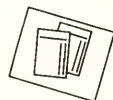




DATA SERVICE IN A LIBRARY SETTING



*Bliss Beckman Siman
Data Archivist/Assistant Professor
Library Instruction Services Division
Baruch College, CUNY*

Historical Background

Baruch College, originally the business school of the City College of New York (CCNY), is, since 1968, one of the eight senior colleges in the City University of New York (CUNY). Although particularly strong in the field of business, most academic fields are represented in its curriculum with the departments organized into three schools: Business, Liberal Arts and Education. The college awards business and liberal arts undergraduate degrees as well as the MBA, several other master's degrees and a Ph.D. in business. Increased interest in data resources on campus has paralleled a new emphasis on computerization. There had always been some use of secondary data on campus. Several important machine-readable data files were already available, scattered through several different departments, unorganized and with little documentation or information available outside the particular departments which possessed the files. Use was limited to those few who knew the files existed and who knew how to access them. Under the leadership of Professor Thomas V. Atkins, Deputy Chairman for Library Instruction Services, the library was able to effectively convince the college administration that data files should be conceived of as basically an information resource and, as such, the college library was the natural place for a data service.

In the Spring of 1981, a Data Archives Service (DAS) was established as part of the library's information services. The library administration

added not only a data library but created an educational program whose function was to inform and instruct the Baruch community about the use of secondary data as an information resource. Because of its instructional orientation DAS was made part of the Library Instruction Services Division and was intended to complement services already provided by groups on campus such as the Educational Computer Center, the Statistics Lab, etc. Membership in ICPSR and the Roper Center were begun immediately. Data from sources other than ICPSR or Roper was purchased on an extremely selective basis due to budget restrictions. A reference collection of manuals and data catalogs was set up for use with the growing tape collection, for the first time centralizing to some extent the documentation for both mainframe software and secondary data. The training programs were begun, on a limited basis, almost immediately.

Almost at once, Baruch College began to lobby for a University-wide ICPSR membership. There was some precedent for this since there had been a previous City University ICPSR membership which had lapsed due to administrative problems. Baruch's efforts joined those of a significant number of faculty and administrators at other CUNY colleges who had long been interested in seeing a return of the university-wide membership. Finally, in July of 1983, these combined efforts were successful and the senior colleges of the City University of New York became a federated member of ICPSR, one of the largest federations

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in the Consortium. To begin with the federation included only the four-year institutions. It is assumed that the two-year colleges will join at a later time if there is sufficient interest. To encourage the success of the federation, Baruch's administration, both college and library, willingly accepted the college's appointment as coordinator for the new membership.

Funding

As is often the case with academic institutions, there was little additional funding available. When the service began it operated on the proverbial "shoestring" with support from the library budget and using library personnel. Some additional financial assistance came from the Title III grant awarded to Dr. Atkins for the development of a Graduate Business Resource and Study Center. Sufficient money for computer use and tape storage were allocated from the general research funds of the Baruch College Educational Computer Center.

When Baruch became the coordinator of the City University ICPSR membership, the University Chancellor's Office paid the Federation's membership fee. Half-time services of Baruch's data archivist, additional student assistance, and some money for non-personnel expenses such as documentation, magnetic tapes, supplies, software and travel funds were funded by additional support from the Chancellor's Office and members of the ICPSR Federation. Since Baruch contributed its facilities and the services of its already established data library, it was not required to contribute further funds. University support is limited to expenditures associated with the ICPSR Federation while Baruch uses its own funds for purchase of non-ICPSR data, special equipment and its own data services.

Staffing

Baruch's data archivist is assigned part-time to the Baruch service and part-time to the CUNY Center which is

also staffed by a part-time graduate assistant and undergraduate student assistants. The archivist, a trained librarian, set up the data library, organized the tape collection, developed the documentation collection of appropriate codebooks and manuals, and established the research consultation service. Once organized, basic maintenance of the tape and reference collection have been assumed by the graduate assistant, who also provides assistance with the development of educational programs. As the service expands, it is expected that additional graduate assistance will be needed. Undergraduate students assist with clerical duties, as does the secretarial staff of the Library Instruction Division. The staffing is based on an assumption that computer and statistical consultation is available from Baruch College's Educational Computer Center or, in the case of other CUNY users, at their home campuses.

Equipment

The City University has a large central computer installation (CUNY/UCC) used by all the colleges as their main facility. The hardware at the UCC includes an IBM 3081, an IBM 3033, and an Amdahl 470/V6-II. In addition to the mainframes, there are high speed printers, graphics equipment and software installations of most of the major statistical packages. Almost all the senior colleges, including Baruch, have supplementary equipment including mainframes, minis and microcomputer labs. CDA stores copies of its tapes at the CUNY UCC on a permanent basis so that they are easily available to all campuses. For convenience Baruch facilities are often used for small printing jobs since the CUNY UCC is located some 50 blocks to the northwest.

The Center itself has had only a Decwriter 300 band printing terminal for maintenance of its tape collection and development of on-line demonstrations for seminars. Recently a Volcker Craig CRT and an IBM PC XT were received.

This equipment will be used for present activities of the Center in addition to development of instruction in and assistance with microcomputer data analysis, an area in which the CDA intends to specialize. For training seminars which include on-line demonstrations of secondary data resources, the Center has had access to the Baruch College Graduate Business Study and Resource Center seminar room which is equipped with several Decwriters for workshop participants and an Electro-home Projector which projects an enlarged image from a video terminal.

Physical Environment

If the Data Archives Service at Baruch, or for that matter, the CUNY Data Service had waited for proper housing, it would not exist today. Space is at a premium almost everywhere in the University, but nowhere more than at Baruch College. The data library was begun in one of the faculty offices of the Library Instruction Division which at that time housed three other faculty members in addition to the part-time data archivist. At this writing, a separate room serves as office space for the archivist, as a workroom for maintenance for the data collection, a storage room for the documentation collection, and as consultation space. There is some additional storage space for the master tape copies. Presently, plans are being made to acquire additional space which will serve as a workroom for the students in maintaining the tape collection and the data archives files. The original office will then be freed for use as office space and for data consultations. On the desiderata list is a terminal room for users which will encourage data use in the data library and allow for on-line data consultations.

Dissemination of Information

When the Baruch Data Archives Search Service became the coordinator for the CUNY ICPSR membership it expanded upon its own primary emphasis, the education

of faculty and graduate students, to bringing about a general awareness of the potential of secondary data analysis and ICPSR files in particular. A monthly annotated list of ICPSR data available to all CUNY faculty is mailed to the campus liasons, the libraries and specific data users. At Baruch, the CUNY list is supplemented with a listing of datasets available to only Baruch faculty and students. A Baruch data directory is in preparation which will list and index by subject all data available on campus including non-bibliographic databases accessed through Computer Search Services. These general listings are supplemented by data bibliographies on specific topics which are prepared for seminars and then mailed on request. The semi-annual newsletter published by the Baruch Graduate Business Study and Resource Center and mailed to all departments has carried a section on the Baruch Data Archives since its inception. But timely information and publicity for the entire CUNY community remains a difficult problem because staff is limited and the community to be served is large, disparate and separated by sizeable distances.

For Baruch and CUNY the most important methods of reaching out to both new and sophisticated data users has been the training program and the seminar series. Each seminar focuses on the information resources for the study and teaching of a particular inter-disciplinary topic. Each seminar includes some mention of bibliographic databases available on the topic as well as a brief overview of information sources in print. The greatest portion of the two hours, however, is devoted to machine-readable data files, particularly those from ICPSR. Where appropriate, government data files or other data archives which specialize in the topic are mentioned. An on-line, interactive demonstration of the contents of an important dataset in the field concludes each seminar. Topics covered have been Urban Problems, Women, Youth, and Consumer Behavior. Plans for the future include seminars in this

format on the national elections, health care, education, marketing, etc. The seminars held at Baruch have been supplemented by visits to the individual college campuses with a "What is ICPSR" format also including on-line demonstrations.

Future Developments

At this point it is expected that the CUNY ICPSR Federation will continue as an integral part of the university's information resources and Baruch will maintain its own data service as well. Plans for the future for both services are inextricably linked. First on the agenda is the solution to the problem of reaching the huge CUNY community. In some part this will be done by renewed emphasis on successful programs, but additional services will be offered as finances and personnel permit.

We intend to continue and increase training in the availability of data resources and how they are used for research and teaching. These seminars, we believe, assist in motivating faculty to enlarge their uses of data and secondary analysis both in research and in instruction. Both the interdisciplinary seminars held at Baruch and the ones held at the individual colleges will be increased. In addition, "hands-on" workshops actually using data will be held in the specially equipped Baruch on-line classrooms. Not only our training will increase, but also our services. We intend to facilitate faculty and student use of microcomputers for data analysis by purchasing or preparing subsets on diskette and supporting microcomputer statistical packages. Special workshops are planned, for example, on the use of ABC, ICPSR's instructional statistical package. As a part of this effort, special instructional packages will be developed similar to teaching packages prepared by the Library Instruction Division for bibliographic instruction. These are intended for use in our course-related lectures series.

Our informational services will expand this year with a new data directory containing tape access information, a subject index and enlarged annotations. For Baruch this will tie together all campus files, while the CUNY edition will list ICPSR data available. This directory is a preliminary step in our long-term goal of having an on-line dataset catalog. Publication of our newsletter on a regular basis and special publications on major datasets are also in our plans for future development.



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statistical packages used for analysis. Another useful manual would be an internal document describing the operational procedures of the archive for use in training new staff.

Program Development

Archives can play a role in the development of new programs, particularly in the collection and creation of specialized data and by encouraging the creation of new computing power.

The author wishes to thank David Nasatir, whose article "Operational Considerations of Archives" in Howard White's Reader in Machine-Readable Social Data served as the basis for both the workshop presentation and this article.

