

MURPA Seminar Friday 16 September 2011 at 9am: Digital Sustainability: Information as a Persistent Resource in the Digital World

Speaker: Dr. Francine Berman, Vice President for Research and Professor of Computer Science, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Venue: Seminar Room 135, Building 26, Monash University Clayton

Abstract: The ubiquitous availability of digital information has transformed the world as we know it, creating a paradigm shift from information-poor to information-rich that impacts nearly every area of modern life. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the research community. Today, data from scientific instruments, sensors, on-line surveys, audio and video, social network communications and many other sources have accelerated our ability to discover, innovate, and understand the world around us. Providing adequate stewardship of this digital information, and ensuring that needed data is accessible now and for the foreseeable future, are among the most critical challenges of our time. In this talk, RPI Vice President for Research and computer scientist Fran Berman discusses the challenges and opportunities for stewardship of the digital data that drives research, and more generally life, in the Information Age.

Bio:

Dr. Francine Berman is Vice President for Research and Professor of Computer Science at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. She is a Fellow of the Association of Computing Machinery (ACM) and a Fellow of the IEEE. She is currently serving as Chair-Elect of the Information, Computing and Communication Section of the AAAS. In 2009, Dr. Berman was the inaugural recipient of the ACM/IEEE-CS Ken Kennedy Award for “influential leadership in the design, development, and deployment of national-scale cyberinfrastructure.”

Prior to joining Rensselaer, Dr. Berman was Professor in the UC San Diego Department of Computer Science and Engineering, and first holder of the High Performance Computing Endowed Chair in the Jacobs School of Engineering. From 2001 to 2009, Dr. Berman served as Director of the San Diego Supercomputer Center (SDSC) where she led a staff of 250+ interdisciplinary scientists, engineers, and technologists.

Dr. Berman has served on a broad spectrum of national and international leadership groups and committees including the National Science Foundation's Engineering Advisory Committee, the National Institutes of Health's NIGMS Advisory Committee, the Anita Borg Institute for Women and Technology Board of Trustees, the National Academy of Sciences Board on Research Data and Information, the U.S. President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) Networking and Information Technology Research and Development (NITRD) Review Working Group, and others.

From 2007-2010, she served as co-Chair of the US-UK Blue Ribbon Task Force for Sustainable Digital Preservation and Access, and currently serves as Chair-Elect of the AAAS Information, Computing, and Communication Section. For her accomplishments, leadership, and vision, Dr. Berman was recognized by the Library of Congress as a “Digital

Preservation Pioneer”, as one of the top women in technology by BusinessWeek and Newsweek, and as one of the top technologists by IEEE Spectrum.