

## **"The Writer Speaks" Oral History Collection**

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Writers Guild Foundation Archive

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## **Descriptive Summary**

**Title:** "The Writer Speaks" Oral History Collection

**Dates:** 1994-2013

**Collection Number:** WGF—IA—001

**Creator/Collector:**

**Extent:** 63 interviews; approximately 90 hours of video footage

Online items available  <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1cpvBEDotV7pSBwLB55MhqSmZ5O831Bc>

**Repository:** Writers Guild Foundation Archive

Los Angeles, California 90048

**Abstract:** "The Writer Speaks" interview series, conducted by the nonprofit Writers Guild Foundation from 1994 to 2013, consists of 63 videotaped oral history interviews with prominent film and television writers. Interviewees include Billy Wilder, Robert Towne, Julius Epstein, Garry Marshall, James L. Brooks, Norman Lear, Carl Reiner, William Goldman and Sidney Sheldon. Among the major topics discussed are early childhood, inspiration and influence, big breaks, career milestones, process and craft, the Hollywood blacklist, and advice to aspiring writers. The collection is available on DVD as well as on the Writers Guild Foundation's YouTube channel.

**Language of Material:** English

**Access**

Access to this collection is unrestricted.

**Publication Rights**

The rights belong to the Writers Guild Foundation. Please contact the Archive for requests to reproduce or publish materials.

**Preferred Citation**

"The Writer Speaks" Oral History Collection. Writers Guild Foundation Archive

**Acquisition Information**

The series was produced by the Writers Guild Foundation between the years 1994 and 2013 and is part of the institutional archive.

**Biography/Administrative History**

The nonprofit Writers Guild Foundation was founded in 1966 by a group of prestigious film and television writers with a mission to promote excellence and visibility in the craft of screenwriting and honor and preserve the work of the past. In reaching these goals, the WGF operates the Shavelson-Webb Library and Archive and hosts speaker events, conferences, and mentorship programs to support the next generation of emerging writers.

**Scope and Content of Collection**

"The Writer Speaks" is a collection of oral history interviews conducted by the Writers Guild Foundation between 1994 and 2013. The collection consists of 63 videotaped interviews with 67 prominent film and television writers. The interviews are available individually on DVD and collectively on the WGF's YouTube channel as the "Oral History" playlist. Among the topics discussed are early childhood, big breaks, career milestones, inspiration and influence, process and craft, professional relationships, the Hollywood blacklist, and advice to aspiring writers. Taken together the interviews paint a vivid, dynamic portrait of the film and television industry in the 20th century and chart the influence of popular entertainment on culture, society, politics and art. Interviewees include Edward Anhalt, Charles Bennett, Robert Benton, Walter Bernstein, Robert Brees, Irving Brecher, Marshall Brickman, James L. Brooks, Allan Burns, Bob Carroll, Jr., Lionel Chetwynd, Barbara Corday, Madelyn Pugh Davis, David Dortort, Julius J. Epstein, D.C. Fontana, Devery Freeman, Lowell Ganz, Lila Garrett, John Gay, Mel Goldberg, Bo Goldman, William Goldman, Everett Greenbaum, Buck Henry, Austin Kalish, Irma Kalish, Fay Kanin, Hal Kanter, Millard Kaufman, Christopher Knopf, Norman Lear, Ernest Lehman, William Link, David Lloyd, Babaloo Mandel, Loring Mandel, Allan Manings, John Mantley, Ann Marcus, Garry Marshall, Arthur Marx, Richard Matheson, Paul Mazursky, John McGreevey, Frank Pierson, Abraham Polonsky, Carl Reiner, Del Reisman, Bill Richmond, Jean Butler Rouverol, Alvin Sargent, Robert Schiller, Arnold Schulman, Sherwood Schwartz, Lorenzo Semple, Mel Shavelson, Sidney Sheldon, Treva Silverman, Leonard Stern, Stewart Stern, David Swift, Daniel Taradash, Robert Towne, Saul Turteltaub, Bob Weiskopf, and Billy Wilder. Interviewers and narrators include David Steven Cohen, Barbara Corday, Tony Curtis (narrator for the Ernest Lehman episode), Elias Davis, Seth Freeman, Julia Brady Jenner, Jack Lemmon (narrator for the Billy Wilder episode), Angela Wales Kirgo, Walter Matthau (narrator for the Julius Epstein episode), Jan Oxenberg, Del Reisman, Eva Marie Saint (interviewer for Daniel Taradash), Melville Shavelson, Michael Winship and John Sacret Young. Select interviews are also available as unedited transcripts.

