
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS**National Film Preservation Board****Request for Information and Notice of Hearing; Study on the Current State of Film Preservation****AGENCY:** National Film Preservation Board, Library of Congress.**ACTION:** Notice of inquiry; notice of hearing.

SUMMARY: This Notice of Inquiry and Notice of Hearing advises the public that the Librarian of Congress, in consultation with the National Film Preservation Board of the Library of Congress, is conducting a study on the current state of motion picture preservation and restoration in the United States. This study is being prepared pursuant to Public Law 102-307, The National Film Preservation Act of 1992, 106 Stat. 284. Section 203 (2 USC 179a) of the legislation requires the Librarian to complete this study and submit it to Congress by June 28, 1993. This Notice of Inquiry is intended to elicit public comments to complete this study. This notice invites comments and information that will assist the Librarian in understanding the issues involved in motion picture preservation nationwide. In addition, a Notice of Hearing advises the public that to complete this study, the Librarian will hold two public hearings in February 1993 in Los Angeles, CA, and Washington, DC. Groups or individuals interested in participating in these public hearings should contact the Library of Congress about submitting oral and written comments. The hearings and public comments requested in this Notice are intended to elicit information to assist the Librarian of Congress, in consultation with the National Film Preservation Board, with the completion of the study and the establishment of a comprehensive national film preservation program, to coordinate the efforts of film archivists, copyright owners, educators and historians, and others concerned with preserving America's film heritage.

The Library particularly invites comments from representatives of major and specialized film archives, institutional collections holding film

materials, commercial film studios and laboratories, stock footage libraries, and scholarly and professional organizations involved with the production, study, use or preservation of film.

DATES AND HEARINGS AND PUBLIC

COMMENTS: The two public hearings will be held: February 12, 1993 (Los Angeles); February 26, 1993 (Washington, DC).

All requests to testify orally must be made by January 15, 1993, and should clearly identify the person and/or organization desiring to comment. The Librarian of Congress will provide additional information regarding the location and time of these hearings in the near future.

Written statements for the hearings should be submitted, in camera-ready copy, by January 22, 1993, 3.

Written submissions are also invited from persons or organizations unable to testify or attend the hearings for use in the study. All written comments or supplementary information should be received, in camera-ready copy, by March 15, 1993, 3.

ADDRESSES: Ten copies of written statements, supplementary statements, or comments should be submitted as follows:

If sent by mail: Library of Congress, M/B/RS Division, Washington, DC 20540, Attn: Steve Leggett.

If delivered by hand: Library of Congress, M/B/RS Division, 336 James Madison Memorial Building, First and Independence Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20540.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Steve Leggett, Library of Congress, M/B/RS Division, Washington, DC 20540. Telephone: (202) 707-5912; Facsimile: (202) 707-2371; or, Eric Schwartz, Counsel, The National Film Preservation Board, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20540. Telephone: (202) 707-8350.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National Film Preservation Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-307) was signed into law by President Bush on June 26, 1992. It reauthorized the National Film Preservation Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-446) which expired on September 27, 1991. The 1992 reauthorization continues the activities of the Board for four years from the date of enactment, shifting the main focus of the Act to the development of a comprehensive national film preservation program.

The legislation in section 203 (2 U.S.C. 179a), charges the Librarian of Congress, in consultation with the National Film Preservation Board, to conduct this study and after completion of the study, to develop a coordinated national film preservation program. The objectives of

this program are (1) to coordinate activities to ensure that efforts of archivists and copyright owners, and others in the public and private sector, are effective and complementary; (2) to generate public awareness and support for these activities; and (3) to increase accessibility of films for educational purposes.

The newly created National Film Preservation Board, appointed by the Librarian, consists of the organizations represented on the original thirteen member Board with new additions: A cinematographer, a representative of the theater owners, a film archivist, and two at-large members—bringing the total Board to eighteen members. The new Board, which met for the first time in Washington, DC, on September 21–22, 1992, includes representatives from institutions and organizations specified in the Act, in addition to the two at-large members.

These institutions and organizations are: The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences; The Directors Guild of America; The Writers Guild of America; The National Society of Film Critics; The Society of Cinema Studies; The American Film Institute; The Department of Theater, Film and Television of the University of California at Los Angeles; The Department of Film and Television of New York University; The University Film and Video Association; The Motion Picture Association of America; The National Association of Broadcasters; The Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers; The Screen Actors Guild of America; The National Association of Theater Owners; The American Society of Cinematographers in conjunction with the International Photographers Guild; and United States members of the International Federation of Film Archives.

The initial step toward a national film preservation program is the preparation of a study on the current state of film preservation, to be submitted to Congress by June 28, 1993. "Film," for the purposes of this study, is defined as works originally fixed on film stock and excludes works fixed on videotape or other electronic formats. Therefore, the study will not concern itself with issues related to the preservation of video or television materials.

At the first meeting of the Board on September 21 and 22, the scope and methodology of the study were discussed, including the role of public hearings. It was agreed that the study would define the issues confronting American film preservation including what has been accomplished to date, existing preservation standards,

priorities of major archives and commercial libraries, the geographic distribution of material requiring attention, the capacity of existing laboratory and storage facilities, and access to information on preservation activities. The Librarian is concentrating less, at this time, on obtaining information about new technical developments that might facilitate film preservation efforts.

The Librarian would appreciate comment and information from individuals and organizations about the current state of film preservation, toward the ultimate goal of establishing a coordinated national film preservation program.

The questions below, loosely divided for archival, industry, and educational respondents, are intended as suggestions to help frame specific comments about current preservation practices and problems.

Archival:

- *Collections.* What is the size and scope of your collection? Do you specialize in certain eras? formats? subject area? What particular preservation problems are presented by these materials?

- *Preservation Efforts.* Does your institution have an on-going preservation program? What are your major preservation accomplishments to date (specific information, such as titles and numbers of feet/reels preserved)? What organizational resources (full-time staff, equipment and funds) are currently devoted to preservation or restoration? To what extent are these activities externally funded? What criteria are used to set preservation priorities? What steps are taken to avoid duplicating preservation work done by other organizations? How do you prepare film for preservation or restoration? In what formats does your organization make preservation and viewing copies? To what degree do you use outside contractors or laboratories? What are your quality assurance standards? What are your most pressing preservation problems?

- *Facilities.* Under what physical conditions (of temperature, humidity, packaging, etc.) are preservation masters and reference copies stored?

- *Information and Access.* How much of your collection can be used by researchers? Are materials loaned for screening? Have you entered information about holdings onto computerized data-bases (if so, please describe the data-base)? How do you share information on holdings and preservation activities with other archives, commercial libraries, or

researchers? What measures are taken in your own preservation and access activities to protect the rights of copyright owners?

Industry:

- *Collection.* Do you maintain a film collection? If so, what is its size and scope? What particular preservation problems are presented by this material?

- *Preservation Efforts.* Does your company have an on-going preservation program? What are your major preservation accomplishments to date (specific information, such as titles and numbers of feet/reels preserved)? What organizational resources (full-time staff, equipment and funds) are currently devoted to preservation or restoration? What criteria are used to set preservation priorities? What steps are taken to avoid duplicating preservation work by other organizations? How do you prepare film for preservation or restoration? In what formats does your organization make preservation copies? To what degree do you use outside contractors or laboratories? What are your quality assurance standards? What are your most pressing preservation problems?

- *Copyright.* Have you encountered problems in locating or copying materials held by others for which you hold copyright? Has cooperation with outside archives or educational institutions contributed to copyright infringement problems? What new legal incentives might encourage film preservation? Encourage information sharing? How should public domain materials be treated?

- *Storage and Access.* Under what physical conditions (of temperature, humidity, packaging, etc.) are your films stored? How often are your films inspected? Do your older films circulate? Under what circumstances is information about your company's holdings made available to outside individuals or institutions? Have you entered information about your holdings onto computerized data-bases?

Educational:

- *Use and Availability.* In what formats (16mm, 35mm, videotape, etc.) do you use motion picture material in your research? in teaching? What problems have you encountered in locating and accessing needed materials?

- *Outreach.* How might the educational and museum communities foster public awareness of preservation issues and needs?

Copies of all comments received will be available for public inspection and copying between the hours of 8:30 a.m.

and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, in room 336, James Madison Memorial Building, Library of Congress, First and Independence Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20540.

Dated: November 21, 1992.

James H. Billington,

Librarian of Congress.

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