

OBITUARIES

Abby Mann, 80, Oscar-winning screenwriter

By Susan King
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Abby Mann, 80, the Oscar-winning screenwriter of 1961's *Judgment at Nuremberg* and such acclaimed TV movies as 1973's *The Marcus-Nelson Murders* and 1989's *Murderers Among Us: The Simon Wiesenthal Story*, died of heart failure Tuesday in Beverly Hills, Calif.

During his 50-plus-year career as a writer, producer and director, Mr. Mann, a Philadelphia native, built a strong reputation for his issue-oriented, thought-provoking projects. A multiple Emmy winner, he was especially critical of the inner workings of the American criminal justice system. He was known for creating complex characters and was scrupulous in his investigative research before writing his scripts.

"A writer worth his salt at all has an obligation not only to entertain but to comment on the world in which he lives," he said when he accepted his Oscar for *Judgment at Nuremberg*, the Stanley Kramer drama about the Nuremberg war trials in Germany. One of the film's stars, Richard Widmark, died Monday at age 93.

Mr. Mann was born Abraham Goodman in Philadelphia on Dec. 1, 1927, the son of a Russian-Jewish immigrant jeweler. He grew up in East Pittsburgh in a tough, predominantly Catholic working-class steel-town neighbor-

hood. As one of the few Jews in the area, Mr. Mann always felt like an outsider, and his scripts years later focused on the world of outsiders — the poor and racial minorities who were constantly subjected to prejudice and injustice.

After attending Temple University and New York University, Mr. Mann served in the Army during World War II. He began his professional writing career in the early days of live television in the 1950s, penning scripts for such anthologies as *Studio One*, *Robert Montgomery Presents* and *Playhouse 90*.

Judgment at Nuremberg was originally presented live on *Playhouse 90* in 1959. He also wrote a novel based on the movie.

The *Judgment* movie brought him to Hollywood, where he went on to write 1963's *A Child Is Waiting*, a drama that dealt with mentally challenged children, and the 1965 adaptation of Katherine Anne Porter's novel *Ship of Fools*, which brought Mr. Mann a second Oscar nomination.

He won an Emmy for the 1973 TV movie *The Marcus-Nelson Murders*, which introduced the Kojak character.



Abby Mann,
Phila.-born.