

## Guest Editor's Notes

### **The Evolution of a Special Issue of the IQ in Honor of Sue A. Dodd: How remembering a pioneer data librarian became a tribute to the contributions of IASSIST over the decades**

In the months before the 2012 annual IASSIST meeting, Libbie Stephenson contacted me to toss around ideas for some type of memorial we might plan for the coming meeting to honor our friend and colleague, Sue A. Dodd. Sue had passed away in October 2010<sup>1</sup>. Libbie spoke of the important role Sue had played as a mentor in her data librarian career. She talked about how with the passage of time, newer members of our professional community might not know about the early days of IASSIST nor of the important contributions made then by Sue and others. I agreed and we decided to meet during the conference to discuss all of this further, allowing time for our ideas to percolate. When we met, quite informally, our discussion included others from Sue's cohort: Tom Brown, Carolyn Geda, and Judith Rowe among them.

We agreed on the value of gathering original essays that would consider Dodd's contributions as a conceptual starting point, especially regarding data description broadly conceived. We decided that in moving beyond this, the essays should address the history and development of related topics of special interest, reflecting the expertise of the authors. Subsequently we discussed our ideas with the IQ editor, Karsten Boye Rasmussen, who was fully supportive. I volunteered to guest edit the collection and Libbie stated her interest in preparing a bibliographic essay on Sue's publications. In subsequent months we contacted colleagues whom we thought might be interested in participating in the project and were pleased at the responses. As can be seen by a quick scan of the Table of Contents, they were so positive that our initial goal for "an IQ issue" grew to constitute the whole of IQ Volume 37 (2013)<sup>2</sup>.

Among the numerous themes that run through these essays, the collegiality within IASSIST is ever present. Perhaps the most interesting trait the essays have in common is the unique way each alludes to Dodd's contributions. In explaining our concept of the project to potential authors, we did not expect that they would explicitly tie their work to hers, yet each essay does so in one way or another. Among the authors who knew Sue, some of the commentary reflects the personal as well as the professional. Two of the authors, Ann Gray and Jonathan Crabtree, share experiences of working at the Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina, Sue's professional home for more than 30 years. Peter Burnhill charms with memories of his first encounters with Sue while giving us a glimpse of the early days of the Edinburgh University Data Library and then

EDINA, and his almost 30 years-later encounter with her writing as he embarked on new ventures related to digital preservation of what he terms "scholarly statement."

Several authors note both implicitly and explicitly the manner in which ideas in the 1960s – 1980s were both prescient in terms of challenges still vexing the social science data community and foundational in terms of setting the course that has influenced the collaborative efforts of the international data community ever since. One of the more exciting results of the project is that it offered a venue for an exclusive: a thorough telling of the history of the Data Documentation Initiative (DDI). The comprehensive story of the DDI emerges for the first time in the essays contributed by Karsten Boye Rasmussen, Ann Green and Chuck Humphrey, and Mary Vardigan, and through the detailed and richly documented timeline of the DDI prepared by Mary Vardigan. Taking us from the early study description work at some of the European data archives and the contemporaneous documentation standards efforts in North America, their essays give us an overarching perspective on the context, motivation and requirements behind the design and development of metadata standards, the DDI, and the infrastructural and technological changes that contributed to the contemporary maturation of the DDI.

In addition to a glimpse of the legacy of Dodd at the University of North Carolina, Jon Crabtree's essay explores some of the more contemporary collaborative ventures of the wider data community, especially the Data-PASS (Data Preservation Alliance for the Social Sciences) project. In the following essay Micah Altman and Mercè Crosas take us fully into the present and look to the future, discussing a range of work related to data citation in the context of contemporary frameworks for data management and research. Hailey Mooney brings the essays full circle with her discussion of IASSIST's Special Interest Group on Data Citation and its development of the Quick Guide to Data Citation. Sue Dodd would be very pleased to see this guide, we think, as it seems to be exactly the kind of product that she expected of future generations of data professionals, as expressed in the quote by which Libbie Stephenson closes the introduction of her comprehensive bibliographic essay.

Editing this volume of the IQ was a stimulating and enjoyable experience; working with each of the authors introduced me to new facets of our shared experiences and interests in unexpected ways. My thanks to each of the authors for their enthusiasm, commitment, and

patience. Individually and as a group they personify what IASSIST has stood for all these years: collegial collaboration of social science data professionals across the world. That's what made this endeavor so interesting: I discovered that in honoring the memory of one of our early members, we actually pay tribute to the many contributions of all of IASSIST. And as a bonus, the essays make for a good documentary read. Thank you, all.

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### Notes

1. Sue Anna Dodd, b. 6/18/1937 in Lexington, KY; d. 10/6/2010 in Pittsboro, NC.

2. There is an additional area of Sue Dodd's professional contributions that is not covered in these essays because the work involved was outside their topical scope of consideration. However, in keeping with one of the goals for this project -- to inform readers of Sue Dodd's contributions -- we add this note.

Building upon the work that her publications represent and her outreach to the professional library community, Dodd was among those who also contributed to the professional community of traditional archivists. She participated in training workshops for them, focusing especially on the description and documentation of archival machine-readable records. Most importantly and indicative of her civic commitment, she completed a multi-month consultancy during 1986-87, at the [U.S.] National Archives and Records Administration. She produced a substantial but unpublished report that covered her study of computer records and the Federal records management program, and case studies of the computer records in two Federal agencies: the Bureau of the Census and the Department of State. In the report she identified challenges, prioritized problems, and presented a set of recommendations, with cost estimates, to improve the management of computer records by the National Archives. (Dodd, S.A. "Computer Records and the National Archives: An Assessment With New Directions," 1986-1987)