John McCarthy is one of the "founding fathers" of artificial intelligence, along with Alan Turing, Marvin Minsky, Allen Newell, and Herbert Simon. McCarthy coined the term "artificial intelligence" in 1955, and organized the famous Dartmouth conference in the summer of 1956.McCarthy helped spur the creation of the MAC Project at MIT when he worked there, and at Stanford University, he helped establish the Stanford Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, which for many years has been a friendly competitor of the MAC Project.(Minsky later joined McCarthy at MIT in 1959.) McCarthy invented the Lisp programming language in the late 1950s, based on lambda integrals, and Lisp quickly became the programming language of choice for artificial intelligence applications after its publication in 1960.

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