

Florence Sando Manson papers20057104

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Creator:	Manson, Florence Sando, 1918-2013
Title:	Florence Sando Manson papers
ID:	20057104
ID:	MS#2215
Date [inclusive]:	1941-2013
Date [bulk]:	1941-1949
Physical Description:	2 Linear Feet 4 document boxes, 1 flat box
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	Florence Sando Manson (1918-2013) was an American broadcast journalist and actor. Between 1941 and 1949, Manson reported for several radio and television stations in the Greater Pittsburgh area and performed in several theater productions at the Pittsburgh Playhouse. The papers contain clippings, photographs, episode scripts, correspondence, advertisements, and show programs.

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Florence Sando Manson Papers; Box and Folder; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

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Biographical / Historical

Florence Sando Manson was born a few miles east of Pittsburgh in Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania, in 1918. Manson remained in Western Pennsylvania for college, attending Westminster College on a full scholarship and graduating in 1939. She then enrolled at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, where she earned a master's of arts in Drama in 1940.

After finishing her graduate program, Manson returned to Pittsburgh and started a career in broadcast journalism. Beginning in 1941, she covered news and hosted her own shows for local radio stations, such as WJAS, WCAE, and KQV. Her popular programs included "Everything Under the Sun," "Women's Digest," and "The Florence Sando Show," and she eventually became the Director of Women's Radio at WCAE.

Beginning in 1951, Manson started hosting television shows for the local network, WDTV, which became KDKA-TV in 1954. Alongside Dorothy Randall and Helen Rauh, Manson hosted "Ask the Girls," where the three women responded to questions from viewers. In addition, she hosted "Women's Digest" and "The Florence Manson Show," the latter of which served as a spinoff from her radio program, "The Florence Sando Show." Manson married film executive Arthur Manson in 1953, and the two remained married for 60 years. The Mansons had two children, Cynthia and Anthony.

When Manson wasn't on the air, she was often performing in shows at the Pittsburgh Playhouse. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, she acted in several productions, including *Strange Bedfellows*, *Post Road*, *Mrs. Moonlight*, and *No, No, Nanette*. When the Mansons moved to New York in 1959, Manson continued her interest in theater and sat on the boards of the Riverdale Neighborhood House and the Ensemble Studio Theatre.

Manson died on November 25, 2013 from complications connected to dementia. She died at her home in the Riverdale neighborhood of the Bronx. She was 95.

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Scope and Contents

The collection contains the papers of Florence Sando Manson and, in the main, relates to her career as a broadcast journalist in Pittsburgh, as represented by Series I-II. The series are arranged thematically and correspond to Manson's careers in radio, television, and acting. There is a small final series that relates to Manson's personal life, which includes clippings about her marriage to Arthur Manson, articles about her extended family, portraits, and additional written material.

The bulk of the collection relates to Manson's career in broadcast journalism, which spanned from 1941 through 1959. The collection contains episode scripts, clippings, advertisements, photographs, and correspondence related to her various radio and television shows on KQV, WCAE, WJAS and WDTV, which turned into KDKA-TV in 1954. Series III, which documents Manson's acting career in Pittsburgh, contains show programs, clippings, and photographs.

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Arrangement

This collection is arranged in four series and several subseries.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Revision Description

Finding aid created by CCR. 2025-07-11

Conditions Governing Access

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This collection is located off-site. You will need to request this material at least five business days in advance to use the collection in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library reading room.

Processing Information

This collection was processed by Sophia Scanlan (Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, 2030). Finding aid written by Sophia Scanlan in July 2025.

Processing Information

The collection was reboxed, refoldered, and relabeled. Order was imposed to organize materials by career (e.g. radio, television, acting) rather than strictly by item type. Duplicate documents were weeded out.

Accruals

No additions are expected.

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Related Materials

Selected Related Materials

[The Paley Center for Media](#) holds some material related to Florence Sando Manson, including an interview with Louis Armstrong.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Acting
- Broadcast journalism
- Clippings (Information Artifacts)
- Correspondence
- Journalists
- Photographs
- Radio journalism
- Radio scripts
- Television broadcasting of news
- Television scripts
- Women in journalism
- Women journalists

- Manson, Arthur, 1928-2018

Collection Inventory

Series I: Radio, 1942-1952

Scope and Contents

This series includes episode scripts, newspaper coverage, advertisements, correspondence, and photographs related to Manson's career as a radio journalist on a variety of stations in Pittsburgh, including WCAE and WJAS. Manson hosted a number of shows, among them "Everything Under the Sun," "Women's Digest," and "The Florence Sando Show."

Subseries I.1: Scripts, 1942-1952

Scope and Contents

This subseries contains scripts for "Everything Under the Sun," "Women's Digest," "The Florence Sando Show," and other miscellaneous shows and episodes. The subseries also contains a folder of partial scripts that could not be identified. Scripts for Manson's television shows can be found in Subseries II.1.

Title/Description	Instances	
Scripts, Everything Under the Sun, 1942-1943	box 1	folder 1
Scripts, Women's Digest, 1944-1946	box 1	folder 2-3
Scripts, Florence Sando Show, 1948-1949	box 1	folder 4
Scripts, Miscellaneous, circa 1942-1944	box 1	folder 5
Partial Scripts, circa 1942-1952	box 1	folder 6

Scope and Contents

Fragmented scripts from miscellaneous radio shows.

Subseries I.2: Press Coverage, 1941-1952

Scope and Contents

This subseries includes newspaper advertisements and articles about Manson's radio shows.

Title/Description	Instances	
Radio, Ads, 1946-1952	box 1	folder 7
Radio, Press Coverage, 1941-1949	box 1	folder 8

Subseries I.3: Photographs, undated

Scope and Contents

This subseries contains photographs of Manson reporting on-air and interviewing guests on her radio shows.

Photographs, Radio, undated

box 1

folder 9

Subseries I.4: Correspondence, 1946-1947

Scope and Contents

This subseries contains a few letters between Manson and station officials.

Title/Description	Instances	
Radio, Correspondence, 1946-1947	box 2	folder 1

Subseries I.5: Additional Radio Files, circa 1942-1952

Scope and Contents

This subseries includes awards, certificates, network schedules, and other miscellaneous documents pertaining to Manson's career in radio.

Title/Description	Instances	
Awards, 1952, undated	box 2	folder 2

Scope and Contents

Guide Post Award (or the best Pittsburgh Woman on Television (1952) and Westminster College Achievement Citation (undated)

Additional Radio Files, circa 1942-1952	box 2	folder 3
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Scope and Contents

Contains network schedules, breakfast program, and a few other miscellaneous documents.

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Series II: Television, 1951-1959

Scope and Contents

During the 1950s, Manson hosted a variety of television programs on WDTV, a station owned by Westinghouse Broadcasting Company that turned into KDKA-TV in 1954. Programs, press coverage, photographs, and correspondence related to Manson's shows—especially "Ask the Girls," "Women's Angle," and "The Florence Manson Show" are included in this series.

Subseries II.1: Shows, 1954-1958

Scope and Contents

This subseries primarily contains episode scripts for "Women's Angle." Scripts for Manson's radio shows can be found in Subseries I.1. Also included is a lacquer disc of the theme song for "The Florence Sando Show." The disc is located in a flatbox.

Title/Description	Instances	
Scripts, Women's Angle, 1954-1956	box 2	folder 4-5
Florence Manson Show Disc, 1958	box 5	folder 1

Scope and Contents

Lacquer disc of theme song for "Florence Manson Show." Two slides taped onto disc.

Subseries II.2: Press Coverage, 1951-1959

Scope and Contents

This subseries includes advertisements and articles about Manson's television programs, "Ask the Girls," "Women's Angle," and "The Florence Manson Show." Most articles and ads appear in local newspapers, such as the *Pittsburgh Press*, *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, and *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. In addition, the subseries includes television guides and Manson's own "Sparkle Scrapbook" series that served as additional promotion for her shows.

Title/Description	Instances	
TV Guides, 1951-1953	box 2	folder 6
TV Guides, 1954-1956	box 2	folder 7
TV Guides, 1958-1959	box 2	folder 8
TV, Ads, 1952-1958	box 2	folder 9

Scope and Contents

Includes a KDKA-TV program log.

Sparkle Scrapbook Articles, 1951	box 3	folder 1
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Scope and Contents

Short articles by Manson that end with advertisements for "Ask the Girls" on WDTV

TV, Press Coverage, 1951-1959	box 3	folder 2-3
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Subseries II.3: Photographs, undated

Scope and Contents

This subseries includes primarily glossy photographs of Manson hosting television shows. Several images depict Manson on the set for "Ask the Girls," a show she hosted with two other women panelists. The subseries also contains one small negative slide.

Title/Description	Instances	
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TV, Photographs, undated	box 3	folder 4
Women's Angle Slide, undated	box 3	folder 5

Subseries II.4: Correspondence, 1953-1958

Scope and Contents

This subseries contains a handful of letters to Manson from viewers and network officials.

Title/Description	Instances	
TV, Correspondence, 1953-1958	box 3	folder 6

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Series III: Pittsburgh Playhouse, 1942-1980

Scope and Contents

In addition to covering the news, Manson also enjoyed acting. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, Manson performed in a variety of shows at the Pittsburgh Playhouse, among them *Strange Bedfellows*, *Post Road*, *Mrs. Moonlight*, and *No, No, Nanette*. This series includes show programs, press coverage, and photographs of Manson acting.

Title/Description	Instances	
Pittsburgh Playhouse, Programs, 1942-1950	box 3	folder 7

Scope and Contents

Includes programs from *Post Road*, *Mrs. Moonlight*, *Strange Bedfellows*, *Fifty Grand*, and *No, No, Nanette*.

Pittsburgh Playhouse, Press Coverage, bulk 1950-1953	box 3	folder 8-9
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Scope and Contents

Aside from 1950-1953 clippings, includes article from 1980 about a Pittsburgh Playhouse reunion.

Pittsburgh Playhouse, Photographs, undated	box 3	folder 10
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Series IV: Personal and Biographical, 1942-2013

Scope and Contents

This series contains material related to Manson's personal life, including her family and her marriage to Arthur Manson. The subseries also holds biographical material, such as obituaries, photographs (including glossy and negative portraits), and other writings about Manson.

Subseries IV.1: Family, 1949-1958

Scope and Contents

This subseries includes press coverage of Florence Sando and film executive Arthur Manson's wedding in January 1953. Also included are clippings about the birth of Cynthia Manson in August 1956, and additional news articles mentioning Manson's extended family.

Title/Description	Instances	
Marriage, 1952-1953	box 4	folder 1
Scope and Contents Several articles about Manson's engagement and wedding to Arthur.		
Family, 1949-1958	box 4	folder 2
Scope and Contents Includes articles about the birth of Manson's daughter, Cynthia.		

Subseries IV.2: Writings About Manson, 1942-1995

Scope and Contents

This bulk of this subseries includes clippings about Manson's appearances in the Greater Pittsburgh area between 1942 and 1957, including the annual Easter Parades and other events. Also included in this subseries is a copy of Lynn Boyd Hinds' 1995 book, *Broadcasting the Local News: The Early Years of Pittsburgh's KDKA-TV*, which mentions Manson several times.

Writings about Manson's radio or television shows can be found in Subseries I.2 or Subseries II.2, respectively. Clippings about Manson's performances at the Pittsburgh Playhouse can be found in Series III.

Title/Description	Instances	
Writings About Manson, 1942-1957	box 4	folder 3-4
Easter Parade, 1956-1957	box 4	folder 5
Scope and Contents Several articles mentioning Manson's participation in Pittsburgh's annual Easter Parades.		
Broadcasting the Local News (book), 1995	box 4	folder 6
Scope and Contents Manson's copy of <i>Broadcasting the Local News: The Early Years of Pittsburgh's KDKA-TV</i> by Lynn Boyd Hinds (1995)		

Subseries IV.3: Photographs, 1956, undated

Scope and Contents

This subseries includes several glossy portraits and negatives of Manson, some of which she used as headshots to accompany resumes. In addition, the subseries contains photographs of Manson in groups or with unidentified individuals. One oversized photograph, which shows Manson at the Easter Parade in 1956, is housed away from the rest of the subseries in a flatbox.

Title/Description	Instances	
Portraits, undated	box 4	folder 7
Scope and Contents		
Includes some negatives.		
Miscellaneous Photographs, undated	box 4	folder 8
Easter Parade Photograph (oversize), 1956	box 5	folder 2

Subseries IV.4: Death, 2013

Language of the Material: English.

Scope and Contents

This subseries contains a selection of obituaries following Manson's death in 2013. Included among them are obituaries published in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, Associated Press, and *Variety*.

Title/Description	Instances	
Obituaries, 2013	box 4	folder 9

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