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## Donald Levy Papers

1966-1987

2 boxes (2 linear feet)

Call no.: MS 878



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[SCUA home](#)

[Credo digital](#)

[Scope](#)

[Inventory](#)

[Admin info](#)

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The co-owner with Alan Peterson of Krackerjacks, a psychedelic clothing store in Boston, Donald "Jack" Levy grew the boutique he started in 1966 into a staple of the counterculture in the Boston area and eventually a franchise. Levy was at the center of a controversy in Cambridge when the city tried to ban "obscene" buttons. Though several stores removed the buttons, Levy refused and with community support, fought the city's ban. Levy also opened several clothing stores in the Boston-area: Garbo, a women's clothing store; Dazzle in 1971, a vintage clothing store; Goods in 1976, a natural fiber and novelty store; and purchased and refurbished the Blue Diner in 1986 (now the South Street Diner). He currently owns diners in Newton, Framingham, and Watertown Mass.

The Donald Levy Papers contain ephemera, photographs, and clippings primarily documenting Krackerjacks as well as Levy's other clothing stores and the opening of Blue Diner. Of particular interest is a petition circulated by Levy during the city's attempt

to ban "obscene" buttons. Included among the signatures is a 15-year-old Jonathan Richman, who called the button ban, "an example of lingering Victorianism."

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## Background on Donald Levy

Clothes and fashion played a central role in the 1960s countercultural revolution in the United States and at the center of the counterculture's fashion in the Boston-area was Krackerjacks. Krackerjacks was founded in Cambridge, Mass. by Donald "Jack" Levy and Alan Peterson in 1966 and was a boutique synonymous with "mod" and "hippie" fashion and accessories. In 1967, when Krackerjacks was attacked, among other shops, for having "obscene" buttons by Cambridge City Council member Thomas H.D. Mahoney, it became a symbol of the countercultural movement itself. Levy fought back against the ban, refusing to take the buttons off his shelves despite pressures from local police. Krackerjacks survived and expanded into a successful franchise.

In addition to Krackerjacks, Levy opened several other boutiques in the Boston-area: Garbo, a women's clothing store; Dazzle in 1971, a vintage clothing store; and Goods in 1976, a natural fiber and novelty store. In 1986, Levy expanded into the restaurant business, purchasing and refurbishing the Blue Diner (now the South Street Diner and no longer owned by Levy). He currently owns the Deluxe Station Diner, the Deluxe Depot Diner, and the Deluxe Town Diner in Newton, Framingham, and Watertown, Mass. respectively.



Richie Havens at Krackerjacks, ca. 1968

## Scope of collection

The Donald Levy Papers contain ephemera, photographs, and clippings primarily documenting Krackerjacks as well as Levy's other clothing stores and the opening of Blue Diner. Of particular interest is a petition circulated by Levy during the city's attempt to ban "obscene" buttons. Included among the signatures is a 15-year-old Jonathan Richman, who called the button ban, "an example of lingering Victorianism."

# Inventory

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Blue Diner

1986-1987

Box 1: 1

Garbo

undated

Box 1: 2

Goods: clippings

1976-1986

Box 1: 3

Goods: ephemera

1975-1985

Box 1: 4

Dazzle: clippings

1971-1974

Box 1: 5

Dazzle: ephemera

1971

Box 1: 6

Krackerjacks: advertising

ca.1970

Box 1: 7

Krackerjacks: button controversy

1967

Box 1: 8

Krackerjacks: clippings

1966-1969

Box 1: 9

Krackerjacks: ephemera

ca.1967

Box 1: 10

Krackerjacks: photographs

ca.1970

Box 1: 11

Krackerjacks: photographs

ca.1970

Box 1: 12

Krackerjacks: photographs

ca.1970

Box 1: 13

Krackerjacks: photographs, staff

ca.1970

Box 1: 14

Krackerjacks: posters

undated

Box 2: 2

Krackerjacks: scrapbook

ca.1967

Box 2: 1

Photographs

undated

Box 1: 15

Photographs: contact sheets

undated

Box 1: 16

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## Administrative information

## Access

The collection is open for research.

## Provenance

Acquired from Donald Levy, 2015.

## Processing Information

Processed by Rainer Werner, August 2015.

## Language:

English

## Copyright and Use (More information )

*Cite as:* Donald Levy Papers (MS 878). Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

## Search terms

### Subjects

Counterculture--United States--20th century

Fashion--United States--20th century

Massachusetts--Cambridge--History--20th century

Stores, Retail--Massachusetts

### Contributors

Levy, Donald [main entry]

Richman, Jonathan (Vocalist)

### Genres and formats

Clippings

Petitions

Photographs

### Link to similar SCUA collections

Massachusetts (East)

Photographs

Social change



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