
Joan Moore Collection

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Writers Guild Foundation Archive

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Joan Moore Collection

Dates: 1932-1976

Collection Number: WGF-MS-067

Creator/Collector: Moore, Joan

Extent: 1.75 linear feet

Repository: Writers Guild Foundation Archive
Los Angeles, California 90048

Abstract: The Joan Moore Collection, 1932-1976, documents the research done by Dr. Joan Moore, a sociologist who began a study of the Writers Guild of America in 1963 and subsequently wrote several unpublished manuscripts about the history of the Guild and the craft of screenwriting. The collection includes more than 300 surveys completed by Writers Guild members as part of Dr. Moore's research study, as well as correspondence, notes, research files, manuscripts, and detailed summaries of interviews that Dr. Moore conducted with many prominent writers.

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

Joan Moore Collection. Writers Guild Foundation Archive

Acquisition Information

Donated by Joan Moore, February 23, 2004

Biography/Administrative History

Dr. Joan Moore is a noted sociologist and scholar who received her Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. In 1963, when she was an assistant professor of sociology at the University of California, Riverside, Dr. Moore approached the Writers Guild of America about undertaking a sociological study of the writers' experience in the film and television industry. The Guild agreed, and Dr. Moore spent the next several years working with the Guild on the study, which included sending a detailed questionnaire to all of the members as well as interviewing a number of prominent writers about their experiences in the industry and in the Guild. Dr. Moore presented several papers on her findings, and also began writing a book-length history of the Guild, in collaboration with her husband Burton Moore. The book was never published, however, and Dr. Moore moved on to other areas of study, including a focus on Latinos in America and the issues of gangs and crime.

Scope and Content of Collection

The Joan Moore Collection documents the work of Dr. Joan Moore, a sociologist who undertook a study of the Writers Guild of America in 1963. The collection is divided into two series. Series I: Research 1932-1976, includes correspondence about setting up the study, as well as research materials that Dr. Moore compiled from Guild files and published sources. This includes three files of material given to her by Guild member John Larkin, who was active in many Guild activities in the 1950s. Most importantly, this series includes over 300 detailed surveys completed by members of the Writers Guild of America in 1964-1965, as well as the code book and code sheets that were used to analyze the data. The survey gave the respondents the opportunity to write replies on the form, so there is a great deal of information in the surveys about the practice of film and television writing in 1964. This series also includes detailed summaries, and in some cases transcripts, of interviews that Dr. Moore conducted relating to the history of the Writers Guild. Writers interviewed by Dr. Moore included Ray Bradbury, William Ludwig, Richard Murphy, Michael Blankfort, Marvin Borowsky, Edward Dmytryk, Samuel Guy Endor, Edmund Hartmann, Lowell Hawley, Emmet Lavery, John Howard Lawson, John Lee Mahin, Ernest Pascal, Robert Presnell, Allen Rivkin, Leonard Spigelgass and Karl Tunberg. Also included is the transcript of an in-depth 1965 interview with labor leader and anti-Communist crusader Roy Cohn. The interviewer is unidentified, but it does not appear to have been conducted by Moore. The series also includes notes, drafts, and statistics gleaned from the research by Dr. Moore. Series II: Writings and publications 1945 - ca. 1970s includes articles and manuscripts written by Joan Moore, including "An Unpublished Quasi-History of the Writers Guild" (circa 1968) and "The Hollywood Writer," (circa early 1970s), co-written with Burton Moore. Also included is a copy of a conference paper by Howard Suber entitled "Hollywood Blacklist: Fact and Fiction." This series also includes sixteen issues of the Guild journal "The Screen Writer," dating from 1945-1947.

Indexing Terms

Writers Guild of America

Screenwriters
Television writers
Sociologists
