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Panel 3 A Report from 8.2 to ICIS: Three Points of View on Information Systems and Qualitative Research from the June 1997 Conference of IFIP Working Group 8.2

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PANEL 3

A REPORT FROM 8.2 TO ICIS: THREE POINTS OF VIEW ON INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FROM THE JUNE 1997 CONFERENCE OF IFIP WORKING GROUP 8.2

Chair: **Ken Kendall,** Rutgers University

Panelists: **Eileen Trauth**, Northeastern University
            Michelle Brown, Richmond University
            Marie-claude Boudreau, Georgia State University

"Information Systems and Qualitative Research" was the theme of the recent Philadelphia meeting of IFIP WG 8.2. Three scholars will report, from their personal and respective viewpoints, what they observed and learned when they attended the Philadelphia meeting.

The International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP), created in 1960 under the auspices of UNESCO, currently consists of thirteen technical committees (TCs), each of which consists of numerous Working Groups (WGs). "TC 8" focuses on information systems and "WG 8.2," which began in 1977 and is often simply called "8.2," consists of researchers interested in the interaction of information systems and organizations. IFIP TC 8 (in the company of other groups such as the Society for Information Management, the Institute of Management Science's College on Information Systems, and the Association for Computing Machinery's Special Interest Group in Business Information Technology) has been associated with ICIS ever since the latter was founded.

In its history, 8.2 has been a major force in shaping the information systems discipline. Its Manchester meeting in 1985 and its Copenhagen meeting in 1990—both of which were also devoted to qualitative research methodology in the study of information systems and organizations— resulted in influential books that have advanced both the acceptance and the state of the art of qualitative IS research. The 1997 meeting of 8.2 in Philadelphia took place as the third in this series of meetings devoted to qualitative research methodology, also resulting in the publication of a book.

In the context of this tradition, the three panelists (Eileen Trauth, Michelle Brown, and Marie-claude Boudreau) will share their personal viewpoints and interpretations about the significance that the Philadelphia meeting of 8.2 had for them. Rather than provide a summary of the proceedings, the panel will share some issues and challenges which the conference evoked in them. The panelists will share what they brought away from this conference in their roles as a senior-level professor, an assistant professor, and a doctoral student, respectively. In addition to personal lessons, the discussion will touch on aspects such as the state of the art and craft of qualitative research in IS, implications for IS researchers at all stages in their development, and ramifications for the development of the IS discipline.

Each panelist will speak for about twenty minutes, with the remainder of the time devoted to questions from the audience.