

## **Dee Caruso Papers**

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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:** Dee Caruso Papers

**Dates:** 1960-2007

**Collection Number:** WGF-MS-043

**Creator/Collector:** Caruso, Dee, 1929-2012

**Extent:** 9.2 Linear Feet

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

**Abstract:** The Dee Caruso Papers, 1960-2007, consist mostly of produced television and film scripts and treatments of unproduced TV shows and film. Some of the popular shows include The Jerry Lewis Show, Get Smart, The Monkees, The Red Skelton Hour, and The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour. This collection also contains personal and professional documents like promotional materials for films, course materials and instruction manuals from Caruso's UCLA career, and issues of Sick magazine, which he worked on.

**Language of Material:** English

**Access**

Majority of materials stored off site. One week advance notice required for retrieval.

**Publication Rights**

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

**Preferred Citation**

Dee Caruso Papers. Writers Guild Foundation Archive

**Acquisition Information**

Donated by Dee's wife Sandra Caruso, June 16, 2016.

**Biography/Administrative History**

Dee Caruso, born on April 27, 1929 in New York, is known for his work on the television shows Get Smart, The Monkees, and The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour. He got his start writing for nightclub acts such as Don Adams (of Get Smart! fame) and Allen & Rossi. From there he went on to work with some of the brightest stars in comedy, including Jerry Lewis and Red Skelton. He studied at Syracuse University, where he got his BA in American Literature and Journalism, and UCLA where he received his MA in Cinema. In addition to his screenwriting work, Caruso worked as a writer and editor on Sick magazine, a predecessor to Mad magazine, from 1960 to 1964. In 1965 he married his wife Sandra Maley and relocated to Los Angeles to work in television. Teaming up with writer Gerald Gardner, they worked on a number of different television programs. They wrote 22 episodes of The Monkees, were head writers for Get Smart, wrote for The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour, Happy Days, What's Happening!!, The Bill Cosby Show, The Ghost & Mrs. Muir, and Gilligan's Island and produced The Red Skelton Hour. Together they were also nominated for a Primetime Emmy for their work on David Frost's That Was The Week That Was. Caruso and Gardner occasionally wrote specials for famous comedians including Jack Benny, Jerry Lewis, Don Rickles, Debbie Reynolds, Robin Williams and Bill Cosby. While primarily known for writing for television, Caruso and Gardner also co-wrote a number of feature films. The most notable of these was the Disney film The World's Greatest Athlete in 1973, which starred Tim Conway, Jan-Michael Vincent and John Amos. They also wrote the screenplay for the Jerry Lewis film Which Way to the Front? in 1970 and television movies including How to Break Up a Happy Divorce, and Break Up. Caruso co-wrote the film Doin' Time in 1985 with Franelle Silver and Ron Zwang. After retiring from screenwriting, Caruso taught What's Funny, What's Not, with his wife at UCLA Extension for 10 years, before teaching screenwriting for 20 years in the UCLA film school. Dee Caruso died on May 27, 2012 at the age of 83 and was survived by his wife of 47 years, Sandra Caruso.

**Scope and Content of Collection**

Series I: Scripts, 1962-1985 includes scripts written by Dee Caruso throughout the course of his career, including television and feature films. Subseries A: Weekly Television Scripts, 1962-1978, consists of episodic shows: The Garry Moore Show, The Jerry Lewis Show, That Was the Week That Was, Get Smart!, The Monkees, The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour, The Red Skelton Hour, What's Happening, Gilligan's Island, and several others. Subseries B: Television Movies and Specials, 1969-1977 contains teleplays for a few TV movies, including ABC's Wide World of Entertainment, How to Break Up a Happy Divorce, and specials for comedians like Don Adams and Jack Benny. Subseries C: Feature Films, 1967-1985, consists of his feature film scripts Which Way to the Front?, The World's Greatest Athlete, and Doin' Time. Series II: Unproduced Projects and Treatments, 1960-2007, contains treatments, sketches and ideas for TV series and films. Subseries A: Unproduced Scripts, 1966-2007, contains scripts for unproduced films and television shows including The Hertz Brothers, The Pickle

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Brothers, Love American Style, Tay-Gar King of the Jungle, How to Break Up a Happy Marriage (a film based on the book Mortmain), Drag: A Comedy, Beatlemania, and several others. Subseries B: Treatments, 1960-2007, contains treatments of unrealized television shows and films, including The Closet President, The Italian Sports Car Agency, This is Barney Starker, A Slight Case of Murder, The Spy in E-Flat, and several others. Series III: Professional Papers, 1960-2007, contains original manuscripts for two unpublished books by Caruso, What's Funny, What's Not, and The New Screenwriters Handbook. It also contains promotional materials for The World's Greatest Athlete (posters, newspaper clippings, Disney correspondence) and for That Was the Week that Was, The Pickle Brothers, and The Hertz Brothers. Also included are course materials for a UCLA Class entitled "Intro to Comedy Writing in Film," a number of copies of Sick magazine as well as various story ideas and cover mockups, and many pages containing hundreds of Caruso's typed jokes.

**Indexing Terms**

Made-for-TV movies

Screenplays

Television scripts

*World's greatest athlete (Motion picture) Sick (Magazine)*

Screenwriters

Television Writers

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