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## MICROFORMS OF UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

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This paper explores the field of microreproduction in specific relation to the microforms used for United States government publications. Vernon D. Tate, commenting on the sources of information and literature of microreproduction, said: ". . . though dispersed it is voluminous, but the field is also vast and so rapidly expanding that no single source can be comprehensive, authoritative and up to date. Probably it will never be possible to create and maintain an information source of this type to the satisfaction of all concerned."<sup>1</sup> The voluminous amount of material already written is helpful; however, the rapidity with which the field changes makes it necessary at intervals to supplement previously published materials.

Definition of the terms involved will be followed by a discussion of the most recent technological changes in microreproduction. Next will be a current listing of the principal non-governmental sources of microfacsimile copies of government publications. Non-governmental sources have been very prolific in the production of microforms of United State government publications; governmental sources have produced only about one-sixth as much as the commercial sources. Some major projects for microreproduction of United States government publications originating in government sources will also be listed. Although this list is not comprehensive, it is extensive enough to give the reader an idea of the considerable amount of effort the government is devoting to the microreproduction of its publications. Catalogs and lists of United States government publications from both governmental and non-governmental sources are free upon request. Tools which the librarian needs to keep informed of latest developments in the field of microreproduction are listed and briefly described.

Peter Scott, Head of the Microreproduction Laboratory of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Library, explained the terminology of microreproduction in his article, "Advances and Goals in Microphotography."<sup>2</sup>

Microtransparency was the first type from which a micro-image was evolved. Webster defines microfilm as "A film of small size; specif., a strip of film of standard motion-picture film size or smaller, used for keeping a photographic record of printed matter, manuscripts, etc., in a small space."<sup>3</sup> Among the various microforms, microfilm has been in existence the longest time, and its reading machine has been simpler and cheaper to operate, than the equipment needed for the other microforms. Sheet microfilm and strip card mounted film are variations of the original microfilm, yet still in the category of the microtransparency.

The second type from which a micro-image was evolved was called the micro-opaque. Although the micro-opaque did not match the quality of projection achieved from a transparency, it did have certain definite advantages. The micro-opaque includes three forms: photographic, printed, and strips. The photographic embraces the microcard, microstrip, and sheet; whereas, the printed refers to the Readex Microprint. Lawrence S. Thompson, Director of the University of Kentucky Libraries, explains why opaque micro-facsimile publication is in the hands of commercial producers: "The reason for this situation is that opaque micro-facsimile publication is an edition process. At least ten or fifteen copies must be produced at one time to liquidate the cost of the negative and show some profit."<sup>4</sup> A recent technological development in the field of microreproduction is the electrostatic print. The steady gain in the use of this new process has made it possible to reproduce technical research reports in a limited number of copies through microfilm into hard copy. Elimination of the microfilm step was a later refinement. The low cost of this new process had made it even more appealing.

Microfiche is a translucent sheet of film, 6" x 4 1/8" in size, capable of storing 98 pages of copy. At least two American companies are now able to use this medium, viz., Microcard Corporation of West Salem, Wisconsin and Micro Photo of Cleveland, Ohio. Although new to American microform publishers, microfiche has been manufactured in Europe for several years. A portable machine can be used to read the film cards of microfiche, which can also be reproduced in hard copy form. The superior image quality of microfiche is an additional advantage.

In this country the principal non-governmental sources of micro-facsimile copies of government publications are as follows:

1. Micro Photo, Inc., Division of Bell and Howell Company, 1700 Shaw Avenue, Cleveland 12, Ohio.
2. Microcard Editions, Inc., 901 26th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.
3. Readex Microprint Corporation, 5 Union Square, New York 3, New York. Readex is the major publisher of United States documents in microform; its catalog, available free upon request, almost covers the field.

4. University Microfilms, Inc., 313 North First Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan.
5. Matthew Bender and Company, Inc., 255 Orange Street, Albany 1, New York.
6. J. S. Canner and Company, Inc. 618 Parker Street, Boston 20, Massachusetts.
7. Godfrey Memorial Library, Middletown, Connecticut.
8. Institute of Paper Chemistry, Appleton, Wisconsin.
9. Legal Microfilm Association, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.
10. Research & Microfilm Publications, Inc., Riva Road, Post Office Box 267, Annapolis, Maryland.

Schmeckebier and Eastin listed the first four;<sup>5</sup> however, the addresses are corrected to read as they are given in the list of publishers in the Guide to Microforms in Print, 1963. Paul L. Berry listed items 5-9 at the conclusion of his article in Library Resources and Technical Services.<sup>6</sup>

Readex's project to reproduce United States government publications in microprint constituted a partial answer to government document problems facing librarians. "In 1953 Readex began to put on microprint some 12,000 titles of non-depository federal government publications (i.e., those not recorded in the Monthly Catalog, issued by the Superintendent of Documents in Washington, as being sent out to libraries designated as official depositories of United States Documents)."<sup>7</sup>

According to William Bergquist, Vice-President of Readex Microprint Corporation, in June 1963, "At the last count we had 61 subscriptions to the Microprint edition of the U. S. Government Publications, Non-Depository."<sup>8</sup>

All or most of the publications of the following list of agencies are included in the non-depository publications.<sup>9</sup> Starred agencies represent those whose publications are also available as "separate units," and will be discussed here later.

- \*Atomic Energy Commission
- \*Census Bureau
- \*Children's Bureau
- Customs Bureau
- Economic Cooperation Administration
- Entomology & Quarantine Bureau
- Federal Power Commission
- \*Federal Reserve System Board of Governors
- \*Fish and Wildlife Service
- \*Forest Service
- \*Interstate Commerce Commission
- \*Mines Bureau
- \*National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Naval Research Bureau  
 Plant Industry, Soils & Agricultural Engineering Bureau  
 Reclamations Bureau  
 Rural Electrification Bureau  
 Wage, Hour & Public Contracts Division

Readex was informed by librarians that many United States government releases contained important statistics on prices, production figures, bank clearings, etc. Subsequently, arrangements were made to include these releases beginning with January 1959. Starred items in the following list indicate that all releases are included. Double starred items indicate their availability also as "separate units."<sup>10</sup>

\*\*Agricultural Marketing Service  
 \*\*Agricultural Research Service  
 \*\*Business and Defense Services Administration  
   \*Business Economics Office  
 \*\*Census Bureau  
   \*Commodity Credit Corporation  
   \*Commodity Exchange Authority  
   \*Commodity Stabilization Service  
   \*Congress. House of Representatives  
   \*Congress. Senate  
   \*Defense and Civilian Mobilization Office  
 \*\*Engineer Corps. Army  
 \*\*Federal Reserve System Board of Governors  
   \*Foreign Agricultural Service  
 \*\*Geological Survey  
   \*Housing and Home Finance Agency  
 \*\*Mines Bureau  
   \*Public Assistance Bureau

Selective coverage is provided for the releases of the following agencies and (other than the Federal Power Commission) they are available as "separate units":<sup>11</sup>

Civil Aeronautics Board  
 Federal Power Commission  
 Labor Department  
 Labor Statistics Bureau  
 National Labor Relations Board  
 National Science Foundation  
 Weather Bureau

Special libraries as well as departmental collections find the microprint edition of current United States government publications available in "separate units" peculiarly suited to their purposes. The Readex Microprint Publications Catalog for 1963 states that "A Separate Unit

combines all depository and non-depository publications of the issuing agency entered in the Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications during the calendar year, as well as the agency's periodicals and subscription publications listed in the appendix to the Monthly Catalog. In addition, it contains all important releases."<sup>12</sup> All units are distributed annually, except for the Federal Register and those units costing one hundred dollars or more. Monthly distribution covers these two situations.

The Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS) is available as a "separate unit" in the microprint edition. The JPRS was set up originally in the years following the second world war when the United States rapidly increased its support of scientific and technical research. "JPRS is primarily a co-ordination agency; it acts as the centralized translation service for government offices, agencies and departments having need of current foreign language documentary materials."<sup>13</sup> Although reports concerning science and technology predominated in the beginning, those within the realm of the social sciences have increased significantly. The American Council of Learned Societies originally underwrote part of the cost of distributing publications in designated subject areas of JPRS reports; however, it ceased activity in this field when Readex made the decision to issue a microprint edition of JPRS, containing all numbers entered in the Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications from the first listing in October 1958, to date.

The Monthly Catalog serves as a perfect guide by which to locate JPRS material in the microprint edition since each report has a separate entry number and is indexed. The processed nature of all JPRS reports indicates their short life among library materials; the microprint edition lends permanence to these valuable research materials containing pertinent current information relative to all subject areas. The range of topics which the reports cover is indicated by the following list of titles: Soviet Abstracts: Biology; Activities of the Department of Oceanography of Poland; On Composition and Disposition of Patients in USSR Psychiatric Institutes; Selected Translations from Vestnik Akademii Nauk; Abstracts and Translations from East European Legal Publications; Economic Report on North Korea; Spot Report on Communist China's Language Reform; and Summary of Provincial Presses (largely East European).<sup>14</sup>

At a later date Readex also offered the depository publications beginning with 1956; however, the coverage was not comprehensive for the first year due to the fact that the serials had all been distributed by the office of the Superintendent of Documents before filming began. The first year (1956) lacks the serial and periodical publications for July to December 1955 which are listed in the February 1956 issue of the Monthly Catalog.

In addition, Readex provides coverage of the following government publications:

1. Congressional Record (recent years may be obtained separately).
2. Committee hearings and committee prints (offered currently).
3. U. S. Congressional Serial Set, so far from number 1 (1817 to number 687 (1853)).
4. American State Papers (Vols. 1-38, 1789-1838).
5. Bulletin of the U. S. Department of State and other current publications.
6. Technical Report Literature: some published report series.
7. Official Gazette of the U. S. Patent Office, 1956 to date.
8. Index-Catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon-General's Office, 1880-1948.<sup>15</sup>

Like Readex, Research & Microfilm Publications, Inc., specializes in JPRS reports; however, the latter concentrates on the social science reports and CIA research publications. Most of their publications are original publication projects, compiled in such a way as to serve the needs of academic research. Bibliographies provide guides to the film projects. A synopsis of current publication projects includes:

1. United States Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS) Current Social Science (SS) Translation Distribution Program
2. Backfiles of JPRS SS Translations, 1957-
3. JPRS Bibliographies and Card Files, 1957-
4. JPRS SS Scholarly Book Translation Series
5. United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Research-Translation Projects
6. US-UK-France-USSR: Minutes of the Allied Commission
7. Foreign Language Social Science Periodicals and Monograph Series
8. Scientific Translation Information Program

In commenting on the volume of these projects, Theodore E. Kyriak, Executive Director of Research and Microfilm Publications, Inc., says: "The FY 1963 JPRS social science compilations include over 200,000 pages. The bibliographies for the five area projects alone amount to nearly 1,000 pages covering the one year production. We have over 140 subscriptions for our current JPRS programs. This includes almost all major U. S. Universities and institutions from Canada, Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand."<sup>16</sup>

Matthew Bender & Company, Inc. offers the following Microprint publications pertaining to the United States Government.

1. Legislative History Service (\$125 per year). The legislative histories of important Federal acts beginning with the 82nd Congress. Subscribers receive 500 microcards each year, of 25,000 to 35,000 pages.

2. U. S. Supreme Court-Full Opinion Cases (price varies), October 1946 term to date.
3. U. S. Supreme Court-Cert. Dec., Per Curiam Cases, starting with October 1956 term: October 1956 term, 3,113 cards (\$778.25); October 1957 term, 3,477 cards; October 1958 term, in preparation; October 1959 term, in preparation.
4. U. S. Court of Claims Reports, Volumes 1 to 100 (\$400).

Micro Photo Division of Bell & Howell Company publishes the Official Gazette of the U. S. Patent Office on microfilm. This provide an invaluable reference file of abstracts of all patents in force in the United States from 1872 to the present day. In addition, they have the index for 1934 to date.

There are several instances in which it is possible to secure a government document on microform from two or more non-governmental sources.

The United States governmental sources of microforms of government publications have originated some major projects of microreproduction of documents. The considerable amount of effort put forth by the government is reflected in the following list:

**Foreign Activity Reports:**

- U. S. National Archives has microfilmed archival material.
- U. S. Department of State Research and Analysis Reports were produced during World War II by the Office of Strategic Services.
- Library of Congress has microfilm summaries of foreign radio broadcasts and summaries and translations of the foreign press.

**Technical Report Literature:**

- Atomic Energy Commission and the Armed Services Technical Information Agency have used microcards as a means of original publication for technical reports.
- Publication Board Project at the Library of Congress has produced a large body of technical report literature and governmental translation; librarians may obtain these documents from the Library of Congress in the form of microfilm or photoprints.

**Legal Publications:**

- U. S. National Archives has microfilmed the Federal Register since 1936.<sup>17</sup>

The List of National Archives Microfilm Publications (1961) may be obtained from the National Archives free on request. The 1961 List supersedes the one published in 1953. The introduction notes the chief purposes of the microfilm publication program, the fields of research covered, the information given for each microcopy, and the available pamphlets for certain

publications indicated by asterisks in the numerical list in the appendix. These pamphlets contain ". . . the introductions to microfilm publications, their contents, and any indexes or lists that may be helpful to users of the film."<sup>18</sup> A table of contents arranged according to the organization of the government, a numerical list of the full titles of all the National Archives microfilm publications listed, and an index make the location of related materials relatively easy. The Annual Reports and the publications of the National Archives (except the Territorial Papers of the United States) have been reproduced as Microfilm Publication 248. A microfilm edition of the Federal Register is available, and the yearly price varies. Photocopies or microfilm copies may be secured of out-of-print items listed in the Publications of the National Archives and Records Service; the cost of each photocopy or microfilm copy will be supplied on request. Federal Population Censuses, 1840-80 (c1955), a price list of microfilm copies of the original schedules, is available free to libraries. National Archives Staff Information Paper no. 19, The Preparation of Records for Publication on Microfilm (July 1951), describes the procedures for editing microcopies. Guide to the Records in the National Archives (1948) describes the record groups in the National Archives.

The Department of State makes use of certain microreproduction techniques in the storage of its official records; however, all public documents are still maintained in the original form. Establishment of a Microfilming Clearing House in the Union Catalog Division of the Library of Congress was announced in March 1953, to guide large scale acquisition and preservation of library materials on microfilm.<sup>19</sup> This was a project of the Committee on Cooperative Microfilm Projects, a subcommittee of the Board on Resources of American Librarians. At intervals the Microfilming Clearing House Bulletin is published as an appendix to the Library of Congress Information Bulletin.

Since microreproduction of government documents is such an active field in both governmental and non-governmental sources, the librarian needs to keep informed of the latest developments. Notes and items of interest in the field of microproduction are contained in the following periodicals:

1. American Archivist has an annual section on microreproduction with emphasis on archival and business uses.
2. American Documentation has occasional notes on microreproduction.
3. College and Research Libraries contains a news section on microreproduction.
4. Journal of Documentation has frequent notes of news on microreproduction.
5. Library Journal has a column "News and Notes on Microphotography" by Edward N. Jenks.

6. Microdoc, journal of the (British) Council for Microphotography and Document Reproduction, has three sections of special interest: Micronews, Notes and News, and Microtext--New Publications. An excellent bibliography, a book review section, abstracts, and a directory of publishers of microforms (both European and American) contribute to the value of this quarterly as a forum for exchange of views on microphotography.
7. National Micro-news, official publication of the National Microfilm Association, is a news sheet appearing six times a year. Content is made up of technical articles and notes as well as news of interest to the field. Supplementary information on apparatus and supplies of microphotography appears regularly.

Microcosm (University Microfilms) and Micro Photo Reader (Micro Photo, Inc.) announce new projects and developments in the field. Free subscriptions to these house organs may be obtained simply by writing to the companies. In addition to the periodicals and house organs, two other serials contribute to the knowledge of librarians in the field of microreproduction. The Microcard Bulletin is published irregularly by the Microcard Foundation, Madison, Wisconsin. Besides listing its own publications and calling attention to works issued by other publishers, it brings new products, processes, and activities in micro-opaque reproduction to the attention of librarians and researchers. National Microfilm Association's Proceedings of the Annual Meeting contains concise, valuable data on all aspects of the field.

When the Philadelphia Bibliographical Center pioneered in the reporting of microfilm holdings through its Union List of Microfilms in 1942, it limited the serial to works in a single microform, but representing all bibliographical forms except newspapers and dissertations. It now no longer includes documents or serials; therefore, it would not be helpful to the documents librarian. Guide to Microforms in Print began publication in 1961. Current information on microforms includes United States government publications on microform. Subject Guide to Microforms in Print, published by Microcard Editions, Inc., covers all methods of microreproduction. It is a comprehensive guide by subject classifications to materials available on microforms from United States publishers. Each entry gives the price of the work, the publisher, and the type of microform.

Richard Walden Hale's Guide to Photocopied Historical Materials in the United States and Canada was published for the American Historical Association in 1961. Research materials and bibliographical tools for the materials were provided by the listing of non-parallel bibliographical information on photocopied manuscripts available in depositories in the United States and Canada. Bibliography, census, constitutional documents, amendments, and government records for the United States are covered on pages 68-70.

The benefits which librarians have derived from the production of microforms of United States documents include (1) preservation, (2) space-saving, (3) ease of acquisition, and (4) reduced binding costs. Original library materials worn through age or use may be copied by using one of the microforms. Fragile newsprint easily damaged by constant use is peculiarly adaptable to use on microfilm. Granted that microforms meet a need and have an important place in the library system, they do not take the place of books, and they do create problems in reader acceptance which can only be handled through education of both librarian and patron. Problems have arisen as a result of rapid growth and technological changes in the field of microreproduction, and a lack of planning has resulted in the confused state of microreproduction. As it emerges from its embryonic stage, it will achieve its maximum potential through the cooperation of librarians, bibliographers, and microfacsimile producers and publishers.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Tate, Vernon D. "Sources of Information about Microreproduction," In National Microfilm Association. Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Meeting and Convention, held at Washington, D. C., April 2-4, 1959. p. 186.
2. Scott, Peter. "Advances and Goals in Microphotography," Library Trends, 8:349, Jan. 1960.
3. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary. Springfield, Massachusetts, G. & C. Merriam, 1953, p. 531.
4. Thompson, Lawrence S. "The Microfacsimile in American Research Libraries," Libri; International Library Review, 8:216, 1958.
5. Schmeckebier, Lawrence F., and Eastin, Roy B. Government Publications and Their Use. Washington, D. C., The Brookings Institution, 1961, p. 437.
6. Berry, Paul L. "United States and Canadian Government Documents on Microforms," Library Resources and Technical Services, 5:66-67, Winter 1961.
7. Thompson, op. cit., p. 219.
8. Berquist, William, Vice-President of Readex Microprint Corporation. Letter dated June 21, 1963.

9. Readex Microprint Publications. New York, Readex Microprint Corporation, 1963, p. 8.
10. Ibid., p. 9.
11. Ibid., p. 9.
12. Ibid., p. 11.
13. Ibid., p. 61.
14. Ibid., p. 62.
15. Berry, op. cit., pp. 62-63.
16. Kyriak, Theodore E., Executive Director of Research and Microfilm Publications, Inc. Letter dated July 16, 1963.
17. Berry, op. cit., pp. 62-63.
18. List of National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1961. Washington, D. C., National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration, 1961 (National Archives Publication No. 61-12). Introduction, p. VI.
19. Library of Congress Information Bulletin (March 9, 1953), Appendix, p. 8.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF RELEVANT PERIODICAL ARTICLES

- Barcus, Thomas R. "Micro-reproduction of Federal Publications," Library Journal, 77:39-41, Jan. 1, 1952.
- At the time of the writing of the article, Barcus was Technical Assistant in the Processing Department of the Library of Congress. He proposed a project to reproduce United States Government publications in microform. This is a well-organized and informative review of developments in microreproduction.

Berry, Paul L. "United States and Canadian Government Documents on Microforms," Library Resources and Technical Services, 5:60-67, Winter 1961.

A scholarly, analytical article characterized by a lack of prejudice and an awareness of the full implications of both advantages and disadvantages of the microreproduction of government documents. A detailed listing of major projects for microreproduction of United States Government publications along with their sources (i.e., governmental or non-governmental) is especially valuable.

Born, Lester K. "History of Microform Activity," Library Trends, 8:348-358, Jan. 1960.

The technique of citing selected examples of projects in microreproduction is employed in order to explain operational history. He presents an excellent background for understanding the present state of microreproduction.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Literature of Microreproduction, 1950-1955," American Documentation, 7:167-187, July 1956.

This presents a completely documented, annotated bibliography in essay form. The three hundred titles have all appeared since the publication in 1950 of the Library of Congress bibliography on the subject. It is selected in nature yet international in coverage.

Jolley, L. J. "Microrecording in Libraries," Library Review, 77:442-450, Autumn 1958.

This writer looks toward a future in which the existence of microforms forces upon librarians an interdependence which will demand a higher level of cooperation.

National Microfilm Association. Proceedings of the annual meeting, 1959, "Sources of Information about Microreproduction," by Vernon D. Tate, pp. 185-197.

Power, Eugene B. "Symposium on Microreproduction; Microfilm," Serial Slants, 3:43-46, Oct. 1952.

Technological advances up to 1952 are described by the administrative head of University Microfilms.

Randall, Ferris S. "Microcosmos," Serial Slants, 5:122-129, Oct. 1954.

A practical analysis of various microforms and their applicability in varying situations is given from the librarian's standpoint. It is a lucid description of the characteristics of microprint.

Scott, Peter. "Advances and Goals in Microphotography," Library Trends, 8:448-492, Jan. 1960.

The writer presents the over-all picture of the position of microphotography in the modern library and urges each librarian to analyze his own needs in order to set up a system which will bring microphotography out of its embryonic stage. Figure 1 shows the basic microforms as a guide to the organization of the article. Figure 2 explains in a clear manner the typical library uses of the microtechniques.

Thompson, Lawrence S. "Microforms as Library Resources," Library Trends, 8:359-371, Jan. 1960.

Common sense, flexibility, and foresight are urged to help the microfacsimile achieve its maximum potential.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Microfacsimile in American Research Libraries," Libri; International Library Review, 8:209-222, 1958.

This report on the contribution of Readex, in placing the depository and non-depository government publications on microprint, deplors lack of planning in microfacsimile publishing in America and urges adequate bibliographical description of their products.

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Papers in this series are issued irregularly and no more often than monthly. Numbers 52, 58 Revised, and 61 through 66 are available at \$1.00 per copy. Individual copies of other back issues still in print are distributed free upon request. The Occasional Papers deal with any aspect of librarianship and consist of manuscripts which are too long or too detailed for publication in a library periodical or which are of specialized or temporary interest. The submission of manuscripts for inclusion in this series is invited. Material from these papers may be reprinted or digested without prior consent, but it is requested that a copy of the reprint or digest be sent to the Editor, Occasional Papers, Publications Office, University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science, Urbana, Illinois.

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