RSR: Reference Services Review. 1987, v.15, p. 47 -54.

ISSN: 0090-7324 <u>Weblink to journal.</u> ©1987 Pierian Press

Current Surveys

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Photography: A Survey of New Reference Sources

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What a difference a few years make! In the fall 1982 issue of *Reference Services Review* I described forty reference monographs and serial publications on photography. That article concluded with these words, "a careful reader will be aware that not one single encyclopedia or solely biographical source was included... this reviewer could find none in print... A biographical source proved equally elusive" (p.28).

Thankfully this statement is no longer valid. Photography reference is greatly advanced and benefited by a number of fine biographical works and a good encyclopedia published in the past two or three years.

Most of the materials chosen for this update, as well as those cited in the initial survey article, emphasize the aesthetic nature of photography rather than its scientific or technological facets. A great number of the forty titles in the original article are still in print; others have been updated. Most are as valuable now as they were then for good photography reference selection. However, only those sources published since 1982 or those that were not cited in the original survey have been included.

This survey is divided into six sections: Biographies, Dictionaries (Encyclopedias), Bibliographies, Directories, Catalogs, and Indexes.

BIOGRAPHIES

Three of the reference works cited in this survey have filled such a lamented void in photography reference literature that they stand above the rest in their importance and value. These sources are outstanding in their usefulness, coverage, and scholarship. The first two are biographies; the other is discussed in the catalogs section, below.

The first publication of note is *Contemporary Photographers*, a 1982 St. Martin's Press Publication. This 837 - page, one - volume work is devoted to prominent photographers either living or recently deceased. The 650 biographees were chosen by a 16 - member advisory panel that included such distinguished individuals as Helmut Gernsheim and Beaumont Newhall.

The entries are arranged alphabetically by name. Each of the one- or two-page articles includes standard biographical information; lists of individual exhibitions, selected group exhibitions, and sites of major public and private collections; a detailed bibliography of books and

articles by and about the photographer, and a black-and-white reproduction of a representative photograph. The living biographees were asked to submit the photograph of their choice and to include a brief statement about their work or about photography in general. These signed statements vary in length from a few sentences to one or two columns. Each of the entries is followed by a signed critical essay written by one of 155 contributors. The advisors and contributors are briefly identified in a separate listing. The publisher has stated that the book will be revised every five years. A second edition, published in 1986, is listed in the 1986 - 1987 *Books in Print*. It should prove as significant a publication as this first edition.

Museum directors, curators, gallery owners, photo - historians, and other photographic "innovators" as well as photographic artists are profiled in Turner Browne's and Elaine Partnow's *Macmillan Biographical Encyclopedia of Photographic Artists & Innovators*. The editors chose to include those for whom photography is or was "the major passion, if not the major pursuit." A second criterion is visibility. An initial distribution of 7,000 questionnaires was winnowed to over 2,000 names, about one - fourth of whom are nineteenth or early twentieth century photographers.

The bulk of the volume is arranged alphabetically by name and includes biographical data, notable family members, and a description of photographic achievements. A bibliography of publications and information about portfolios, collections, archives, and a current address (when possible) are also included. Each page has one or two entries.

A total of 144 black-and-white and color plates of selected works, from about 1830 to 1980, have been arranged chronologically.

The third of the biographical sources is a bio - bibliography, profiling many photographers either not listed or discussed only briefly in the two books above.

Deborah Willis-Thomas has been a photographic specialist at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture of the New York Public Library since 1980. In the course of her work she discovered a wealth of material on Black America that had been preserved in photographic images by mostly unknown and obscure Black photographers. The result of her research appears in *Black Photographers*, 1840-1940: An Illustrated Bio-Bibliography. The editor features information on sixty-five photographers, arranged in four chronological periods. These are: Daguerreans (1840-1859), Daguerreans and Photographers (1860-1899), Photographers (1900-1919), and Photographers (1920-1940). All except two of the photographers were born in the United States and active in this country. The two born elsewhere were primarily active here.

The entries are arranged alphabetically by name within appropriate time periods. Most entries include a name and a studio name, pertinent biographical information, principal subjects, geographic location, processes used, major collections, exhibitions, and a selected annotated bibliography. Unfortunately, information is sparse for some of the biographees.

A sample of representative works has been reproduced in the second half of the bio-bibliography in the same order in which the photographs were cited in the first section. Almost all of these are full-page reproductions. The earliest is a daguerrotype from around 1842 and the latest is from the 1960s. A comparison with the Macmillan encyclopedia revealed very little overlap in coverage; only four names appeared in both sources.

Willis-Thomas also includes a bibliography of over forty books, catalogs, and films she used in the preparation of this book as well as a name and a geographical index. This reference is one of many in this article that has been published on acid-free paper, a more than welcome incentive to purchase. This trend in preservation of important materials should and will be encouraged.

DICTIONARIES (ENCYCLOPEDIAS)

The *Encyclopedia of Photography* is identified in a variety of ways by its publisher, the Library of Congress, and its cover page and binding. It is called alternatively the *ICP Encyclopedia of Photography* and the *International Center of Photography Encyclopedia of Photography*. *Encyclopedia of Photography* is the title found on OCLC.

This one-volume encyclopedia contains over 1,300 alphabetically arranged entries under names as well as under terms and processes. About 250 are biographical entries that dwell on the technique and style of the artist and provide a description of the individual's contribution to the art of photography. A list of major works and selected exhibitions is included. Charts and graphs accompany many of the entries and both black-and-white and full-color plates are distributed on almost every other page of the text.

Many of the topics have merited longer, article-type coverage, rather than dictionary-style entries. Among these are restoring photographs, satire in photography, rights and permissions, photojournalism, and color photography. The last includes a chronological list of significant events in the development of color. The first event cited occurred in 1802 when Thomas Young proposed that colors are sensations, not the physical properties of objects.

Several appendixes appear in this encyclopedia. The first is an eighteen - page biographical supplement that consists of an international list of photographers not mentioned in the main body of the text. Under each name are recorded the individual's native country, birth and death dates, and specialties or interests, which are described in such terms as "city streets," "fashion," "social documentary," "teacher," "nudes," "film maker," "poet," and "advertising." Since many of these people are not listed in any other volume, this is an excellent source for quick reference and identification.

A second appendix is composed of an international list of photographic societies and associations. Most of these entries include brief statements about the organizations' concerns, goals, and programs.

The third of the appendixes is an eight - page bibliography of works, most of them contemporary. They are arranged in broad subject classifications such as basic techniques, history, original sources, general applications, theory, and scientific principles.

"See" and "see also" references are used throughout the text to good advantage. The term "dance photography," for example, directs the reader to entries under "theatrical and dance photography." The references below the actual article refer the user to articles on action photography, glamour photography, and portraiture.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES

It should be noted that many of the reference sources that appear throughout this survey could have been placed in this section; the three major reference works here are those in whose titles or subtitles the word "bibliography" appears.

The newest of these works is Robert S. Sennett's *Photography and Photographers to 1900: An Annotated Bibliography*, a 1985 publication. Monographic literature concerning photography in the nineteenth century was selected and arranged within five broadly classified sections that include general works, early technical treatises, early theoretical treaties, monographs on photographers, and early views and topographic surveys. Within the subject categories, the entries

are alphabetical by author. Each entry indicates title, dates, pages, publisher, and place, and provides notes on translations, indexes, and bibliography. The publication data are followed by a description of the book's content that varies in length from one to three sentences. While most of the works are in English, a substantial number of French, Italian, and German monographs are included. There is an index to both authors and subjects.

A much more specific time period is treated by Penelope Dixon's *Photographers of the Farm Security Administration*. The Farm Security Administration (FSA) was a New Deal agency created in 1937 to help farmers buy needed equipment. Photographers were hired by Roy Stryker, the head of the FSA's Historical Section, to record the agency's activities. The famous photographs of Dorothea Lange, Ben Shahn, Walker Evans, and others evoke the conditions and hardships of the time. While the photographers traveled throughout the country, the emphasis was on the rural south and midwest.

This publication is composed of two main parts. The first consists of bibliographies on each of twelve photographers associated with the FSA and one on Roy Stryker. These individuals were chose by the editor because either their photography was important to the project, or they were subsequently recognized as major American photographers. The entries include a one - to three - page biographical sketch and bibliographical information on books, films, interview sources, exhibitions, catalogs, theses, review articles, and other references including government publications. The second part of the volume is devoted to "group" publications--those in which two or more photographers are cited. Most of the materials in this section are about the FSA or contain FSA photographs.

Even more specialized bibliography is offered in *Incunabula of British Photographic Literature: A Bibliography of British Photographic Literature, 1839-75, and British Books Illustrated with Original Photographs.* The noted photohistorian and photographer Helmut Gernsheim is the editor of this scholarly reference.

Gernsheim and the British publisher, Scolar Press, chose to arrange this bibliography in chronological order. The first entry is *Le Premier Livre Imprimé par le Soleil* by L.L. Boscawen Ibbetson. It is an album of contract prints of ferns, flowers, and grasses made in 1839 and exhibited at the first Great Britain photographic exhibit in London from 1852 to 1853. Each of the 635 titles is a book, newspaper, or magazine illustrated with an original photograph. All are in English, but some were published in such countries as India, Canada, Hong Kong, and South Africa. Each entry contains publication date, title, author, number, size, and type of illustration, and pertinent notes. There are reproductions of photographs or title pages on almost every page of the volume.

A bibliography of almost 350 British photographic literary works from the years 1839 to 1875 is featured in part two. Using the same chronological arrangement found in part one, the early works are described in detail. Again, these are accompanied by reproductions of title pages. Part three follows with information on journals, almanacs, and annuals. It also features citations of "important" essays on photography that appeared in a variety of non photographic journals, almost all of which were published in London.

One especially interesting section is composed of notes on early examples of the use of such terms as "heliography," "photography," and "daguerreotype." The earliest reference cited is a treatise written in 1798 titled, "A Treatise on the Sublime Science of Heliography...." The word "photography" does not appear until 1845.

DIRECTORIES

Two of the following eight directories deal specifically with education, and four with where to sell, purchase, or exhibit photographs; two are lists of worldwide commercial and industrial photographers.

The first of these directories is eighth edition of *College Instruction in Photography*, *Motion Pictures, Graphic Arts, Still Photography: A Survey*. Compiled by C. William Horrell and commonly called the *Horrell Report*, it is a publication of the Eastman Kodak Company and was first published in 1984.

The material in this slim paperback volume was compiled from questionnaires and is displayed in a tabular format within a geographic arrangement. Included in each entry are an institution's name, address, principal courses, and diplomas or degrees conferred. The institutions are American and Canadian colleges, universities, technical institutes, schools of photography, and community colleges.

Horrell has also included twenty-two separate tables analyzing enrollment, courses offered, costs, graduate students, employment opportunities, semester hours, staffs, department sizes, and the like. One major drawback of the publication is the editor's insistence on the use of far too many abbreviations; there are forty codes for course offerings alone. While somewhat difficult to use, the information is more complete than that offered by the following source.

Published in 1985 by the Society for Photographic Education in..., *Graduate Education in the United States* does not include junior colleges, schools of photography, or colleges offering only undergraduate degrees. Information is provided on facilities, libraries, degrees offered, date of program establishment, number of students, degree requirements, and assistantships. An address from which to obtain additional information on each school is given. One school is described per page.

The information offered in the *Graduate Education* volume is arranged so that it can be read and understood much more easily than that in *College Instruction*. However, there are serious gaps in the former's coverage, since far too many eligible schools are either purposely or unintentionally omitted. Only one Ohio college, Ohio University is listed when eight or nine could have been included. Among those neglected was Ohio State University. The Horrell (Eastman Kodak) publication has data on over forty schools in Ohio, many of which were noted as conferring graduate degrees in photography.

Two of the directories are devoted to the location of actual photographs in a wide variety of private and public agencies and institutions. *World Photography Sources*, a 1982 publication edited by David N. Bradshaw, is one volume in which entries are arranged in twelve very broad subject or specialty classifications such as agriculture, geography and history, plant and animal science, sports, performing arts, and social sciences. The primary arrangement is by name of agency rather than by subject.

Each entry concerning an agency, association, gallery, photographer, corporation, consulate, tourist office, or airline lists an address, telephone number, contact person, primary subject of available photographs, request procedures, cost information, and key personnel. There are 1,728 separate entries, which are indexed alphabetically, numerically by assigned number, geographically, and by subject in separate indexes.

Fred W. McDarrah, picture editor of *The Village Voice*, is the editor of the second edition of *Stock Photo and Assignment Source Book*, published by the Photographic Arts Center of New York City. He includes information on stock photographs possessed by news agencies,

photographers, business sources, libraries, institutions and societies, government agencies, travel offices, film libraries, and photographic publications. In all about 4,000 sources in which to find photographs "instantly" are listed. Each entry includes a telephone number, cable address, telex, list of personnel, list of photographer's assignment specialties, and a detailed description of the photographs in stock. Both free and priced materials are included. The photographs are indexed by individual or institution and by subject.

A brief comparison revealed some differences between the two picture source directories. The subject index to Bradshaw's book was twenty-three pages long and included eighteen separate entries on insects, eight on Native Americans, seven on the circus, thirty-two on the subject of royalty. The section on royalty, was further divided geographically as were the 130 references under scenic views. *Stock Photo's* subject index comprised five and one-half pages and included six citations on insects, twenty-seven on Native Americans, four on the circus, fifteen on royalty and thirty-seven on scenic views, with no geographic breakdown. *World Photography Sources* cites 1,728 agencies and institutions; *Stock Photo* has 4,000 entries.

There may be sources cited by both references, but a page selected at random was crosschecked between volumes and not one match was found. Therefore, both books would be needed for thorough treatment of the subject.

The Photographer's Complete Guide to Exhibition & Sales Space is a close cousin to Literary Market Place and its companion editions. While emphasizing businesses, auction houses, publishers, consultants, and booksellers that might be interested in purchasing photographs, it also features information on places where photographs might be exhibited. Sites include galleries, museums, and private dealers in the United States and Europe. In all, 1,443 separate sources are cited; the address, director or curator, and telephone number of each are noted, and the specialization of each is briefly described, (private, nineteenth century, posters, 1940 to the present, contemporary, and so on). There are also lists of appropriate workshops, photography schools, serials published by degree-granting institutions, book publishers, equipment manufacturers, and associations. The arrangement of this directory is geographic, a negative feature since it lacks an alphabetical index.

The contents of this guide are so broad that instead of the normal two or three subject tracings, the book was cataloged as a directory of museums, of photographic art galleries, of conservation and restoration, of photographic literature, and of the study and teaching of photography. All are useful and valuable areas of directory information.

The collector of buyer, rather than the seller, is the audience of *The Photograph Collector's Resource Directory*, yet, inevitably, many of the same galleries and dealers mentioned in other sources are repeated here. The collector's guide lists about 800 worldwide dealers and galleries and about 700 museums and other exhibition site possibilities. The galleries and private dealers are arranged geographically by state and then alphabetically. Each entry contains address, telephone number, contact person, and a brief description of the collection. A second section of this volume describes an international list of museums that collect or exhibit photographs. Also included are book publishers, serials, conservators, photography schools, manufacturers of photographic equipment, and the like. Although repetitious, this paperbound volume does offer some unique information. Its most serious drawback is its lack of an index.

Photographs can be and are used to influence, cajole, and move the consumer in a way perhaps not conceived by the earliest photographers. Beyond the home photograph album or the illustrated book or magazine, photographs are used to sell products and ideas. The last two

directories in this survey are devoted to the identification of individual photographers and photographic studios that specialize in this highly visible and culturally persuasive form of the art.

American Showcase, Inc. of New York is the publisher of a series of annual directories that feature color photographs of very high quality, along with the names and telephone numbers of photographers. Among their titles are *American Photography Showcase*, *American Illustration Showcase*, and *Corporate Showcase*, an annual reference serial now in its fifth edition. Corporate photographers and illustrators located throughout the United States are the focus of *Corporate Showcase*. With few exceptions, each individual or agency is generally represented by one full-page sample of high quality on glossy paper in either black – and - white or color. The fourth edition, published in 1983, had 239 color pages. The name, address, telephone number, and photographic specialties of each person appears at the top of the page. Since the information was supplied by the artists, the style and content vary somewhat; only some include data on major corporate clients, agencies, and professional memberships.

The bulk of the volume is devoted to lists of photographers, arranged in a geographical classification: New York City, Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, Midwest, Rocky Mountain, and West are the areas identified. The rest of the volume contains a 100 - page "Gray Pages," a directory of addresses and telephone numbers of representatives, visual artists, suppliers, makeup artists, costumers, prop houses, set builders, model agencies, casting agencies, animal trainers, and graphic designers. These are arranged in the same geographical manner. The fourth edition includes six essays by prominent industry figures in the field of corporate communications.

While almost identical to *Showcase* in style, appearance, and purpose, the shift is to an international mix of photographers in *Art Director's Index to Photographers*, another annual, the latest of which is number twelve. The international aspect is illustrated fact that by the most of the text is presented in French and German, in addition to English. A few of the pages are reproduced in the language of the photographer or agency, including some either entirely or partially in Japanese.

The listings of advertising photographers from selected countries note field of work, telephone number, major clients, and, in some cases, provide a brief statement about experience, skills, or specialties. Each includes a sample photograph. Volume one covers Europe; volume two lists people in the Americas, Asia, and Australia.

CATALOGS

A third outstanding, new photography reference source is the *Library Catalog of the International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House*, one of a series of library book catalogs produced by G.K. Hall.

The International Museum of Photography is an independent, nonprofit institution established in 1949 as a cooperative venture of the Eastman Kodak Company and the University of Rochester. Its research collection includes over half a million photographic images, thousands of films, photographic apparatus, and a library of over 30,000 volumes. Included in this four-volume set of reproduced catalog cards are over 11,000 monographic titles on the aesthetic, historic, and social aspects of photography and cinematography. No periodicals or manuscripts are included. Two of the four volumes are author/title and two are subject cards.

Photographica: A Subject Catalog of Books on Photography: Includes Books, Pamphlets, and Selected Periodical Articles on Still Photography and Allied Topics/Drawn from the Holdings

of the Research Libraries of the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations is another G.K. Hall library book catalog. The work contains about 8,000 entries arranged alphabetically within about 120 subject classifications via the reproduction of the libraries' original catalog cards. Many of these cards are marked with pencil notations, initials, and corrections while others are so old and faded they are difficult to read. Many are handwritten rather than typed. The catalog record reflects the holdings of the research libraries prior to September 1971. The omission of either an author or title index is a great oversight.

According to a G.K. Hall representative, *Photographica* is no longer in stock, although it is not officially out of print at this time. In any case, the George Eastman House catalog is preferred.

The last of the catalogs lists resource materials that are of great interest to scholars, but not easily located in other references and bibliographies. *From Museums, Gallerie, and Studios* lists interviews recorded on more than 600 films and video and audio cassettes by contemporary artists and photographers. It is part of the Greenwood Press's Art Reference Collection. Titles, dates, format, rental/purchase information, and an annotated description of contents are arranged under the individual's name. One section is lists of multiple, rather than individual, artists. In all, there are fifty-three separate entries under such terms as "photographs," "photographers," "photographic art," and "photojournalism" in the subject/title index.

INDEX

While both of the following reference sources are classified here as indexes, they differ radically in purpose and content. The first is an index to periodical literature, while the second acts as a location guide to the actual work of individual photographers.

Photography Magazine Index 1978-1983, edited by Stu Berger, is a subject index to nine popular, rather than scholarly or specialized, American photographic journals. Among the magazines are American Photographer, Modern Photography, Camera 35, and Popular Photography. Such broad subjects as cameras, miniature; careers, exposure, photojournalism, and archival processing are among the over 150 subjects areas cited. There is no author entry or index by name. The scholarly photography index, International Photography Index (G.K. Hall, 1981), includes only three of the titles found in Photography Magazine Index. Some other titles are indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature. While an interesting reference tool, it would be of greatest use to the amateur photographer who subscribes to one or more of the titles monitored or to public and technical institute libraries. This is due to its emphasis on technical terms rather than on the art of photography or photographers, and to the number and type of journals indexed. This small and somewhat poorly bound paperback volume has been updated in loose-leaf format for the annual edition of 1984 and 1985. A binder to hold all of the editions is also available from Paragon Press, its publisher and distributor. According to a spokesperson for the publisher, the number of titles indexed has been expanded in more recent issues.

The final reference source in this survey is another of the G.K. Hall publications and was compiled at the International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House by editor James McQuaid. *An Index to American Photographic Collections* is a record of the photographic collections of over 450 American public collection sites such as museums, schools, archives, and historical societies. The major portion of the book consists of listings of collection sites, arranged geographically. Each includes address, telephone number, contact person, and a list of individual photographers featured in the collection. A brief note concerning the size and subject emphasis of

the collection often accompanies the other information. A photographer's index in the second half of the book lists over 19,000 photographers, with a code to indicate in which collection(s) their work may be found. This index does not refer to photographs located in books, magazines, or anthologies, nor does it include information on photographs in galleries and other private collections.

CONCLUSION

Although a few of the reference works cited in this survey have flaws, each of them should be in a specialized reference section. Small academic or public library collections would, of course, be more selective.

The most significant event to occur in the past few years in this area is the publication of these important biographical and bibliographical publications. Even newer editions of most of the works cited are either already available or in the planning stages. While a few reference texts are offered at high costs, for the most part costs have been contained and some of the sources are offered at very reasonable, if not downright inexpensive, prices.

This author's wish list would include two materials. The first would be a new edition of Albert Boni's *Photographic Literature*, the classic bibliography. The first volume, published in 1962, addressed the years 1727 to 1960; the second edition treated 1960 through 1970. A third edition is warranted. The second wish would be for the publication of a better arranged, more inclusive, and prompt index covering an international list of popular and scholarly photographic periodicals.

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