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## **The Tonight Show Jokes and Sketches Collection**

Finding aid created by Writers Guild Foundation Archive staff using RecordEXPRESS

Writers Guild Foundation Archive

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**Descriptive Summary**

**Title:** The Tonight Show Jokes and Sketches Collection

**Dates:** 1958-1990

**Collection Number:** WGF-MS-111

**Creator/Collector:** Carson, Johnny, 1925-2005.

**Extent:** 2.5 linear feet (two boxes)

**Repository:** Writers Guild Foundation Archive  
Los Angeles, California 90048

**Abstract:** The Tonight Show Jokes and Sketches Collection consists of material written for the Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson. Monologue jokes and sketches were written by various writers and span 1958-1990 [bulk 1963-1966, 1980s].

**Language of Material:** English

**Access**

Open for research. Available by appointment only.

**Publication Rights**

The responsibility to secure copyright and publication permission rests with the researcher.

**Preferred Citation**

The Tonight Show Jokes and Sketches Collection. Writers Guild Foundation Archive

**Acquisition Information**

Donated by Jeff Sotzing 8/21/2019.

**Biography/Administrative History**

This collection was donated from the personal papers of Johnny Carson's estate.

**Scope and Content of Collection**

The Tonight Show Jokes and Sketches Collection consists of material written for the Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson. Monologue jokes and sketches were written by various writers and span 1958-1990 [bulk 1963-1966, 1980s]. In the course of creating a show, writers submitted typed jokes for review and some were selected for the taping of the show. Writers represented include Larry Klein & Hal Goodman, Ed. Weinberger, Pat McCormick, Michael Barrie & Jim Mulholland, Raymond Siller, Kevin Mulholland and Bob Keane. Many pages are undated, by unknown contributors. Scattered throughout the collection are some notes and markings from Carson about what jokes will be told during the broadcast and in what order. Some recurring sketches and characters appear in the collection, such as Carnac the Magnificent, Floyd Turbo and Tea Time Movie with Art Fern. A few pages of jokes and sketches originated from May 1958 when Carson guest hosted the Tonight Show for Jack Paar. Finally, the collection contains a few "submission packets" from writers hoping to get hired on the show.

**Indexing Terms**

Television scripts.

*Tonight show (Television program)*

Television comedy writers

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