

Second International Conference on Conceptual Structures

Judith P. Dick

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The Second International Conference on Conceptual Structures (ICCS'94) was held at the University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, on August 16 to 20. The conference marked the tenth anniversary of conceptual graphs. About 80 scientists from 12 countries attended. Daniel Fallon, the University of Maryland's provost and vice-president of academic affairs, welcomed the group, stressing the importance of scientific investigation and commending members for their support of younger scholars.

Invited speaker Eileen Way from State University of New York (SUNY) at Binghamton presented an opening address entitled "Conceptual Graphs: Past, Present, and Future"; this address was a review of the 10 years of conceptual graph work. Pat Hayes of the Beckman Institute in Urbana, Illinois, was the second invited speaker; he presented a popular introduction, "Aristotelian and Platonic Views of Knowledge Representation." The third invitee, Jack Minker from the University of Maryland, surveyed logic-programming developments over the last 15 years in "Deductive Databases—A Retrospective."

The closing address by John Sowa (SUNY Binghamton), who derived conceptual graphs from the work of logician C. S. Peirce, focused on

knowledge representation in the coming decade and on already emerging trends. In "Representations of Representations," he discussed the contribution of conceptual graphs to the work of the American National Standards Institute X3T2 Group in preparing a report on the isolation of a common logic foundation and conceptual schema-modeling facilities.

Papers were presented by a number of individuals and groups from several countries on the development and use of the conceptual graph representational language. The rapid development of the software base was demonstrated in the "Third PEIRCE Workshop: A Conceptual Graph Workbench," chaired by Gerard Ellis of the University of Queens-

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land, Australia. A workshop entitled "Knowledge Acquisition Using Conceptual Graph Theory" (University of New England, Australia) was well attended and promises to be a perennial favorite.

Prizes were awarded to students to encourage improved research. Michel Wermelinger, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal, was the winner of the best paper award for his work "Basic Conceptual Structure Theory," which provided a significant extension of the Sowa logic.

Bikash Ghosh, Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, Thailand, won the award for the best research proposal, which detailed the development of a conceptual graph programming language. Travel aid was extended to a number of other students, with preference given to those at a distance whose work demonstrated a serious and continuing interest in the use of conceptual graphs. The funds were made available through a grant from the American Association for Artificial Intelligence (AAAI).

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Judith Dick is currently with Paradigm Development Corp. in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Toronto in 1991 and has taught at the University of Maryland at College Park. Her primary interest is the development of conceptual information retrieval for case law.