
Guide to the Jefferson Sutton Science Fiction Collection

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Guide to the Jefferson Sutton Science Fiction Collection 1943/1985

Special Collections & University Archives

Overview of the Collection

Collection Title: Jefferson Sutton Science Fiction Collection

Dates: 1943-1985

Bulk Dates: 1958-1979

Identification: MS-0247

Creator: Sutton, Jeff, 1913-1979

Physical Description: 5.68 linear ft

Language of Materials: English

Repository: Special Collections & University Archives

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Biographical Information:

Jefferson Sutton was born on July, 25, 1913 in Los Angeles, California. He began his career at age fourteen as an office boy in the editorial department of the *Los Angeles Examiner* where he worked for many years. He was a staff photographer-writer with International News Photos from 1937 to 1940.

Sutton enlisted in the Marine Corps from 1932 through 1936, and re-enlisted at the outset of World War II, serving with the Second Marine Division in the South and Central Pacific areas. Later, he wrote a novel called *The River* about his experience on Guadalcanal.

In the 1940s, his work experience included jobs such as a reporter, news and portrait photographer, and housing expediter. He also worked as an assistant to San Diego Mayor Harley Knox. After receiving his Master's Degree in Experimental Psychology at San Diego State University, Jefferson Sutton worked as a research engineer in human factors engineering in the aerospace industry for several years before turning to editorial public relations with General Dynamics/Astronautics. As a Convair human engineer, he explored man's adaptation to machines and established his business as an editorial consultant to industry. Several years later he returned to his "true love" – writing. During the many years of his writing career which started in 1958 with the publication of his science fiction novel *First on the Moon*, Jefferson Sutton remained a free-lance editorial consultant to aerospace industries in 1960-1979. He published articles in related professional magazines.

Sutton published 23 novels in more than 10 languages. In one of his interviews he said that writing came naturally to him: his father was the editor in the *Los Angeles Examiner* for 35 years; his grandfather had experience with publishing newspapers. Sutton's writing includes a number of science fiction books, war, political, and juvenile books. Sutton wrote that his greatest interest had always been people and the settings in which they function. As a writer, Sutton stayed in areas in which he was most knowledgeable – space, astronautics, war, newspaper backgrounds, and in areas of pure imagination (science fiction). In 1962 he wrote the novel *Apollo at Go*, a prophetic book about man's first landing on the moon. In his fictitious account, he missed the eventual, actual 1969 landing on the moon by 9 days. Among his earlier books about space exploration are *Bombs in Orbit* (1959) and *Spacehive* (1960).

Jefferson Sutton married Eugenia Geneva Hensen on February 1, 1941. Eugenia G. Hansen was born in Denmark, Wisconsin. She went to the University of Wisconsin and then transferred to the University of California at Los Angeles where she earned her Bachelor's degree in economics and met Jefferson Sutton. After the World War II, the couple lived in the San Diego area.

Eugenia (Jean) Sutton worked as a secretary for the San Diego City Council (1949-1952) and administrative assistant in San Diego State College (1953-1955) before receiving her Master's degree in education from San Diego State University and began teaching at the Grossmont Union High School District in 1959. The Suttons had two children: Christopher and Gale.

Jean Sutton participated in the editing of 15 novels written by her husband, starting with his first fiction book *First on the Moon*. Jean and Jeff Sutton first collaborated as coauthors on the juvenile book *The Beyond* (1968). They published some

juvenile books as coauthors, including *The River*, *The Programmed Man*, *Lord of the Stars*, and others. Two of them, *The Beyond* and *The Programmed Man*, were Junior Literature Guild selection.

Jefferson Sutton died on January 31, 1979 at his home in La Mesa at the age of 65.

Access Terms

This collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Genre/Form of Material:

Personal Papers

Publications

Personal Name:

Sutton, Jeff

Sutton, Jeff -- Archives

Sutton, Jeff -- Criticism and interpretation -- Sources

Topical Term:

Authors, American -- 20th century -- Biography -- Sources

Science fiction, American

Science fiction, American -- History and criticism -- Sources

Writers and their works

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Conditions Governing Access:

This collection is open for research.

Preferred Citation:

Identification of item, folder title, box number, Jefferson Sutton Science Fiction Collection, Special Collections and University Archives, Library and Information Access, San Diego State University.

Related Materials:

Elizabeth Chater Science Fiction Collection

Elizabeth Chater Science Fiction Manuscript Collection

John Hood Science Fiction Collection

Arrangement of Materials:

I. Manuscripts, 1958-1979

II. Articles, 1943-1958

III. Correspondence, 1958-1980

IV. Research Materials, 1956-1979

Scope and Contents

Jefferson Sutton, a San Diego State University graduate, is the author of more than 20 novels written in different genres: science fiction, war, politics, and juvenile literature. His books can be found in libraries throughout the country, his novels were published in more than 10 languages, and two of his juvenile books were Junior Literature Guild selections (*Lord of the Stars*, 1968, and *The Programmed Man*, 1969). Most of the collection documents Jeff Sutton's career as a writer. The collection consists of the typewritten drafts of Jeff Sutton's novels, correspondence with publishers, editors, and readers, publications about Jeff Sutton, book reviews, and private research materials. The smaller part of the collection documents Sutton's successful professional career as a research engineer. The collection contains Jefferson Sutton's publications in the popular aviation magazine *Flying*, the U.S. Department of Air Force's magazine *Flying Safety*, and in the Air Force Institute

of Technology's journal *Contact*. The collection also includes materials written by the wife and coauthor Eugenia Geneva Sutton. The papers date from approximately 1943 to 1985 with the bulk of the material from 1958 to 1979. The collection is organized into four series: [Manuscripts](#), [Articles](#), [Correspondence](#), and [Research Materials](#).

The [Manuscripts](#) series consists of typewritten original book manuscripts of Jeff Sutton's novels. The series contains manuscripts of nineteen novels written between 1958-1979. This series documents Sutton's creative processes as well as the impact publishers and editors had upon the final published versions of each included book manuscript. The collection includes two drafts of *The Missile Lords*. They are marked as Draft # 1 and Draft # 2. The *Frogman of Space* novel also has two drafts. The draft titled *Frogman of Space*, first draft pages includes the first 162 pages of the first draft of the novel. This part of the novel was later edited and replaced by 126 pages in the second draft of the novel housed in the file *Frogman of Space*. All the manuscripts have author's notes and remarks. There are missing pages in two manuscripts (*The Man Who Saw Tomorrow*, and *The Missile Lords*, draft # 1). The series does not contain the manuscripts from four novels published by Jeff Sutton in 1958-1970. The series is filed alphabetically by title.

The second series, [Articles](#), is the smallest in the collection. This part of the collection presents Sutton's publications in newspapers and magazines before he started his career as a professional writer. The series documents Sutton's early career, and illustrates the effect of his life experience during the World War II, and of his years in the aerospace industry on later writing processes. The themes of war, space and flying appear repeatedly in Sutton's novels. The collection contains copies of *Flying* and *Flying Safety* magazines from 1957-1958 with Jeff Sutton's articles, and a photocopy of his publication in the *Los Angeles Examiner* (1943). The *Los Angeles Examiner* published photos taken by Sutton in the time of his serving in the Second Marine Division on the South and Central Pacific areas during World War II and the letter written by him to Lynn Spencer, the *Los Angeles Examiner* society editor, about the realities of war. Sutton's biography states that he worked as a reporter and photographer for many years, but the collection does not contain any of Jeff Sutton's other newspaper articles or photographs. The series is filed in alphabetical order (magazine or the newspaper title).

The [Correspondence](#) series contains documents dated from approximately 1958 to 1980. It includes correspondence of Jeff Sutton. Newspaper clippings with book reviews and articles about Jeff and Jean Sutton and their writings are scattered throughout the files. This series provides a detailed picture of the interaction of Jefferson Sutton with editors and publishers regarding the content of his novels, financial details of publication, and publicity. One of the folders contains the correspondence of Eugenia Sutton with editors and publishers after the death of Jefferson Sutton, and photos of Jeff Sutton and his wife. The series includes reviews of Jeff Sutton's books. Many reviews were photocopied by the Suttons, and do not contain information about the publisher or the exact date of publication. Originals of letters with readers' reactions to Jeff Sutton's books are organized in chronological order. The materials in the series are filed alphabetically, by file name.

[Research Materials](#) series contains research materials used by Jefferson Sutton during his career as a research engineer and a science fiction writer from 1956 to 1979. It demonstrates how the earlier research and publications prepared Jefferson Sutton for his career as a professional writer, documents his writing processes, provides details of story development. The series includes a box of paper cards with the bibliography, background information for science fiction book writing, and typewritten notes prepared by Jefferson Sutton. The card file is organized numerically. Some cards are missing from the card file.

Manuscripts 1958-1979

Box 1, Folder 1	Alien from the Star 1969
Box 1, Folder 2	Alton's Unguessable
Box 1, Folder 3	Alton's Unguessable
Box 1, Folder 4	Apollo at Go
Box 1, Folder 5	Apollo at Go
Box 1, Folder 6	The Beyond
Box 1, Folder 7	Beyond Apollo
Box 2, Folder 1	The Boy Who Had the Power
Box 2, Folder 2	Cassady
Box 2, Folder 3	Cassady
Box 2, Folder 4	Frogman of Space, first draft pages
Box 2, Folder 5	Frogman of Space
Box 2, Folder 6	H-Bomb over America
Box 2, Folder 7	H-Bomb over America
Box 3, Folder 1	Lord of the Stars 1969
Box 3, Folder 2	The Man Who Saw Tomorrow

Box 3, Folder 3	The Mindblocked Man
Box 3, Folder 4	The Missile Lords (Draft #1)
Box 3, Folder 5	The Missile Lords (Draft #1)
Box 4, Folder 1	The Missile Lords (Draft #2)
Box 4, Folder 2	The Missile Lords (Draft #2)
Box 4, Folder 3	The Programmed Man
Box 4, Folder 4	The River
Box 4, Folder 5	The River
Box 5, Folder 1	Spacehive
Box 5, Folder 2	Step One 1958
Box 5, Folder 3	Tropic Fury
Box 5, Folder 4	Watch on the Mountains
	Articles 1943-1958
Box 5, Folder 5	Flying 1958
Box 5, Folder 6	Flying Safety 1957-1958
Box 5, Folder 7	Los Angeles Examiner 1943
	Correspondence 1958-1980
Box 5, Folder 8	Apollo at Go 1962-1964
Box 5, Folder 9	Eugenia Sutton 1954-1979
Box 6, Folder 1	Readers 1958-1980
Box 6, Folder 2	Regarding the Publication of "Missile Lords" 1960-1970
Box 6, Folder 3	Reviews 1958-1980
	Research Materials 1956-1979
Box 6, Folder 4	Research Publications 1956-1958
Box 7, Folder 1	Card File circa 1956-1979