

**Finding Aid to the  
Joel Cohen Disneyana Collection, 1942-2005**

**Summary Information**

**Title:** Joel Cohen Disneyana collection

**Creator:** Joel Cohen (primary)

**ID:** 115.2645

**Date:** 1942-2005 (inclusive); 1975-2001 (bulk)

**Extent:** 0.75 linear foot

**Language:** The materials in this collection are in English.

**Abstract:** The Joel Cohen Disneyana collection is a compilation of correspondence, photographs, and more relating to Joel Cohen's Disneyana collection. The bulk of the materials are dated between 1975 and 2001.

**Repository:**

Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong  
One Manhattan Square  
Rochester, New York 14607  
585.263.2700  
library@museumofplay.org

**Administrative Information**

**Conditions Governing Use:** This collection is open for research use by staff of The Strong and by users of its library and archives. Though the donor has not transferred intellectual property rights (including, but not limited to any copyright, trademark, and associated rights therein) to The Strong, he has given permission for The Strong to make copies in all media for museum, educational, and research purposes.

**Custodial History:** The Joel Cohen Disneyana collection was donated to The Strong in September 2015 as a gift from Joel Cohen. The papers were accessioned by The Strong under 115.2645. The papers were received from Joel Cohen in two boxes.

**Preferred citation for publication:** Joel Cohen Disneyana collection, Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong

**Processed by:** Robert Ramos, March 2016

**Revision Note:** This finding aid has been updated to reflect the passing of Mr. Cohen.

**Controlled Access Terms**

**Personal Names**

- Cohen, Joel
- Disney, Walt, 1901-1966

**Corporate Names**

- Cohen Books and Collectibles
- International Business Machines Corporation (IBM)
- The Walt Disney Company
- The Walt Disney Studios

**Subjects**

- Bambi
- Disney characters
- Disneyana
- Donald Duck
- Dumbo
- Goofy
- Mickey Mouse
- Pinocchio
- Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs
- Walt Disney Land (Cal.)
- Walt Disney World (Fla.)

**Biographical Note**

Joel Cohen (1937-2016) was a nationally-recognized Disneyana authority. Cohen began collecting Disney books in the 1970s, but eventually acquired artwork, figurines, toys, games, and other Disney ephemera. Through his collecting, Cohen crafted a career of dealing Disneyana, where he bought, sold, and appraised items for customers. All the while, Cohen worked at IBM as a Project Engineer with a degree in electrical engineering. Cohen has been featured in various articles and magazines, praising his commitment and prestige within the Disney collecting world.

Joel Cohen eventually opened his own store in Boca Raton, Florida, called Cohen Books and Collectibles, which became a World Wide Walt Disney Collector Service. Using the store as a conduit for his collecting, Cohen greatly developed his collection of Disneyana; he bought, sold and appraised items from the United States and Europe. Cohen presented at various universities, conventions, seminars, and television, and he loaned items from his collection to museums, schools, shops and events. During the 1990s, Cohen guest lectured on Disneyana collecting at Florida Atlantic University, in Boca Raton. His endeavors and impact on the Disneyana collecting world have been well-noted by the collecting community.

Cohen passed away on May 17, 2016 in Boca Raton, Florida.

**Collection Scope and Content Note**

The Joel Cohen Disneyana collection is a compilation of personal letters, business letters, printed emails, certificates of appraisal, journal articles, photographs, textbooks, and more relating to Joel Cohen's Disneyana collection. Sizeable portions of this collection are business letters and item evaluations/certificates of appraisal by Joel Cohen.

The Joel Cohen Disneyana collection is arranged into five series, two of which have been further subdivided into subseries. The collection is housed in two archival document boxes and one oversized folder.

**System of Arrangement**

- Series I: Disneyana collection correspondence, 1952-2005
  - Subseries A: Correspondence and receipts
  - Subseries B: Item evaluations/appraisals
- Series II: Disneyana collection photographs, c. 2000s
- Series III: Literature, c. 1980-1997
  - Subseries A: Textbooks
  - Subseries B: Articles
- Series IV: IBM/professional life, 1960-1981
- Series V: Miscellaneous, 1942-1996

**Contents List**

**Series I: Disneyana collection correspondence, 1952-2005**

**Scope and Content Note:** This series contains correspondence, and receipts between Joel Cohen and customers, as well as item evaluations and appraisals.

**Subseries A: Correspondence and receipts**

**Scope and Content Note:** This subseries contains inquiries, “thank-you” letters, comments, and receipts of purchases between Joel Cohen and his customers.

**Box 1**

- Folder 1 Correspondence and receipts, 1952-2002

**Subseries B: Item evaluations/appraisals**

**Scope and Content Note:** This subseries holds item evaluations/appraisals produced by Joel Cohen for his customers.

**Box 1**

- Folder 2 Item evaluations/appraisals, 1996-1999
- Folder 3 Item evaluations/appraisals, 1999-2005

**Series II: Disneyana collection photographs, c. 2000s**

**Scope and Content Note:** This series comprises mostly of photographs of Joel Cohen’s Disneyana collection, as well as various other photos.

**Box 1**

- Folder 4 Photographs, n.d. [c.2000s]
- Folder 5 Photographs, n.d. [c.2000s]

**Series III: Literature, c. 1980-1997**

**Scope and Content Note:** This series contains textbooks, as well as articles about Joel Cohen from various newspapers.

**Subseries A: Textbooks**

**Scope and Content Note:** This subseries contains two copies of the class textbook that was required for Joel Cohen's Disneyana Collecting course while he was guest lecturing at Florida Atlantic University, in Boca Raton.

**Box 2**

Folder 1 Textbooks, 1996

**Subseries B: Articles**

**Scope and Content Note:** This subseries contains various articles from several newspapers praising Joel Cohen for his collection and drive for Disneyana collecting.

**Box 2**

Folder 2 Articles, c. 1980-1997

**Series IV: IBM/professional life, 1960-1981**

**Scope and Content Note:** This series contains documents and pictures relating to Joel Cohen's career at IBM. It also holds his graduate degree in electrical engineering from Northeastern University.

**Box 2**

Folder 3 IBM/professional life, 1960-1981

**Series V: Miscellaneous, 1956-1996**

**Scope and Content Note:** This series holds miscellaneous items, such as envelopes addressed to "Comic Strip Classics," pamphlets, correspondence, sketches, and photographs with little relation to Joel Cohen's main Disneyana collection.

**Box 2**

Folder 4 Miscellaneous, 1956-1958 and 1995-1996

**Oversized**

Folder 1 "Walt Disney Goes to War," *Life Magazine*, August 31, 1942