian Research Center for Computers and Law (NRCCL) at the Faculty of Law of the University of Oslo. For those of us who had the good fortune of working with him, he was a very special person who keeps inspiring us to continue his heritage. A website has been set up, accessible at <http://jonbing.net/> that includes, in particular, an extensive bibliography of *Jon's* publications, comprising *Jon's* academic papers, his writings on legal and technological issues intended for a non-specialist audience, and his many works of fiction.

Jon had a wide network of international contacts, and he has contributed to the shaping of a truly international research centre at the University of Oslo. Not least thanks to his welcoming and cosmopolitan attitude, the NRCCL today has faculty members and students from all over the world. It was characteristic of *Jon's* commitment to an interdisciplinary approach, and further evidence of the breadth of his knowledge and understanding of the field, that the many researchers who visited NRCCL included most of today's key figures in the field of Artificial Intelligence and Law. Together with some of his NRCCL colleagues, *Jon* participated in several of the International Conferences on AI & Law, and co-chaired the organization of ICAIL 1999 at the University of Oslo.

Jon Bing will be remembered particularly for his open-minded, kind and generous personality. Once a month he invited students, alumni and colleagues to his home. The NRCCL's students particularly appreciated these "Monday Club" evenings, fondly

✉ Emily M. Weitzenboeck
emw@wr.no

¹ Wikborg, Rein & Co. Advokatfirma DA, Oslo, Norway

² University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway

³ Emeritus Professor, King's College London, London, UK

called “clubBing” by regular attendees, as an opportunity to benefit from his wide network of contacts. At these events and at all other times *Jon* was always extremely generous with his time, both with respect to students and colleagues. Although he was clearly the focus of attention for many, he was very unpretentious, humble and never sought the limelight. Instead of putting his own person at the centre, *Jon* used his professional status to offer outstanding opportunities to younger colleagues.

The articles in this special issue mirror some of the perspectives that we believe would have interested *Jon* in the field of AI & Law.

Emily Weitzenboeck's paper “Looking Back to See Ahead: The Changing Face of Users in European E-Commerce Law” examines the role of current consumer protection legislation in e-commerce transactions by tracing its historical development in the US and Europe, with a view to understanding challenges raised by the figure of the hybrid consumer and the “prosumer”. Employing one of *Jon Bing's* favourite techniques in both his science fiction and academic writings—the time factor—this paper hops to and fro, backwards and forwards in time and back again, often digging deep into the past to then fast forward again to today, to try and understand the position of the “user” in a sales transaction and to examine how and why views on the user’s risks and responsibilities have changed in the eyes of the law, depending on what type of transaction it is for the user.

The paper “The 4th law of robotics” by *Burkhard Schafer* considers some of the copyright issues that may be expected to arise in a world—anticipated by writers of science fiction, *Jon Bing* among them—in which humans regularly interact with the non-human intelligence they have created. In particular, Schafer poses the question of how we are to regulate copyright when robots are consumers and producers of works of art, and in his outline of possible answers he draws on ideas found in varying degrees in *Jon's* own academic and creative writing.

The paper “The Open Agent Society: Retrospective and Prospective Views” by *Jeremy Pitt* and *Alexander Artikis* provides an account of a line of research dealing with the modelling of institutions and agent societies. This paper reflects on the interaction between computer scientists and lawyers that was a central theme in *Jon Bing's* professional life. Moreover, *Jon* also had a strong interest in the law of electronic agents, and actively participated in the research project ALFEBIITE featured in this article. In fact, one of the project results was a book on “The Law of Electronic Agents”, co-edited by *Jon Bing*.

“Modelling Compliance Risk: A Structured Approach” by *Samson Esayas* and *Tobias Mahler* presents a novel method for identifying and assessing compliance risks. Compliance management is increasingly important and challenging in a global legal environment, and compliance risks are not easily managed. The proposed approach merges compliance management and risk management into a single process, supported by a graphical modelling language. *Jon* was always interested in new approaches for analysing legal issues, and he co-authored a paper on a similar graphical modelling technique to support legal risk assessment.

The paper “On Transparent Law, Good Legislation and Accessibility to Legal Information: Towards an Integrated Legal Information System” by *Doris Liebwald* is on an issue that was close to *Jon's* heart—the implications of vagueness in the law—and directs its focus to the position of those who are subjects to the law. *Liebwald's*

paper looks at the link between law and politics and seeks a common set of basic legislative drafting standards. It examines the issue of legal knowledge engineering and access to law, and suggests a “transparency by design” approach.