

**Bulletin.** INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES MICROFILM COMMITTEE. Nos. 1-5 (Budapest, 1972-76); No. 6 (Madrid, 1977).

**Microphotography for Archives.** ALBERT H. LEISINGER, JR. Washington: International Council on Archives, 1968, 34 p. ill. bibl.

As a result of a number of unanimous recommendations made at the Extraordinary Congress of the International Council on Archives (ICA) held in Washington, D.C. in 1966, the Executive Committee of the ICA created a temporary Microfilming Committee. One of the Committee's most significant achievements during its two year existence was the publication of a basic manual on microfilming for archivists, entitled *Microphotography for Archives*. The manual, prepared by Albert H. Leisinger Jr., Secretary of the Committee, was not intended as a "guide for the technician" but merely as an introduction to microfilming. All facets of archival microfilming are dealt with, including the uses of microfilm, the various microforms, the disadvantages of microfilm, microfilm equipment, the operation of microfilm programmes, as well as storage and maintenance. This material is supplemented by eighteen pages of illustrations and an extensive bibliography. Although some of the technical information that it contains is now dated, the manual remains a "must" for any archivist who is involved in a microfilming programme. It has been printed in English, Spanish, Hungarian, French and German.

The establishment of a permanent Microfilm Committee was provided for in a number of resolutions which were passed by the Madrid Congress of the International Council on Archives in 1968. This Committee was constituted in April of 1969 but did not meet until the spring of 1970. Two of the Committee's basic aims are the making public of the results of archival microfilming and the publication of worthwhile techniques and experiences. As one means of achieving these objectives, the Committee has published a *Bulletin* annually since 1972.

To date, six *Bulletins* have been produced. *Bulletins* #1- #5 were published by the National Archives of Hungary in Budapest and were edited by Ivan Borsa. *Bulletin* #6 was published by the Centro Nacional de Microfilm in Madrid and was edited by Carmen Crespo. Each *Bulletin* is comprised of three major sections. The first section deals with the activities of the Committee per se, and includes reports, recommendations, lists of corresponding members and extracts from Committee minutes. The second section, on "Archival Microfilming", features short articles on microfilm programmes in various countries. The third section is probably the most valuable and consists of short articles on technical matters such as storage, film stability and equipment. A small section at the end of each issue is devoted to the publication of abstracts of particular articles in the main body of the *Bulletin*. The abstracts are printed in English, French, Spanish, Italian and German.

Most readers will find relatively little of value in the section which is devoted to Committee activities. Since the emphasis in this section is on the Committee's "house-keeping" matters, the material generally will be of interest only to those who sit on the Committee or are its corresponding members. One notable exception is the outline of the study of the legal problems in the use of microfilm which appears in *Bulletin* #4, published in 1975.

While the outline itself is of considerable interest, the final report of the study, entitled "Legal Questions of the Application of Microfilms", is infinitely more valuable. This report appears in the Archival Microfilming section of *Bulletin* #5, published in 1976 and is without question the most substantial paper which has appeared in any of the *Bulletins* to date. Although its scope is restricted to only one legal problem of microfilm, namely, its acceptability as evidence in a court of law, the survey provides a comprehensive summary of practices in several countries. The authors of the report express the hope that their

recommendations might serve as the basis not only for the acceptance of microfilm in those countries "where such regulation is not yet complete" but also for an international convention dealing with the legal validity of microfilm.

Unfortunately the customary section on "Archival Microfilming" usually does not contain articles of any substance. Most of the material in this section consists of brief, rather general reports of the microfilming activities of various national archives. In a typical piece, some information is given regarding the development of the particular agency's microfilming programme. Extensive statistics concerning the nature of the agency's microfilming holdings are also provided. While this information may be of considerable value to the members of the Microfilming Committee who are concerned with the development of microfilm practices throughout the world, the average reader will derive little benefit from this material.

In spite of the fact that the section entitled "Technique" contains some articles of general archival interest on subjects such as microfilm reader specifications, the bulk of the material is probably too "technical" for the majority of archivists. Obviously it is directed to the person who is intimately involved in the production and handling of archival microfilm. Of special remark are the reports on the various studies involving the permanence of microfilm.

Limitations notwithstanding, the *Bulletin* is a worthwhile effort in that it not only makes known the activities of the Committee, but it successfully realises the Committee's aims of publishing the results of archival microfilming and disseminating information on microfilming techniques and experiences. Archivists can only value it as a useful reference tool.

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**Studies in Micropublishing 1853-1976: Documentary Sources.** Edited by ALLEN B. VEANER. Westport, Conn.: Microform Review, 1976. xx, 489 p. ISBN 0913672 07 6 \$19.95.

Veaner's volume is of limited value to archivists. It is prepared for librarians, witness sections such as "The Role of Microforms in Collections Building, Education and Scholarship" or those dealing with the cataloguing of microforms. Archivists of course classify microforms by their creator as if they were original materials. A further drawback of this book is its form since it is a collection of source documents and not articles offering operational advice. Although some parts relate to archival activities, their value is attenuated by the fact that micropublication is emphasised rather than microfilming. There is no attempt to be comprehensive either in such areas as preservation. Even though there is a usefully referenced article by Werner Clapp, only two out of fifty articles deal with the permanence and durability of microfilm. Unfortunately too, some of the recent German and British sources on the longevity of diazo film are excluded.

The real weakness is that the book does not draw together the most up-to-date literature on subjects considered—only seven have been published since 1970. Yet so much has happened technologically and in the sphere of micropublishing. For instance, there have been significant developments in film types, especially microfiche, and in the marriage of computers and microforms. These aspects are touched on but quite inadequately covered.

Notwithstanding, *Studies of Micropublishing* offers a very good historical perspective. In many of the articles there is a great deal of information on the creation and care of microforms. Archivists will recognise both how they have suffered under the exaggerated claims of the microfilming industry and how careless they themselves can be in handling master negatives, in properly identifying material to be filmed and in accurately