
Norman Corwin Collection

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Writers Guild Foundation Archive

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<https://www.wgfoundation.org/wgf-library-archive/about-the-film-and-tv-archive/>

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Norman Corwin Collection

Dates: 1930-2012

Collection Number: WGF-MS-019

Creator/Collector: Corwin, Norman, 1910-2011

Extent: 2.4 linear feet

Repository: Writers Guild Foundation Archive

Los Angeles, California 90048

Abstract: The Norman Corwin Collection, 1930-2012, contains manuscripts, correspondence, essays, articles, programs, personal artifacts and books by and about writer Norman Corwin. Correspondence includes letters to and from Ray Bradbury, Carl Sandburg and more. The collection also includes published works by and about Corwin, many with Corwin's handwritten annotations and marginalia.

Language of Material: English

Access

Available by appointment only.

Publication Rights

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

Preferred Citation

Norman Corwin Collection. Writers Guild Foundation Archive

Acquisition Information

Donated by Diane Corwin, September 18, 2014.

Biography/Administrative History

Norman Lewis Corwin was a radio writer, producer, screenwriter, playwright, stage director, and television writer. He was born May 3, 1910, in Boston, Massachusetts. "Dubbed 'Radio's Poet Laureate,' Corwin was a writer and producer who used the newly developed medium of radio to examine vital social issues of the day before turning to writing for film and television. Through documentaries and dramas such as *26 by Corwin* (1941) and *On a Note of Triumph* (1945), Corwin crafted a reputation for creating inspiring, if not challenging, serious programming that focused on history dramatizations, adaptations of literary works, radio plays, and human interest reports and featured innovative sound effects and narrative devices. He began his career in newspapers before becoming a news reader for a radio station. After a move to New York City in 1936, Corwin began creating programs first for an independent radio station then for the CBS Radio Network and United Nations Radio. Among his best-known radio programs were the series *Norman Corwin's Words without Music*, *We Hold These Truths* (1941), and *V-J Day* (1945), which was created for *V-J Day*. Corwin began exploring other mediums beginning in the late 1940s, writing the libretto to the opera *Warriors* (1947). In the 1950s and 1960s, he wrote a number of screenplays, including *The Blue Veil* (1951), *Scandal at Scourie* (1953), *No Place to Hide* (1956), and *Madison Avenue* (1962). Corwin was nominated for an Academy Award for penning the adaptation of *Lust for Life*. Corwin also wrote and occasionally directed stage plays, including *The Rivalry* (1959) and *The World of Carl Sandburg* (1960). For television he wrote several episodes of the documentary miniseries *F.D.R.* (1965) and had his own series *Norman Corwin Presents* (1972). Inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame in 1993, Corwin returned to radio with *Memos to a New Millennium*, distributed by Public Radio International, in 1999. Corwin died at 101 years old on October 18, 2011, survived by his son and daughter"— Norman Corwin. *Contemporary Theatre, Film and Television*. Vol. 118. Detroit: Gale, 2012. *Biography in Context*. Web. 10 Nov. 2014.

Scope and Content of Collection

Series I: Works, 1960-1993, contains manuscripts of performed plays and radio broadcasts. These include *The Hyphen* (1966), *Cervantes* (1973), *Together Tonight* (1976), and *the Plot to Overthrow Christmas* (1993). Some of these were marked up or annotated by Corwin. Finally, this series contains a limited edition handmade book by Corwin called *The Jerusalem Printout* (1978). Series II: Papers, 1930-2012, consists of correspondence, articles, essays, notes and personal artifacts created by Corwin during his lifetime. Essays and notes cover such topics as Hollywood, Ray Bradbury and writing. Correspondence spans decades of Corwin's personal and professional life and includes well known figures such as Ray Bradbury, Carl Sandburg, Kurt Vonnegut, Rod Serling, Dashiell Hammett, and Dorothy Parker. Also included in this series is an unpublished manuscript of an untitled project about the Revolutionary War. Lastly, this series contains a DVD from Corwin's memorial service and scrapbooks containing a selection of correspondence and photographs, both created by the donor. Series III: Books, 1937-2009, contains books by Corwin, about Corwin, and books he used in his research. Subseries

A, 1942-2009, contains published books of Corwin's radio dramas and correspondence, including *Thirteen* by Corwin (1942), *On a Note of Triumph* (1945), and *Overkill and Megalove* (1963). Subseries B 1937-1985 contains a book about Corwin (13 for Corwin, 1985) and books from his personal collection used in research. A highlight is *Dear Theo* (ed. Irving Stone, 1937), a book of Van Gogh's letters which Corwin used and annotated in writing his Oscar-nominated feature screenplay *Lust for Life* (1957).

Indexing Terms

Drama

Bradbury, Ray, 1920-2012

Radio scripts

Screenplays

Play scripts

Lust for life (Motion picture)

Dramatists

Radio writers

Screenwriters
