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## **Bob & Esther Mitchell Collection**

Finding aid created by Writers Guild Foundation Archive staff using RecordEXPRESS

Writers Guild Foundation Archive

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

2018

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## **Descriptive Summary**

**Title:** Bob & Esther Mitchell Collection

**Dates:** 1945-1993

**Collection Number:** WGF-MS-005

**Creator/Collector:** Mitchell, Bob, 1918-1992; Mitchell, Esther, 1920-2012

**Extent:** 5.6 linear feet

**Repository:** Writers Guild Foundation Archive

Los Angeles, California 90048

**Abstract:** The Bob & Esther Mitchell Collection, 1945-1993 is comprised of materials relating to the partners' television writing careers, including development materials, multiple drafts with handwritten revisions, and a selection of ephemera and publicity materials. Shows represented include Buck Rogers in the 25th Century, Charlie's Angels, CHiPs, Combat!, The High Chaparral, Highway Patrol, Lock-Up, Perry Mason, S.W.A.T., and Swiss Family Robinson.

**Language of Material:** English

### **Access**

Available by appointment only. Materials stored offsite. One week advance notice required for retrieval.

### **Publication Rights**

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

### **Preferred Citation**

Bob & Esther Mitchell Collection. Writers Guild Foundation Archive

### **Acquisition Information**

Donated by the Mitchell family, January 20, 2005.

### **Biography/Administrative History**

Bob and Esther Mitchell were a married couple who wrote collaboratively for a number of popular television shows from the 1960s to 1980s. Both were natives of Wyoming and were married in 1942. Bob was born Robert Junior Mitchell on April 27, 1918 and attended the University of Wyoming, where he established the university's Radio Department and produced, co-wrote, and directed two award-winning musicals. Mitchell served in the U.S. Army in World War II and took a bullet in the chest (which he carried with him the rest of his life). While recuperating, he began writing the stories of the other men in his hospital tent and was appointed as a media aide for the remainder of the war. Following the war, he joined his wife Esther in Hollywood and began writing for radio with his college friend Gene Levitt, with whom he would collaborate for many years to come. Both Levitt and Mitchell moved to New York in 1950 to write for The Steve Allen Show. Upon returning to Los Angeles, Bob began writing for television with scripts for crime shows such as Highway Patrol, Lock-Up, and Perry Mason. It was at this time that he began writing with Esther. Bob died on October 13, 1992 in Los Angeles. - from IMDb's bio written by Esther Mitchell. Esther O. Mitchell was born on May 31, 1920 and passed away one day short of her ninety-second birthday on May 30, 2012. Along with Bob, she wrote extensively for the war drama Combat! and the late 1960s science fiction show Land of the Giants. The pair wrote scripts together for over twenty years, including episodes for Cannon, Charlie's Angels, S.W.A.T., Swiss Family Robinson, and CHiPs. (Written by Esther Mitchell)

### **Scope and Content of Collection**

The Bob & Esther Mitchell Collection, 1945-1993 is comprised of materials relating to the partners' radio and television writing careers, including treatments, step outlines, multiple drafts with handwritten revisions, and a selection of ephemera and publicity materials. The collection is organized into four series. Series I consists of produced television works and related materials. Shows represented include Buck Rogers in the 25th Century, Charlie's Angels, CHiPs, Combat!, The High Chaparral, Highway Patrol, Lock-Up, Perry Mason, S.W.A.T., and Swiss Family Robinson among others. In addition to several scripts for Land of the Giants, the collection includes fan letters and publications paying tribute to the show as late as 1993 despite the series ending in 1970. Series II contains radio scripts and production materials from the late 1940s and 1950s, including several audition and demonstration shows. Programs represented include The Dinah Shore Show, Gunsmoke, Make Believe Town, Murder by Experts, and The Spirit. Series III consists of a small amount of miscellaneous material, including credits lists and minor guild materials such as a Radio Writers Guild bulletin from 1949. Lastly, Series IV contains scripts and development materials for unproduced projects. This series is subdivided into material for identified shows and unidentified projects. Material in each series is arranged alphabetically by title.

### **Indexing Terms**

Television writers

Radio writers

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Mitchell, Robert J., Lieutenant

*Buck Rogers in the 25th century (Television program) Charlie's Angels (Television program) CHiPs (Television program) Combat! (Television program) Perry Mason (Television program) Gunsmoke (Radio program) Land of the Giants (Television program)*

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