

**Information Systems Foundations:
Constructing and Criticising**

Information Systems Foundations: Constructing and Criticising

Dennis N. Hart and Shirley D. Gregor (Editors)



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Information systems foundations

This volume contains the papers presented at the Information Systems Foundations: Constructing and Criticising Workshop at The Australian National University from 16 to 17 July 2004.

The focus of the workshop was on the theoretical foundations of information systems and the practical implications of candidate bodies of theory both from within the discipline and in related areas. In particular, the central aims were to critically assess the current theoretical foundations of the discipline, to determine where these foundations might be lacking, to build on, extend or improve them where possible, and to draw out their implications for practice.

The workshop was the second in a biennial series focusing on the theoretical foundations of the discipline of information systems held at The Australian National University. We believe the first workshop in 2002 achieved its aim of presenting papers that were both thought provoking and stimulating and the second workshop sustained this tradition. Requests for the Proceedings of the 2002 Workshop continue, an indication that the work of our participants is valued. Both workshops have allowed discussion among delegates and social interaction in pleasant surroundings and a distinctive feature of the workshops has been the general spirit of enthusiasm and camaraderie that has pervaded both occasions.

It is probably fair to say that since our first workshop there has been an increasing emphasis in the information systems discipline on the nature and bounds of knowledge of the discipline and the nature of the artefacts with which it deals, in addition to the epistemological issues that have been a primary focus of attention for some time. Our workshop aims are congruent with this trend and through the focus on questions of fundamental theoretical importance, our authors should stimulate further debate to the benefit of theory and practice.

The papers contained here were accepted after a double-blind review process and we thank our program committee and reviewers for their assistance.

We also acknowledge and thank the sponsors of the workshop: the School of Business and Information Management and the National Institute for Economics and Business at The Australian National University. Thanks are also due to Dora Gava for assistance with the workshop organisation and to Sigi Goode who acted as webmaster.

David Kennedy of the Department of Communication, Information Technology and the Arts provided a thought-provoking keynote speech addressing the contributions of information technologies and systems nationally, which provided a good grounding for subsequent discussions.

We dedicate this volume to Kit Dampney, who died in March, 2004. Kit was the organiser of a previous Information Systems Foundation workshop at Macquarie University in 1999, which sowed the seeds for our current workshop series. Kit was genuinely esteemed in our community and his vitality and passion for his work and for communicating his ideas will be well remembered. His own work in mathematical category theory and information structures was significant. Janet Aisbett has written a moving tribute to Kit, which is available from the web site of the *Dampney Centre for IT Applications*, named in Kit's honour¹.

¹ http://dcita.newcastle.edu.au/dcita_news3.htm

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To conclude, we honour Kit Dampney's memory and inspiration and thank our delegates and authors for their participation.

We look forward to another successful workshop in 2006.

Dennis Hart
Shirley Gregor