



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Superman Comic Book Collection

NMAH.AC.0274

Dan Darroch

1987

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Superman Comic Book Collection
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0274
Date:	ca. 1930s-1985.
Extent:	0.3 Cubic feet (2 boxes, 1 map-folder)
Creator:	Austin, Terry Siegel, Jerry (cartoonist) Shuster, Joseph (cartoonist) Salkind, Alexander Lowther, George D.C. Comics Inc. Community Life, Div. of, NMAH, SI
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

This collection was donated by D.C. Comics Incorporated, through Paul Levitz, Vice President, Spring, 1987.

Ownership and Custodial History

This collection was transferred to the Archives Center from the Division of Community Life, October 5, 1987.

Related Archival Materials

Superman artifacts and additional documentary material from D.C. Comics in Community Life collections (separate transaction, accession no. 1987.0213). See also AC0106, Mrs. Curtis B. Patterson Comic Book Collection, 1901-1917.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Dan Darroch, 1987

Preferred Citation

Superman Comic Book Collection, circa 1930s-1985, Archives Center, National Museum of American History

Restrictions

This collection is open for research use.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

The Superman character was created and illustrated in the 1930s by two Cleveland high school students, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster. At first unable to achieve publication as a comic strip, they got the character incorporated into a 1938 comic book, which was an immediate success. Since then Superman has been syndicated widely in newspapers, books, radio and TV programs, movies and animated cartoons. The character has been extensively used in commercial and public interest advertising campaigns.

Scope and Contents

The collection includes numerous newspaper clippings of the Superman comic strip, 1940-1950, promotional material using the Superman character, Superman comic books, 1944-1978 and illustrations of Superman drawn by Terry Austin in 1984. Dramatic scripts for TV and movie portrayals of Superman in 1977 and 1982 as well as a novel by George Lowther about Superman published in 1942 are also parts of the collection.

Arrangement

Collection organized into six series.

Series 1: Superman illustrations by Terry Austin, 1984

Series 2: Superman motion picture scripts by Alexander Salkind, 1977-1982

Series 3: Superman comic books, 1944-1978

Series 4: Superman (novel) by George Lowther, 1942

Series 5: Superman promotional material, 1947-1985

Series 6: Superman newspaper clippings and comic strips, 1940-1950

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Comic strips -- 1930-1990

Heroes -- 1930-1990

Superman (Fictitious character) in mass media

Types of Materials:

Letters (correspondence) -- 1920-1930

Novels -- 1940-1950

Screenplays -- 1970-1980

Scripts (documents)

Names:

Superman (Fictitious character)

Occupations:

Cartoonists -- 1930-1990

Container Listing

Series 1: Superman Illustrations by Terry Austin, 1984

Box 1, Folder 1

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Series 2: Scripts, 1977, 1979, 1982

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Box 1, Folder 2 | "Superman" by Alexander Salkind, , 1977 |
| Box 1, Folder 3 | Revised outline "Superman II" , 1979 |
| Box 1, Folder 4 | Final draft "Superman III" , 1982 |

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Series 3: Superman Comic Books, 1944-1978

Map-folder 1

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Series 4: "Superman" (Novel) by George Lowther, 1942

Box 1, Folder 6

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Series 5: Superman Promotional Material, 1947-1985

Box 1, Folder 7

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Series 6: Newspaper Clippings, 1918, 1940-1948

Map-folder 1	Atlanta Constitution Comics, 1918
Box 1, Folder 8; Map-folder 1	"Superman", 1940-1948
Box 2	Superman Comic Strips (originals), 1940s-1950s As a preservation measure, researchers must use reference copies.
Box 1, Folder 5	Superman Comic Strips (reference copies), circa 1940s-1950
Box 1, Folder 5A	Superman Comic Strips (reference copies), (bulk 1940s)

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