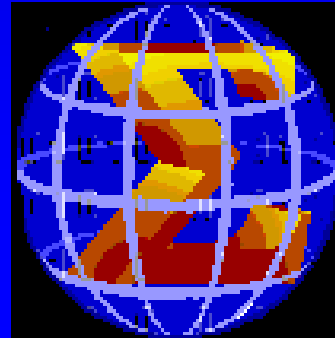


# *Data Liberation in 2004: How Did We Get Here?*

Ernie Boyko, Statistics Canada  
Wendy Watkins, Carleton University

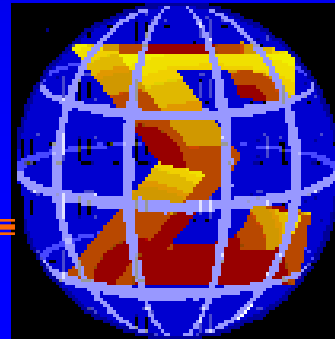


# *Overview*

---

---

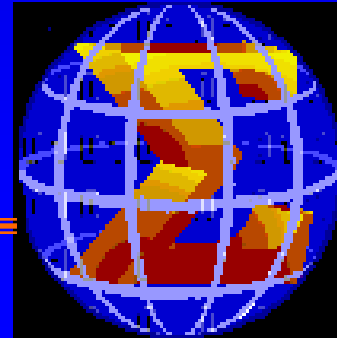
A sketch of the major events that shaped the data world in Canada from the early 80's until today.



# *Background: The Environment of the 1980's*

---

- ◆ Growing expenditure deficits
- ◆ Statistics Canada undergoing managerial transitions
- ◆ Paper publications
- ◆ Technology: mainframes, minis, tapes, datapac
- ◆ CANSIM and flat ASCII files on tape
- ◆ Public Use Microdata Files

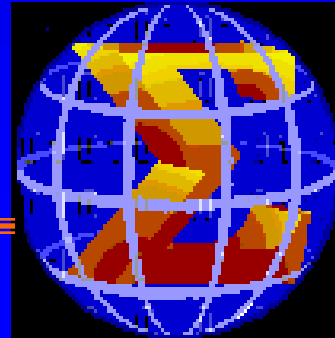


# *1984!!! Brave New World*

---

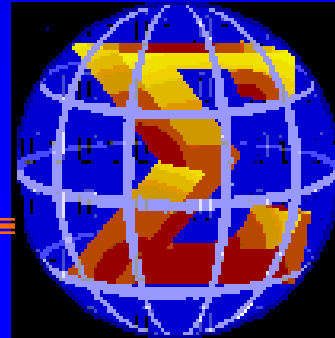
---

- ◆ New government in September 1984
- ◆ Major program review
- ◆ Budget and program cuts
- ◆ 1986 Census cut
- ◆ Census users informed
- ◆ Reinstatement of Census in return for \$100M



# *Fall Out From Expensive Data*

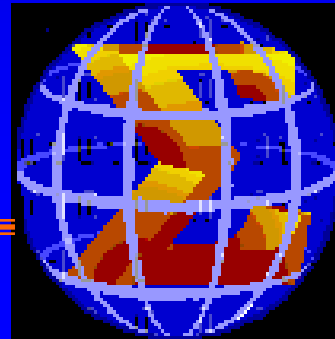
- ◆ One-sided research
  - ❖ well-funded think tanks could afford data
  - ❖ alternative views not heard
- ◆ Data use dropped
  - ❖ graduate students most affected
- ◆ Grant money spent on data, not research
- ◆ US data used in place of Canadian



# *Birth of CAPDU*

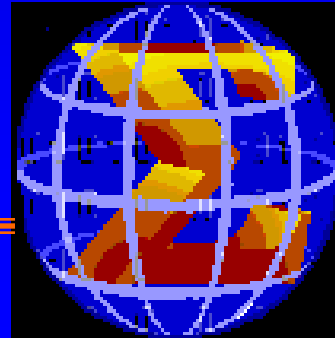
*(Canadian Association of Public Data Users)*

- ◆ Statistics Canada data out of reach
- ◆ CAPDU born in Washington, 1988
- ◆ Began as lobby group, but ...
  - ❖ no lobbying experience
  - ❖ only 8 members
- ◆ Required another approach



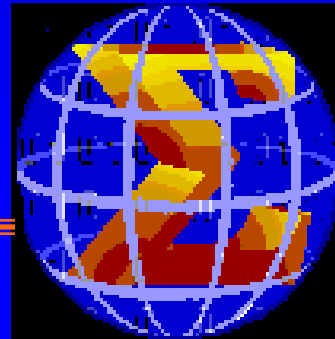
# *Advent of Consortia*

- ◆ Led by Laine Ruus, a CAPDU founder
- ◆ Sponsored by research libraries
  - ❖ acquired all 1986 public census data
  - ❖ undertook
    - documentation of all files
    - dissemination to university community
  - ❖ expanded to cover other Statistics Canada data
  - ❖ about 28 universities in group



# *Consortium as a 4-letter Word*

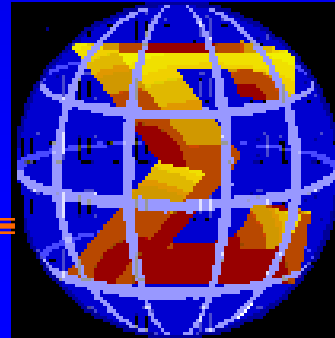
- ◆ Difficult to organize multiple consortia
- ◆ Many universities unable to deal with output
  - ❖ data shipped on tapes
  - ❖ tapes languished in computing centres
- ◆ Only most popular data available
- ◆ Need a long-term solution





# *In the Meantime ...*

- ◆ Ernie wanted university data-person at Statistics Canada
- ◆ Wendy was persuaded
  - ❖ two-year sabbatical at Statistics Canada
  - ❖ frustration over under-analyzed data
  - ❖ paper: “Liberating the Data”
    - argued for co-operative arrangement
    - based on cost, not price

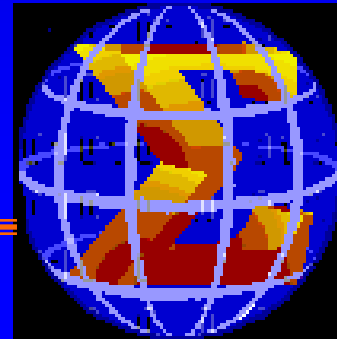


# *Data Liberation: Making it Fly*

## ◆ Working group led by SSFC

### ❖ members from:

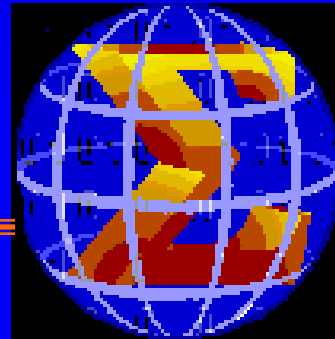
- research community
- Statistics Canada
- CAPDU
- research libraries
- Depository Services Programme



# *Data Liberation: Making it Fly*

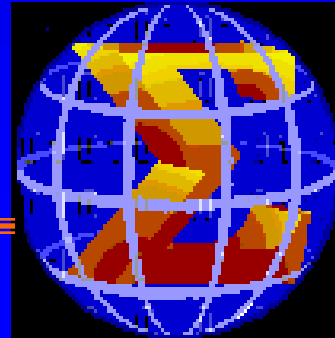
---

- ◆ **Activities:**
  - ❖ lobbying politicians
  - ❖ presentations to the bureaucracy
  - ❖ co-option of Treasury Board
- ◆ **After two years, a pilot project**



# *Data Liberation: Making it Work*

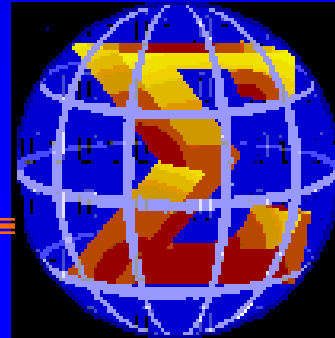
- ◆ DLI Team at Statistics Canada
- ◆ University libraries took the lead
- ◆ License with each university
- ◆ DLI Contact at each university
- ◆ Listservs, FTP and Web sites
- ◆ External Advisory Committee



# *From Past to Present*

---

- ◆ Beginnings of a Data Culture in Canada
  - ❖ 9 Data Centres grow to be 66
- ◆ National and Regional Training Plans
  - ❖ Annual Regional Training Sessions
  - ❖ National Training Session with IASSIST
  - ❖ Train the Trainers, 1996 and 2004
- ◆ Evolution from a Dissemination Project to a Data Service in the StatCan Library



# *Keys to Success: Reflections*

- ◆ Involvement of SFFC -- Political Support
- ◆ Logical Structure
  - ❖ Utilized existing CARL/CASUL definitions
- ◆ Using technology to reduce costs
- ◆ Libraries as Service Centres
- ◆ On-going Training Programme
- ◆ Support from Dedicated DLI Unit
- ◆ Partnership Model

