

**The New York Public Library
Humanities and Social Sciences Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division**

Thomas Bohen papers regarding Grace Paley
1956-1989
MssCol 5981

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Summary

Main entry:	Bohen, Thomas
Title:	Thomas Bohen papers regarding Grace Paley, 1956-1989 (bulk 1958-1961)
Size:	.2 linear feet (1 box)
Source:	Donated by Thomas Bohen, 1996
Abstract:	Grace Paley was a writer of poetry and short stories during the second half of the twentieth century. The collection consists of her agent Thomas Bohen's papers regarding Paley's work, including correspondence with publishers, reviews, photographs, and manuscripts. The papers primarily concern the publication of Paley's first book of short stories, <i>The Little Disturbances of Man</i> .
Access:	Apply in the Special Collections Office for admission to the Manuscripts and Archives Division.
Preferred citation:	Thomas Bohen papers regarding Grace Paley, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.
Special formats	Manuscripts for publication, photographs, short stories.

Biographical note

Grace Paley was born in 1922 in the Bronx, New York, to a family of Russian-Jewish immigrants. She married in 1942 and subsequently had two children in 1949 and 1951. Regardless of her status as a housewife in New York during the 1950s, Paley focused on her writing, mainly poetry and short stories. In 1959, a collection of her short stories were published in *The Little Disturbances of Man*. Although the book received excellent reviews from critics in both Britain and America, it was never entirely welcomed by the general public. She won the Guggenheim Fellowship in Fiction in 1961, and continued writing into the 1990s.

Thomas Bohen was an employee of MCA Artists, Ltd., a division of the Music Corporation of America, which was solely a music booking agency and television distributor during the 1950s. Bohen spent much of his time searching for and reading new TV scripts for programs. He signed Grace Paley onto an MCA Exclusive Management Contract in 1957, but later left the company to pursue other career opportunities, retaining Paley as a client.

Scope and content note

The collection consists of Thomas Bohen's papers regarding Grace Paley and her work from 1956-1989, primarily concerning the publication of her book *The Little Disturbances of Man* in 1959. The bulk of the papers include correspondence between Bohen and publishers in New York and London. There are also numerous MCA (Music Corporation of America) inter-office memos regarding publishing and contracts as well as correspondence with an MCA office in London regarding British publicity and reviews.

The correspondents include Ken McCormick, the editor-in-chief of Doubleday & Co, Inc. which first published *The Little Disturbances of Man* in 1959 and Aaron Asher of Meridian Books, Inc. which published the book in paperback in 1960. The few letters between Bohen and Paley are generally informal, usually regarding contract agreements or enclosing new manuscripts. The remainder of correspondence is comprised of assorted letters to and from Bohen about further reviews, publications, and adaptations of the book for Broadway, CBS Films, the Theatre Guild, the Atlantic Monthly Press, and others. The collection also includes photographs of Paley, proposed jacket designs for the book, and two short story typescripts, "A Gloomy Tune" and "An Irrevocable Diameter." In addition, there are many newspaper clippings of reviews of *The Little Disturbances of Man* in Britain and the United States and stories about her receipt of the Guggenheim Fellowship in 1961.

Container list

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
1	1	Correspondence, 1956-1989
	2	Publicity and reviews, 1960-1961, undated (Includes photographs and newspaper clippings)
	3	Typescripts of two short stories, undated ("A Gloomy Tune" and "An Irrevocable Diameter")