

## **MS-582: Gary Pacernick Papers**

**Collection Number:** MS-582

**Title:** Gary Pacernick Papers

**Dates:** 1965-2009

**Creator:** Pacernick, Gary

### **Summary/Abstract:**

This collection contains correspondence, publications, and paperwork documenting the career of Jewish poet and Wright State University English professor Gary Pacernick. Pacernick was one of the early members of Wright State's English department faculty, serving from 1967 to 2009. Prominent in the collection are letters to Pacernick from poets and writers nationwide and worldwide.

**Quantity/Physical Description:** 2.52 linear feet.

### **Language(s):**

Materials are predominantly in English, with some annotations, letterheads, and salutations featuring Hebrew.

### **Repository:**

Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435-0001, (937) 775-2092, [library-archives@wright.edu](mailto:library-archives@wright.edu)

### **Restrictions on Access:**

There are no restrictions on accessing paper-based material in this collection. Access to original audiovisual media is restricted due to preservation concerns, and only reference copies of original audio and video materials can be accessed in the reading room. Items without reference copies can be digitized at the request of a patron for the cost of creating a digital copy. Please provide us at least two weeks advance notice if you would like to request an audio or video reference copy. Call (937) 775-2092 or e-mail us at [library-archives-ref@wright.edu](mailto:library-archives-ref@wright.edu). Use of digitized content is subject to conditions governing use.

### **Restrictions on Use:**

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### **Preferred Citation:**

[Description of item, Date, Box #, Folder #], MS-582, Gary Pacernick Papers, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio

**Acquisition:** The collection was donated to Special Collections and Archives, Wright State University Libraries, by Gary Pacernick in 2017.

**Other Finding Aid:**

The finding aid is available on the Special Collections & Archives, Wright State University Libraries web site at <https://www.libraries.wright.edu/special/collectionguides/files/ms582.pdf>. It is also available in the OhioLINK Finding Aid Repository at <http://ead.ohiolink.edu/xtf-ead/>.

**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:**

The collection contains several microcassettes, which require special equipment and digitization prior to access.

**Related Material:**

Volumes of the journal *Images* edited by Gary Pacernick can be found in the University Archives (Journals: College of Liberal Arts, Box 1).

**Processing Information:**

Original newspaper clippings were photocopied and the originals were not retained. Original documents containing social security numbers were not retained, and a redacted copy was retained for the collection. Any envelopes that did not provide additional information when compared to the enclosed letter were removed from the collection. Pacernick included a large envelope of correspondence labelled “Letters from poets, etc.” This featured a note identifying significant correspondents in the collection. However, the names on the note do not strictly match with the names appearing on letters in Pacernick’s envelope; some letters intended for this envelope may appear in other places in the collection.

**Processed by:**

Finding aid written according to DACS standards by Megan O’Connor, October 2020.

**Arrangement:**

The collection is arranged into three series:

Series I: Career, 1967-2009

Series II: Correspondence, 1965-2006

Series III: Publications and Writings, 1985-2006

**Biographical/Historical Note:**

Poet and English professor Gary Bernard Pacernick was born on May 9, 1941, in Detroit, Michigan, to Edward and Sally Pacernick. After obtaining a B.A. from the University of Michigan in 1963 and M.A. from the University of Minnesota in 1966, Pacernick received a PhD. from Arizona State University in 1969. Upon receiving his Ph.D., Pacernick began teaching at Wright State University’s English department, where he remained until his retirement in 2009.

Pacernick explored various genres of writing, but specialized in poetry, especially about Jewish themes and experiences. His network of correspondents features poets, writers, and artists, including many Jewish creatives whom he would interview for some of his publications. These

include his 2001 book *Meaning and Memory*. In addition to writing, Pacernick edited Wright State University's poetry journal *Images*, beginning in 1974. He worked with the university's theater department to produce plays he wrote, such as "I Want to Write a Jewish Poem." Additionally, he gave presentations about poetry in the community, including at local schools.

Pacernick married Dorothea "Dotti" Anton on June 4, 1968. The couple had two children, Jennifer and Eden, who, along with Dotti, are referenced throughout the collection. Dotti died of cancer in 2002. Although most of the correspondence in the collection is addressed to Gary Pacernick, some letters are addressed to Dotti Pacernick as well.

### **Scope and Content Note:**

The Gary Pacernick Papers document the career of Gary Pacernick, including his growth as a writer, and his personal and professional networks. It captures the development of many of Pacernick's writing projects, from their inception through the completion of the publication process. It also highlights Pacernick's place as a writer of Jewish poems, as well as his connections with other Jewish writers and artists.

**Series I, Career, 1967-2009**, documents Pacernick's teaching career. It includes certifications, employment paperwork from Wright State University, and certificates acknowledging his completion of forty years of service to the University. Several documents feature biographical information and personal reflections written by Pacernick. Additionally, this series contains fliers, posters, and playbills associated with the work Pacernick produced while at Wright State.

**Series II: Correspondence, 1965-2006**, forms the bulk of the collection. Correspondents include writers, publishers, religious leaders, mentors, friends, and students. Major topics include advice and feedback on writing, publication opportunities, speaking engagements, and personal life. Many letters also discuss writers' submissions to *Images*. Note that some letters may contain strong language.

Letters are arranged by correspondent; institutional correspondents (publishing houses, journals, schools, etc.) are identified by the institution's name. The series is divided into five sections. The first section is correspondence from individuals who sent Pacernick several letters. This is divided into individual folders for each correspondent. Within folders, letters are arranged roughly in chronological order. The second section contains letters from correspondents who sent only one or two letters. These are grouped into collective folders according to the first letter of the correspondent's last name (e.g., all correspondents with last name beginning with "A" are in a folder together). Within these folders, letters are arranged roughly alphabetically by last name. The third section is letters from unidentified correspondents, who signed their letters with no last name or an illegible signature. When possible, letters in this folder are arranged roughly alphabetically by first name. The fourth section is a selection of letters Pacernick had placed in an envelope labelled "Letters from Poets, etc." Pacernick included a note in this folder that provides brief biographical information on significant individuals with whom he corresponded. Several of the individuals mentioned in the note wrote letters that appear in the labelled correspondent folders. For some of these letters, Pacernick penciled the poet's name on the back of the envelope; these labeled letters may connect to the group of letters in the "Poets" folder.

Finally, there is a folder of miscellaneous materials by and about other writers, which includes obituaries, an illustration, and a newsletter with a poem by one of Pacernick's correspondents.

**Series III: Publications and Writings, 1985-2006**, contains material related to Pacernick's writing projects. Three of Pacernick's books are included, which contain poems about individuals and topics referenced in the correspondence, as well as poems referenced throughout the letters. The series also contains microcassette recordings and transcriptions of interviews with fellow poets. Additionally, there are two undated essays.

## **Subject Terms**

### **Persons/Families**

Pacernick, Gary

### **Organizations/Corporate Names**

Wright State University. Department of English.

### **Subjects (General)**

Jewish poetry

Jewish authors -- United States

American poetry -- Jewish authors

Poets, American -- 20<sup>th</sup> century

### **Material Types**

Correspondence

Poems

Microcassettes

Publications

### **Occupations**

Poets

## Collection Inventory

| <b>Box</b>                       | <b>File</b> | <b>Description</b>  | <b>Date</b>        |
|----------------------------------|-------------|---|--------------------|
| <b>Series I: Career</b>          |             |   | <b>1967-2009</b>   |
| 1                                | 1           | About Gary B. Pacernick   | 1967-2009          |
| 1                                | 2           | About Gary Pacernick's works, writings, public appearances      | 1976-1990, undated |
| 1                                | 3           | Newspaper clippings about Pacernick's career (photocopied 2020) | 1975-2007, undated |
| <b>Series II: Correspondence</b> |             |   | <b>1965-2006</b>   |
| 1                                | 4           | <i>Abraxas</i> (Warren Woessner and Ingrid Swanberg)            | 1977-1983          |
| 1                                | 5           | Adams, Betsy  | 1976-1984          |
| 1                                | 6           | Aharoni, Ada  | 1976-1978          |
| 1                                | 7           | <i>American Jewish Archives</i> (Abraham J. Peck )              | 1981-1989          |
| 1                                | 8           | <i>American Poetry Review</i> (Steve Berg, David Bonanno)       | 1975-1983          |
| 1                                | 9           | Apple, Max  | 1977-1985          |
| 1                                | 10          | Barrows, Herbert  | 1968-1988          |
| 1                                | 11          | Bergé, Carol  | 1979-1985          |
| 1                                | 12          | Blank, Amy K.   | 1981-1983          |
| 1                                | 13          | Bly, Robert   | 1970-1980          |
| 1                                | 14          | Bolls, Imogene  | 1984-1990          |
| 1                                | 15          | Brand, Millen   | 1974-1979          |
| 1                                | 16          | Brand, Norman E.  | 1969-1974          |
| 1                                | 17          | Card, Jane R.   | 1973-1974          |
| 1                                | 18          | Carter, Jared   | 1981-1995, undated |
| 1                                | 19          | Chafetz, Sid  | 1973-1983, undated |
| 1                                | 20          | Clemente, Vince   | 1982-1984          |
| 1                                | 21          | <i>Crosscurrents</i> (Elizabeth Bartlett)                       | 1984               |
| 2                                | 1           | Davenport, Guy  | 1982               |
| 2                                | 2           | Dickson, John   | 1987-1993          |
| 2                                | 3           | Dorsey, John M.   | 1968-1971          |
| 2                                | 4           | Elder, Karl ( <i>Seems</i> Literary Magazine)                   | 1975               |
| 2                                | 5           | Fedder, Norman J.   | 1981-1982          |
| 2                                | 6           | Finkelstein, Norman   | 1993-1994          |
| 2                                | 7           | Fisher, Marvin  | 1970-1981          |
| 2                                | 8           | Goldman, Mark   | 1987-1988          |
| 2                                | 9           | Graham, Michael E.  | 1982-1984          |
| 2                                | 10          | Grossman, Martin  | 1978-1980          |
| 2                                | 11          | Grossman, Richard   | 1983               |
| 2                                | 12          | Hall, Donald, File 1 of 2                                       | 1972-1979, undated |
| 2                                | 13          | Hall, Donald, File 2 of 2                                       | 1980-2008, undated |
| 2                                | 14          | Harris, Marie   | 1982               |

| <b>Box</b> | <b>File</b> | <b>Description</b>  | <b>Date</b>        |
|------------|-------------|---|--------------------|
| 2          | 15          | Hathaway, William "Kit"   | 1979-1984          |
| 2          | 16          | Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (Stanley F. Chyet, Jonathan D. Sarna, Marilyn F. Reichert, Ida Cohen Selavan) | 1980-1995          |
| 2          | 17          | Henshaw, Tyler  | 1973-1974          |
| 2          | 18          | Herrmann, Diana Chang   | 1982               |
| 2          | 19          | Hindus, Milton  | 1990               |
| 2          | 20          | Honig, Edwin  | 1981-1982          |
| 2          | 21          | Hudson, John W.   | 1974-1976          |
| 2          | 22          | Ignatow, David  | 1982-1997          |
| 2          | 23          | Inman, Will   | 1980-1987          |
| 2          | 24          | Jacobsen, Josephine   | 1973-1974          |
| 2          | 25          | <i>Judaism</i> (Ruth B. Waxman, Robert Gordis)  | 1982-1983          |
| 2          | 26          | Kertesz, Louise   | 1980               |
| 2          | 27          | Kessler, Milton   | 1973-1993          |
| 2          | 28          | Kherdian, David   | 1975-1978, undated |
| 2          | 29          | Kostelanetz, Richard  | 1977-1983          |
| 2          | 30          | Krapf, Norbert  | 1982, 1992         |
| 3          | 1           | Kurt, Kenneth   | 1972               |
| 3          | 2           | Levertov, Denise  | 1982-1998          |
| 3          | 3           | Levine, Philip  | 2000               |
| 3          | 4           | Lieberman, Larry  | 1973-1993          |
| 3          | 5           | Lifshin, Lyn  | 1975-1986, undated |
| 3          | 6           | Lima, Robert  | 1982-1984          |
| 3          | 7           | Macdowell Colony, The (Conrad Spohnholz)  | 1973-1976          |
| 3          | 8           | Magnuson, Paul  | 1973-1974          |
| 3          | 9           | Marcus, Mordecai  | 1980-1985          |
| 3          | 10          | Marshall, James   | 1971-1978          |
| 3          | 11          | Marshall, Lenore  | 1969-1971          |
| 3          | 12          | McNamee, Doug   | 1991               |
| 3          | 13          | Menashe, Samuel   | 1982-1985          |
| 3          | 14          | <i>Midstream: A Monthly Jewish Review</i> (Debra Berman, Joel Carmichael, Jessica Hornik)                                       | 1982-1983          |
| 3          | 15          | Mills, Ralph  | 1992-2001          |
| 3          | 16          | <i>Mixed Voices/Aegis</i> (Sidney Zimmerman)  | 1977-1979          |
| 3          | 17          | Monk, Samuel H.   | 1967-1969          |
| 3          | 18          | <i>Margins</i> (Tom Montag)   | 1974-1976          |
| 3          | 19          | Mosby, George, Jr, and Judi Mosby   | 1979-1983          |
| 3          | 20          | Mycue, Ed   | 1981               |
| 3          | 21          | Olsen, Tillie   | 1972, undated      |
| 3          | 22          | Perchik, Simon  | 1976-1988          |
| 3          | 23          | Peters, Bob   | 1974-1978          |
| 3          | 24          | Piercy, Marge   | 1982-2000          |

| <b>Box</b> | <b>File</b> | <b>Description</b>                              | <b>Date</b>                 |
|------------|-------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 3          | 25          | Quinn, Sister Bernetta                          | 1984-1990                   |
| 3          | 26          | Rakosi, Carl                                    | 1978-1995                   |
| 4          | 1           | Robbins, Martin                                 | 1976-1980, 1990,<br>undated |
| 4          | 2           | Roberts, Donald and June Roberts                | 1992-1993                   |
| 4          | 3           | Rosenblum, Martin J.                            | 1980-1982                   |
| 4          | 4           | Rowe, Dan                                       | 1965-1977                   |
| 4          | 5           | Schechter, Ruth Lisa                            | 1982-1983                   |
| 4          | 6           | Shapiro, Harvey                                 | 1983-1990                   |
| 4          | 7           | Sheehan, Tom                                    | 1985-1986                   |
| 4          | 8           | <i>Shirim</i> (Marc Steven Dworkin)             | 1982, 1985                  |
| 4          | 9           | Silbert, Layle                                  | 1981-1994                   |
| 4          | 10          | <i>Stone Country</i> (Judith Neeld)             | 1977-1979                   |
| 4          | 11          | Tate, Allen                                     | 1966-1973                   |
| 4          | 12          | Temple Israel                                   | 1982-2004                   |
| 4          | 13          | <i>Unicorn</i> (Stuart Silverman, Karen Rochow) | 1974-1976                   |
| 4          | 14          | Wakoski, Diane, File 1 of 3                     | 1996-1997                   |
| 4          | 15          | Wakoski, Diane, File 2 of 3                     | 1997-1999                   |
| 5          | 1           | Wakoski, Diane, File 3 of 3                     | 1999-2002                   |
| 5          | 2           | Williams, C. K.                                 | 1980                        |
| 5          | 3           | Correspondence-A                                | 1974-2006, undated          |
| 5          | 4           | Correspondence-B                                | 1968-1986, undated          |
| 5          | 5           | Correspondence-C                                | 1967-1990, undated          |
| 5          | 6           | Correspondence-D                                | 1969-1999, undated          |
| 5          | 7           | Correspondence-E                                | 1976-1996                   |
| 5          | 8           | Correspondence-F                                | 1980, 1985, undated         |
| 5          | 9           | Correspondence-G                                | 1969-2001                   |
| 5          | 10          | Correspondence-H                                | 1977-2007                   |
| 5          | 11          | Correspondence-I, J                             | 1981-2000                   |
| 5          | 12          | Correspondence-K                                | 1973-1987, undated          |
| 5          | 13          | Correspondence-L                                | 1973-1993                   |
| 5          | 14          | Correspondence-M                                | 1973-1996, undated          |
| 5          | 15          | Correspondence-N                                | 1974-1983, undated          |
| 5          | 16          | Correspondence-O, P, Q                          | 1967-1997, undated          |
| 6          | 1           | Correspondence-R                                | 1969-1993                   |
| 6          | 2           | Correspondence-S                                | 1970-1993, undated          |
| 6          | 3           | Correspondence-T                                | 1976-1990, undated          |
| 6          | 4           | Correspondence-U                                | 1969-1983                   |
| 6          | 5           | Correspondence-V                                | 1977-1988                   |
| 6          | 6           | Correspondence-W                                | 1975-1992                   |
| 6          | 7           | Correspondence-Z                                | 1971, 1976                  |
| 6          | 8           | Correspondence-no last name/illegible signature | circa 1969-1996,<br>undated |

| <b>Box</b>                                   | <b>File</b> | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Date</b>      |
|--|-------------|--|------------------|
|  |             |  |                  |
| 6  | 9           | "Letters from Poets, etc."                                   | 1970-2000        |
| 6  | 10          | Miscellaneous materials by and about other poets and artists | circa 1980-1999  |
|  |             |  |                  |
| <b>Series III: Publications and Writings</b> |             |  | <b>1985-2006</b> |
| 6  | 11          | Books by Gary Pacernick                                      | 1985-2006        |
| 6  | 12          | Recordings of interviews with poets                          | circa 1995-1996  |
| 6  | 13          | Transcriptions of interviews with poets                      | 1996-1998        |
| 6  | 14          | Essays by Gary Pacernick                                     | Undated          |
|  |             |  |                  |