

Ann Savage:

An Inventory of Her Papers at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Savage, Ann, 1921-2008
Title:	Ann Savage Papers
Dates:	1943-2008, undated
Extent:	12 document boxes, 1 oversize folder (osf) (5 linear feet)
Abstract:	The Ann Savage Papers contain film stills, posters, photographs, moving images, lobby cards, screenplays, contracts, and personal papers belonging to film and television actress Ann Savage.
Call Number:	Film Collection FI-066
Language:	English, printed material in Italian, French, German, Spanish, Czech, and Russian.
Access:	Open for research The Ann Savage Papers contain documents from which personal information has been redacted to protect an individual's privacy. Examples include Social Security and bank account numbers. The originals were removed and replaced with redacted photocopies.

Administrative Information

Acquisition:	Purchases, 2008-2009 (08-09-009-P, 09-04-005-P)
Processed by:	Shannon Hildenbrand, 2012
Repository:	Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin

Biographical Sketch

Ann Savage was born Bernice Maxine Lyon on February 19, 1921, in Columbia, South Carolina, to Hugh Lyon and Louise Carr Miller Lyon. When Savage was still a child, her family relocated to Los Angeles. Her first film role was as an extra in *The Great Waltz* (1938); this experience led her to drop out of school and pursue an acting career. Savage honed her craft with Max Reinhardt, an Austrian acting coach best known for his direction of Academy Award-winning *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1935).

Savage signed with Columbia Pictures in 1942, and at this time she abandoned her given name in favor of a stage name. As a contract player during the early 1940s, Savage earned major roles in fifteen films, the majority of which were B-movies. These films spanned a variety of genres, including comedy (*Dangerous Blondes*, 1943), westerns (*Saddles and Sagebrush*, 1943), and musicals (*Two Señoritas from Chicago*, 1943).

In 1945, Savage appeared opposite Tom Neal in *Detour*, a low-budget film noir directed by Edgar G. Ulmer. Savage played Vera, an audacious, hard-drinking woman who was darker and less glamorous than Ann's previous femme fatale roles. *Detour* performed well in theaters, but it was not until almost 40 years later that the film began to receive both critical acclaim and a cult status among viewers. In 1992, the Library of Congress selected *Detour* for inclusion in the United States National Film Registry; it was the first film noir to be chosen for preservation.

Savage's film career continued until she moved to New York with her husband, Bert D'Armand, in the late 1950s. Though she appeared in several television roles and commercials in the 1950s and 1960s, Savage soon withdrew from the entertainment community almost entirely. She became an avid pilot; after her husband's death in 1969, she took odd jobs to finance her flying lessons. After *Detour's* critical resurgence in the 1980s, Savage began attending film festivals and events. Her final role was in Guy Maddin's film *My Winnipeg* (2007). Savage died in Los Angeles on December 25, 2008.

Sources:

In addition to material found within the Ann Savage papers, the following sources were used:

Morton, Lisa, and Kent Adamson. *Savage Detours: The Life and Work of Ann Savage*. Jefferson, N.C.: MacFarland & Co., 2010.

Scope and Contents

The Ann Savage Papers include film stills, posters, photographs, moving images, lobby cards, screenplays, contracts, correspondence, clippings, bound volumes, magazines, printed material, maps, itineraries, guidebooks, and tickets from the life and film career of the actress Ann Savage. Twelve boxes of material are arranged in two series: I. Film and Television, 1943-1955; and II. Career and Personal Papers, 1943-2008, undated.

Series I: Film and Television materials are arranged alphabetically by title. These materials span the most prolific time in Savage's career, from her first major role in a film (*One Dangerous Night*, 1943) through the television roles she took later in life. The lobby cards, film stills, and posters included in this series provide insight into how B-movies were advertised and illustrate the variety of film genres that Savage encountered during her career. This series contains posters, which were separated to an oversize file folder, as well as moving image materials, which were moved to the Film Collection.

Series II: Career and Personal Papers makes up the bulk of the collection. It is arranged into five subseries: A. Aviation Materials, 1970-1998, undated; B. Correspondence, 1968-circa 2000s, undated; C. Photographs, 1943-2007, undated; D. Publicity, 1944-2008, undated; and E. Travel, 1962-1966, undated.

Subseries A. Aviation Materials is arranged alphabetically by material type, and documents Savage's interest in flying. Savage's participation in associated organizations, such as the Ninety-Nines International Organization of Women Pilots, is also highlighted. Several VHS tapes on aviation were removed and transferred to the Film Department.

Documentation of Savage's interest in aviation continues in Subseries B: Correspondence. When the Ninety-Nines began a fundraising campaign to construct a museum dedicated to the history of female pilots at their headquarters in Oklahoma City, Savage gave generously and received frequent updates on planning and construction.

The bulk of the correspondence in the papers is mail from Savage's fans, who wrote from the United States and abroad to compliment her work and request signatures, photographs, and other mementos. This material dates from much later in Savage's career, and its bulk can perhaps be attributed to *Detour's* increased popularity in the 1980s and 1990s. Several items of fan mail include Savage's photocopied responses.

The small amount of personal correspondence included in this subseries gives insight into Savage's personal relationships with friends and family, and documents her life in both New York and Miami.

Subseries C. Photographs is arranged alphabetically by topic and includes work by some of Hollywood's top entertainment photographers, including George Hurrell and A.L. "Whitey" Schafer. These photographs depict an expansive range of characters, from seductive pin-up to polished fashion model. As a contract-player for Columbia, Savage was an avid participant in several War Bonds Tours and this subseries includes promotional photography documenting her travels across the United States.

Promotional and press materials, arranged alphabetically on an item level, can be found in Subseries D: Publicity. Early publicity materials shed light on the way Columbia marketed its young actresses. Included in the publicity materials are several copies of a 2007 issue of *Time* magazine that named Vera, Savage's character in *Detour*, one of the "10 All-Time Best Movie Villains."

Subseries E: Travel documents various international trips that Savage took with her husband, Bert D'Armand, to Europe, Russia, Scandinavia, and Africa from 1962 to 1966. Arranged alphabetically by topic, this subseries includes hotel bills, itineraries, guidebooks, maps, magazines, postcards, and tickets in a variety of languages from around the world.

Separated Material

Several types of moving image material are present in the collection. Savage's films, as well as VHS tapes on aviation, have been transferred to the Film Collection.

Index Terms

People

Savage, Ann, 1921-2008

Subjects

Actors -- United States -- 20th Century

Motion Pictures -- American

Document Types

Correspondence

Contracts

Film Scripts

Film Stills

Newsletters

Photographs

Posters

Series I. Film and Television, 1943-1955

After Midnight with Boston Blackie (1943)

Poster, 1943

Container osf

Moving images, 1943 (*separated to Film Collection)

Container *

Dancing in Manhattan (1944)

Lobby Cards, stills, 1944

Container 1.1

Poster, 1944

Container osf

Dangerous Blondes (1943)

Lobby Cards, stills, 1943

Container 1.2

Poster, 1943

Container osf

The Dark Horse (1946)

Lobby Cards, stills, 1946

Container 1.3

Poster, 1946

Container osf

Detour (1945)

Script with Savage's annotations, 1945

Container 1.4

Color copy of contract, stills, 1945

Container 1.5

Moving images, 1945 (*separated to Film Collection)

Container *

Ever Since Venus (1944)

Lobby Cards, stills, 1944

Container 1.6

Poster, 1944

Container osf

The Ford Television Theatre (1955), moving images, 1955 (*separated to Film Collection)

Container *

Jungle Flight (1946)

Lobby Cards, stills, 1946

Container 1.7

Poster, 1946

Container osf

Klondike Kate (1943)	
Stills, 1943	Container 1.8
Poster (Argentinian release), 1943	Container osf
Last Crooked Mile (1946)	
Lobby Cards, stills, 1946	Container 1.9
Poster, 1946	Container osf
One Dangerous Night (1943), lobby card, stills, 1943	Container 1.10
Pier 23 (1951)	
Lobby Cards, stills, 1951	Container 1.11
Poster, 1951	Container osf
Moving images, 1951 (*separated to Film Collection)	Container *
Pygmy Island (1950), lobby cards, 1950	Container 1.12
Renegade Girl (1946), moving images, 1946 (*separated to Film Collection)	Container *
Saddles and Sagebrush (1943)	
Lobby cards, stills, 1943	Container 1.13
Moving images, 1943 (*separated to Film Collection)	Container *
Scared Stiff (1945)	
Lobby cards, stills, 1945	Container 1.14
Poster, 1945	Container osf
The Spider (1945), still, 1945	Container 1.15
Two-Man Submarine (1944), stills, 1944	Container 1.16
The Unwritten Code (1944), stills, 1944	Container 1.17

Series II. Career and Personal Papers 1943-2008, undated**Subseries A: Aviation Materials, 1970-2004, undated**

Aeronautical charts, 1972-1995, undated **Container 2.1-4**

Bound volumes

Manuals and pamphlets on flying instruction, 1970-1999 **Container 2.4-4.3**

Spiral bound notebook, undated **Container 4.4**

Films on aviation and airspace, 1992-1998 (*moved to Film Collection) **Container ***

Instruments, undated **Container 4.5**

Medical and insurance information, 1985-1995, undated **Container 4.6**

Magazines and Newsletters

International Women Pilots magazine 1995-2004 **Container 5.1**

The Ninety-Nines Membership directory, 1993-1996 **Container 5.2-4**

Sporty's Pilot Shop and Woman Pilot, 1994-1996 **Container 5.5**

Printed material: bill for flying lesson, clippings, membership card, pamphlet, stickers, 1994, 1996, undated **Container 5.6**

Subseries B: Correspondence, 1968-circa 2000s, undated

Correspondence related to aviation, 1994-1997 **Container 5.7**

Fan mail, circa 1990s-2000s **Container 6.1-10.1**

Personal correspondence, 1968-2002, undated **Container 10.2**

Subseries C: Photographs, 1943-2007, undated

Fashion photographs, undated **Container 10.3**

Glamour photographs, undated **Container 10.4**

Hurrell Girls postcards and mounted photograph, 1943, undated **Container 10.5**

Personal photographs, 1974, 2007, undated **Container 10.6**

Pinup photographs, undated **Container 10.7**

World War II War Bond Tour photographs, undated **Container 10.8**

Subseries D: Publicity, 1944-2008, undated

Esquire, March 1944 **Container 10.9**

Esquire Datebook, 1945 **Container 10.10**

Time, two copies, 7 May 2007 **Container 10.11**

Event programs, funeral programs, drawings, stationary, 1998-2008 **Container 10.12**

Subseries E: Travel, 1962-1966, undated

Hotel bills, 1965-1966, undated **Container 10.13**

Itineraries, undated **Container 10.14**

Guidebooks, 1965-1966, undated **Container 10.15**

Magazines and clippings, 1962-1966, undated **Container 11.1-2**

Maps, undated **Container 11.3-12.4**

Postcards, undated **Container 12.5**

Tickets, 1964-1966, undated **Container 12.6**

Printed material: Savage's international driving permit, pamphlets, ship passenger list, 1962-1966 **Container 12.7**