Claudio Ciborra: 1951–2005

LSE Professors of Information Systems:
Professor Ian Angell, Professor Chrisanthi
Avgerou, Emeritus Professor Frank Land,
Professor Bob Galliers (2000–2002),
Professor Leslie Willcocks (2006).

Claudio had inspired us with his innovative thinking about Information Technology and organizations long before he came to our Department. We watched him at conferences defending surprisingly new and refreshing ideas, confronting the established gurus from the business schools – always dressed in impeccable Italian style for such performances.

In 1998, he was invited to join the Department as a visiting professor, then in 2000 he was appointed to a full chair. When offering him the post, the selection committee asked if he was willing to take on the role of head of department. His answer, so typical of Claudio, was 'I want to be on the sun deck, not in the engine room'. He took on the convenor's role and from the beginning he steered firmly from that deck, though he never lost touch with the engine room.

Claudio was an intellectually demanding leader. He expected the IS department at the LSE not only to do well in terms of conventional academic performance, but also, and more importantly, to secure an international reputation for creative thinking and forthright delivery. He broke several conventions. His direct way of letting you know what he thought, and, in particular, what he did not like, was challenging and often angered even his closest friends.

Claudio loved being at the LSE, where he totally submerged himself in the School's intellectual and social life. He enjoyed living in London, and made many friends beyond the department and the School, making the

most of the capital's multiple facets: the avant-garde East End, the Royal Opera, the salsa nightclub at the basement of the LSE. He was also a true cosmopolitan, visiting friends and juggling professional engagements across Europe and North America, hopping from London to Oslo, to Berlin, to Milan, to Barcelona, to Boston with equal enthusiasm, to give a keynote speech, or organize a new research agenda, hear the Berlin Philharmonic, or to take part in swimming races.

Truly intellectual, daring and uncompromising, yet always playful in his work as well as his personal life. Claudio leaves a huge influence in the shaping of a growing research stream on the social study of information and communication technology.