

## Computer Graphics

runs on IBM PC and compatible equipment and requires 265K (although more is useful if data are being imported) and two disk drives. A Wang PC version is also available. The program including one copy of the manual costs \$179.95. The manual may be ordered through a college bookstore.

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Steve Roski, *Data Structures on the IBM PC* (New York: Brady Communications Company, Inc., 1985). \$21.95.

Many political scientists who program in BASIC might not be attracted by a book entitled *Data Structures on the IBM PC*, but it could be one of the most valuable resources in a BASIC programmer's reference library and software tool kit. At first glance, this volume appears to be a clearly written treatment of such relatively advanced topics as string usage, arrays, chains, and pipelines. This material, while valuable, pales in importance compared to a 147-line program called PREBASIC included in the book.

PREBASIC translates the author's variant of BASIC, which he also calls PREBASIC, into a form that will run on a standard BASIC interpreter or can be compiled. PREBASIC offers several advantages over standard BASIC. First, it eliminates line numbers. Anyone who has worked with a large and complex BASIC program will appreciate the importance of this. Among other things, it allows the programmer to develop a disk library of subroutines (also devoid of line numbers) that can be used repeatedly in different programs. Each chapter of the book offers subroutines that can be made part of the reader's library. This possibility encourages the writing of more highly structured programs than is common in BASIC. PREBASIC also allows for better documentation than standard REM statements. These and other advantages are achieved with changes in standard BASIC that can be learned in only a few minutes. Also included is a program that translates standard BASIC programs into PREBASIC. □

## **The Newsroom: Software for Departmental Newsletters**

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Publisher: Springboard Software, Inc., 7808 Creekridge Circle, Minneapolis, MN 55435; phone (612) 944-3912. Price: \$49.95.

Machine Specificity: IBM PC, XT, AT, or compatible, 256K RAM, PC DOS 2.0 or higher, color graphics card, at least one disk drive, and a dot matrix printer. Also available in versions for the Commodore 64/128, Apple II+, IIe, IIc.

A common and rather tedious task in academia is the production of internal and external departmental newsletters. Microcomputers are beginning to provide assistance in what has been a rather mundane task through desktop publishing software. Springboard Software's *The Newsroom* attempts to meet the needs of newsletter production. The package allows creation of banners, pictures, cartoons, and even text. Over 600 pieces of clip art and five fonts may be selected from disk. *The Newsroom* also provides a good layout routine and is compatible with almost any dot matrix printer.

*The Newsroom* is menu driven and divided quite logically by task. The colorful main menu offers routines for selecting clip art from disk, designing pictures, banner design, copy production, layout, and printing. The package even contains a "wire service" routine allowing telecommunication of copy or pictures. The program will accept a mouse or joystick for selecting menu options or drawing, though neither are required.

Selection of clip art in *The Newsroom* is very simple though the manual must be used to select art. The package stores art in clusters on a data disk and the manual must be used to determine the file name

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for accessing specific art. The cursor keys are used to select and position art on banners or panels if a mouse or joystick is unavailable.

A variety of pens and geometrical shapes are available for drawing. Several fill-in patterns such as bricks are included. All of these are easily selected by icon in designing a picture or banner. Erasing is also possible allowing correction of mistakes or adaptations of clip art. Free style drawing is difficult without a mouse or joystick (as one would expect) but otherwise the drawing capabilities are excellent.

Text production offers a simple word processing capability that includes word wrap. Five fonts are offered but four of them are basically adaptations of Serif. All of the fonts are legible though there is considerable room for improvement in quality. The program will not communicate with word processing packages or work with letter-quality printers to prepare more professional text copy. Additionally, text cannot be right-justified. Layout encompasses selecting task and pictures to insert in one of four predetermined layout sheets supporting both legal and letter sized paper. Text and pictures are laid out in panels. *The*

*Newsroom* nicely wraps text around pictures. A disadvantage is the size of the panels. Only about 120 words can be written in a panel. Longer copy must be continued on another panel.

*The Newsroom* manual is very organized and informative. Sample banners and newsletters are included to incite the creative spirit. Good banner and layout design principles are explained. As for backup copies, the software is well copy protected though a backup copy is available through the mail for \$12. Springboard Software will replace defective program disks free for the first 30 days and for \$5 thereafter. A disadvantage for hard disk users to consider is that the program must be loaded from a floppy drive even if the software is resident on the hard disk.

Overall, *The Newsroom* is an excellent package for newsletter production, especially informal newsletters where letter-quality print is not required. *The Newsroom* can even help in the production of newsletters requiring letter-quality print by aiding banner and picture design. Considering the cost versus capabilities of this package, I highly recommend it for users involved with newsletter production. □

## Area Studies Organizations

\*Information on these area studies organizations is from the summer 1985 edition of *PS*.

Organizations	Officers	Publications	Meetings
*AFRICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION 255 Kinsey Hall 405 Hilgard Ave., UCLA, Los Angeles, California 90024 (213) 206-8011	Executive Secretary: Donald J. Cosentino President: Robert J. Cummings, Howard University Vice-President (President-Elect): Gerald J. Bender, University of Southern California Treasurer: Richard L. Sklar, UCLA	Issue: A Journal of Opinion (occasional) African Studies Review (quarterly) African Studies Association News (quarterly) History in Africa Studies Association	29th Annual Meeting: Oct. 29-Nov. 2, 1986 Capitol Concourse Hotel, Madison, WI
*ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN STUDIES, INC. 1 Lane Hall, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109	President: Frank H. Golay, Cornell University Vice President: Susanne Hoerber Rudolph, University of Chicago	Journal of Asian Studies (quarterly), Barbara D. Metcalf, University of California-Berkeley, Editor Bibliography of Asian Studies (annually)	Boston, MA April 10-12, 1987