

## MS-124, Suzanne Clauser Papers

**Collection Number:** MS-124

**Title:** Suzanne Clauser Papers

**Dates:** 1961- 1993 (Bulk 1961-1988)

**Creator:** Clauser, Suzanne, 1929-2016

**Summary/Abstract:**

Suzanne Clauser was a Yellow Springs, Ohio author who wrote extensively for television and published a successful novel. Her papers include: copies of her earlier unpublished works, copies of several scripts written for the *Bonanza* television series, correspondence, material pertaining to her novel titled *A Girl named Sooner*, screenplays, biographical materials, and clippings.

**Quantity/Physical Description:** 3.5 linear feet

**Languages:** English, German

**Repository:**

Special Collections and Archives, Paul Laurence Dunbar Library, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435-0001, (937)775-2092

**Restrictions on Access:** There are no restrictions on accessing materials in this collection.

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**Preferred Citation:**

[Description of item, Date, Box #, Folder #], MS-124, Suzanne Clauser Papers, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio.

**Acquisition:**

This collection was donated to Wright State University Special Collections and Archives by Suzanne Clauser in May 1981.

**Processed by:** Dorothy Smith, Spring 1982. Revised by Tim Binkley in 2004. Finding aid revised according to DACS standards by Allie Edmonds in 2018.

**Arrangement:**

This collection is arranged into 6 series and 22 subseries:

- Series I: Early Work, 1961-1962  
 Series II: *Bonanza* Material, 1962-1972  
 Series III: *A Girl Named Sooner*, Novel and Screenplay, 1962-1980
- Series IV: Television Screenplays, 1962-1993  
 Subseries IVA: Pioneer Woman, 1973-1974  
 Subseries IVB: The Family Nobody Wanted, 1974-1979  
 Subseries IVC: Grandpa and Frank, 1976-1977  
 Subseries IVD: Little Women, 1977-1979  
 Subseries IVE: The Pride of Jesse Hallam, 1979-1981  
 Subseries IVF: Journey to Topaz, 1962-1975  
 Subseries IVG: Executive Order, 1975  
 Subseries IVH: 24 McFall, 1975  
 Subseries IVI: Harper's Ferry, 1977-1978  
 Subseries IVJ: Suzannah and Em, 1978  
 Subseries IVK: First Do No Harm, 1968-1979  
 Subseries IVL: Ri, 1979  
 Subseries IVM: Children of An Lac, 1980  
 Subseries IVN: An Unmarried Man, 1980  
 Subseries IVO: Country Roads, "Lucille", 1981  
 Subseries IVP: Calamity Jane: Her Own Story, 1982-1983  
 Subseries IVQ: The Soong Sisters, 1984  
 Subseries IVR: Happy Ending, 1986  
 Subseries IVS: Christmas Snow, 1986  
 Subseries IVT: From Vietnam with Love, 1988  
 Subseries IVU: Heaven and Hell, 1993  
 Subseries IVV: Danielle Steel's *Message from 'Nam*, 1993
- Series V: General Correspondence, 1963-1979  
 Series VI: Miscellaneous Material, 1971-1993

**Biographical Note:**

Suzanne Phillips Clauser was born in 1929 and grew up in a suburb near New York City. She attended Indiana University and graduated in 1951 with a degree in American and British literature. In the same year, she married Charles Clauser, a graduate student finishing a Ph.D. in physical anthropology. In 1954 her husband was awarded a Fulbright Grant and the Clausers spent ten months in Burma and Rangoon. Eventually, the Clausers settled in Yellow Springs, Ohio.

In the early 1960s, Clauser drew on her experience in Asia for her first successful writing effort, a travel reminiscence of India published in *Blackwood's Magazine*, a British literary journal. After, Clauser began to write scripts for the *Bonanza* television series. Rod Serling, who came to Yellow Springs to teach a writing course at his Alma Mater, Antioch College; helped Clauser sell her first script to *Bonanza* in 1964. During the next eight years, Clauser wrote material for *Bonanza* regularly. By the time the series ceased production in 1972, it had accepted thirteen of Clauser's scripts and produced eleven.

Clauser's first novel, *A Girl Named Sooner*, was published by Doubleday and Company in 1972. It was well received and Mrs. Clauser was soon at work on its adaptation to a full-length television movie. *Sooner* was shot on location in a small Indiana town and aired in June of 1975. It received very high ratings as well as endorsements from the National Educational Association and the National Council of Churches.

Clauser wrote several highly regarded, full-length plays including *Pioneer Woman* (1974); *The Family Nobody Wanted* (1974); *Grandpa and Frank* (1977); a four-hour adaptation of Alcott's *Little Women* (1978); and *The Pride of Jesse Hallam* (1981), a story about adult functional illiterates which won an award for the best original television play for 1981. Clauser's *Christmas Snow* aired in December of 1986 and was named best children's program at the 1987 Golden Gate Awards.

### **Scope and Content:**

The papers within the Suzanne Clauser collection fall into six series. The arrangement within the files is chronological.

Series I, Early Work, contains handwritten and typed drafts, correspondence and final published copies of two of Clauser's early pieces: "The Green Key," a short story; and "Indian Ghosts," a travel reminiscence. Also included, are several drafts of an unpublished short story, "The Gift." Dates for this series are 1961-1962.

Series II, *Bonanza*, contains correspondence and drafts for nine of the thirteen scripts Mrs. Clauser sold to the *Bonanza* television series. The correspondence is mainly with the production staff and covers business matters, script revisions and various story ideas. The scripts in this series show an evolution through drafts and revisions to the "shooting final" copy. This series covers the years 1962-1972.

Series III, *A Girl Named Sooner*, Novel and Screenplay, contains material pertaining to the novel and the television play of the same name. Included is correspondence between Clauser and publishers, literary agents, and television producers; as well as drafts and revisions of both the novel and screenplay. Also included is a copy of the published novel and a German language edition. Span dates for this series are 1962-1980.

Series IV, Television Screenplays, contains drafts, revisions and "shooting finals" of full-length Clauser screenplays, most of which have been produced for television. Two of the plays, *Pioneer Woman* and *Little Women*, also contain a prospectus for their expansion into a weekly series. Some plays represented in this series include accompanying correspondence regarding revisions, logistics of shooting, and various business matters. The material in this series covers the years 1962-1993.

Series V, General Correspondence, The general correspondence in this series is mostly with Clauser's literary agents in New York and Hollywood, and pertains to whatever writing project she was at work on at the time. The correspondence dates from 1963-1979.

Series VI, Miscellaneous Material, contains biographical and professional data, a file of newspaper and magazine clippings, and a copy of *Night Song* by the late Constance Sontag, for which Mrs. Clauser wrote the foreword. This material dates from 1971-1993.

## **Subject Terms**

### **Persons/Families**

Clauser, Suzanne, 1929-2016

### **Places**

Yellow Springs (Ohio) -- Authors

### **Subjects (General)**

Authors, American -- Ohio

### **Material Types**

Scripts (writing)

Screenplays

Acetate film

Correspondence

## Collection Inventory:

### **Series I: Early Work**

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	1	"The Gift," short story	1961
	2	"Indian Ghosts," travel reminiscence	1961-1962
	3	"The Green Key," short story	1961-1962

### **Series II: Bonanza Material**

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	4	<i>Bonanza</i> Correspondence	1962-1972
	5	"Woman of Fire"	1964
	6	"Devil on Her Shoulder"	1965
	7	"A Natural Wizard"	1966
	8	"Same Pines, Different Wind"	1968
	9	"What's Past is Prologue"	1968
	10	"The Trouble with Amy"	1969
2	1	"The Stillness Within"	1970
	2	"The Stillness Within"	1970
	3	"A Single Pilgrim"	1970
	4	"A Single Pilgrim"	1970
	5	"Second Sight"	1971
	6	"Tristy"	1969
	7	"A Girl from Boston"	1972
	8	"A Girl from Boston"	1972

### **Series III: A Girl Named Sooner- Novel and Screenplay**

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Dates</u>
3	1	A Girl Named Sooner	1972
	2	Ein Madchen Namen Sooner, German ed.	1976
	3	Correspondence- Novel	1968-1980
	4	Typed copy of novel as accepted after first major revision, pp. 1-133	1971
	5	Typed copy of novel as accepted after first major revision, pp. 134-end	1971
	6	Correspondence- Screenplay	1973-1979
	7	First draft of screenplay	Nov. 1973
	8	Shooting final of screenplay	May 1974
3A	1	Film (Located in Audio/Visual Storage)	1977

**Series IV: Television Screenplays**

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Dates</u>
<b>Subseries IVA: Pioneer Woman</b>			
4	1	Correspondence	1973
	2	Draft	1973 Aug
	3	Final draft and revision	1973 Aug-Oct
	4	Prospectus for a television series	1974
	5	Treatment for a television movie	1973
<b>Subseries IVB: The Family Nobody Wanted</b>			
4	6	Correspondence	1974-1975
	7	Final draft and revisions	1979 Dec
<b>Subseries IVC: Grandpa and Frank</b>			
4	8	Correspondence	1976-1977
	9	Final draft and revisions	1977 July
<b>Subseries IVD: Little Women</b>			
4	10	Correspondence	1977-1979
	11	5-hour treatment for television	1977
	12	Presentation for a 1-hour weekly series	1978
	13	Parts III, IV, and V	1979 Sept
5	1	Parts I through V	1977 Dec
	2	Parts I and II	1978 Jan
	3	Part I	1978 March
	4	Part II	1978 March
	5	"A Little Box of Haunts"	1979 Jan
	6	"If You Can't Forget, Forgive a Little"	1979 Jan
6	1	"Death of a Dream," episode 8	circa 1979
	2	"Escapade in Boston," labeled "#8"	circa 1979
	3	"A Flight of Dreams," episode 9	circa 1979
	4	Episode 10 (no title)	circa 1979
	5	"A Week to Remember," draft	1979 Jan
	6	"A Week to Remember," draft	1979 Feb
<b>Subseries IVE: The Pride of Jesse Hallam</b>			
6	7	Correspondence	1979-1981
7	1	Notes and Character Sketches	undated
	2	Draft	1979 Nov
	3	Draft	undated

Box	File	Description	Dates
7	4	Second Draft: "Old Santiago and Me"	1980 March
	5	Second Draft: "The Testing of Jesse Hallam"	1980 March
	6	Draft: "Hard Words"	1980 April
	7	Revisions	1980 April
8	1	Draft – "Hard Words"	1980 April
	2	Draft	1980 Aug
	3	Final shooting draft	1980 Sept
<b>Subseries IVF: Journey to Topaz</b>			
8	4	Sources	1962-1975
	5	Correspondence	1974-1975
	6	Second Draft	1974 Aug
<b>Subseries IVG: Executive Order</b>			
8	7	Notes	1975
	8	Narrative outlines	1975
	9	Narratives	1975
	10	First draft – working copy	1975
9	1	Revised first draft with transcription of FDR speech	1975
	2	Second Draft	1975
<b>Subseries IVH: 24 McFall</b>			
9	3	Sources	1975
	4	Correspondence	1975
	5	619 McFall, notes and sketches	1975
	6	24 McFall, first draft	1975 Oct
	7	24 McFall, second draft	1975 Nov
	8	24 McFall, pilot	1975 Nov
<b>Subseries IVI: Harper's Ferry</b>			
9	9	Sources and correspondence	1977
10	1	First draft and revisions	1977 Nov
	2	Second draft	1978
	3	Second draft	1978
<b>Subseries IVJ: Suzannah and Em</b>			
10	4	Correspondence	1978
	5	First draft	1978 Feb
<b>Subseries IVK: First Do No Harm</b>			
10	6	Sources	1968-1978

Box	File	Description	Dates	
10	7	Correspondence	1978	
	8	Notes	1978	
	9	Treatment / Step Outline	1978 June	
	10	First draft	1978 Aug	
11	1	Second draft	1978 Oct	
	2	Third draft	1979 Jan	
	3	Final draft	1979 Feb	
<b>Subseries IVL: "Ri"</b>				
11	4	Outline	1979	
	5	Correspondence	1979	
	6	Treatment	1979	
	7	First draft	1979 July	
	8	Second draft	1979	
<b>Subseries IVM: Children of An Lac</b>				
11	9	Correspondence	1980	
	10	Treatment	1980	
	11	Revised draft	1980 Jan	
<b>Subseries IVN: An Unmarried Man</b>				
12	1	Correspondence	1980	
	2	First draft	1980 Nov	
<b>Subseries IVO: Country Roads, "Lucille"</b>				
12	3	Rough draft discards	1981	
	4	First draft	1981 May	
	5	Second draft	1981	
<b>Subseries IVP: Calamity Jane: Her Own Story</b>				
12	6	Treatment and revisions	1982 April	7
		Early draft	1982	
	8	Early draft	1982	
	9	First draft	1982	
13	1	Second draft	1982 Oct	
	2	Draft polishes	1982	
	3	Final draft	1983 April	
	4	Final draft	1983 April	
	5	Final draft	1983 May	
	6	Final draft	1983 May	
	7	Final draft	1983 May	



Box	File	Description	Dates
<b>Subseries IVQ: The Song Sisters</b>			
13	8	Second draft, pages 1-70	1984 Oct
	9	Second draft, pages 71-end	1984 Oct
<b>Subseries IVR: Happy Ending</b>			
14	1	Screenplay	1986
<b>Subseries IVS: Christmas Snow</b>			
14	2	Second draft	1986 July
	3	Production draft	1986 Oct
<b>Subseries IVT: From Vietnam with Love</b>			
14	4	Part 1, second draft	1988 Oct
	5	Part 2, second draft	1988 Oct
<b>Subseries IVU: Heaven and Hell</b>			
14	6	Part 1	1993 June
	7	Part 2	1993 June
	8	Part 3	1993 June
<b>Subseries IVV: Danielle Steel's <i>Message from 'Nam</i></b>			
14	9	Part 1, third revision	1993 June 11
	10	Part 2, third revision	1993 June 15

**Series V: General Correspondence**

Box	File	Description	Dates
15	1	Correspondence	1963-1967
	2	Correspondence	1968-1979

**Series VI: Miscellaneous**

Box	File	Description	Dates
15	3	Biographical and Professional Data	undated
	4	Newspaper Clippings	1971-1993
	5	Other Publicity	1972-1981
	6	Book: <i>Night Song</i> by Constance Sontag	1976