

Preface

This book is a tribute to the many contributions that Kenneth C. Sevcik made both as a scholar, and a mentor to numerous young researchers, that was planned on the occasion of his 60th birthday. The project for the book was launched at the end of 2004. Unfortunately it only appears in print after his untimely death due to delays in bringing together the various contributions and in producing the volume.

Ken, who was a very good friend and highly distinguished and respected colleague, passed away on October 4, 2005. We dedicate this book to Ken's memory and to his wife Carmen who encouraged and very warmly supported him for many years.

Prof. Sevcik received his B.S. in 1966 from Stanford University and his Ph.D. in 1971 from the University of Chicago. He joined the Computer Science Department at the University of Toronto as an Assistant Professor in 1971, rose to the rank of Professor, and was Chair of the Department from 1990 to 1992. He served as Director of the Computer Systems Research Institute (CSRI) and on the Governing Council of the University of Toronto. Ken was a founder of the field of computer system performance. During a career that spanned some thirty-five years, he made major scientific and technical contributions to computer system performance evaluation and greatly influenced its practice. Several papers in this volume underline some of these contributions and recall his role as an advisor and mentor to numerous post-graduate and Ph.D. students. His seminal work not only covers queueing network models, but also includes important contributions to database systems through his work on grid files and on database system performance. He was one of the first members of the ACM SIGMETRICS Board of Directors and of IFIP Working Group 7.3. He was honoured with the SIGMETRICS Achievement Award in 2004. He graduated more than 50 M.Sc. and 20 Ph.D. students who, individually and collectively, have in turn made a major impact on the field of Computer Science and on the academic world in general.

The first paper in this volume is written by four of his very prominent students and it describes with accuracy, affection and respect, how Ken worked with his graduate students and what he contributed to them. It is followed by three papers which outline some of Ken's salient contributions and puts them into the broader perspective of its impact on the work of others. The remaining ten papers provide novel technical contributions based on the recent research of the authors in the field of stochastic models, computer and network performance evaluation and system modeling.

By balancing brief personal reminiscences with an overview of some of Ken's important contributions, and with ongoing or recent research work, we pay homage to Ken as an individual who was warm and caring, rigorous, and was also an inquisitive, creative and productive scholar.

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