Skerl, Jennie.

Jennie Skerl Paul Bowles collection
1985-1997
(bulk dates 1985-1988)

Abstract: The Jennie Skerl Paul Bowles collection contains correspondence from Paul Bowles to American Beat scholar Jennie Skerl, as well as additional correspondence, notes, and transcripts of interviews about Bowles's life, work, and Tangier literary circle.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 663
Creator: Skerl, Jennie.
Title: Jennie Skerl Paul Bowles collection
Inclusive Dates: 1985-1997
Bulk Dates: 1985-1988
Extent: .3 linear feet (1 box)
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 663, Jennie Skerl Paul Bowles collection, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

Shelving Summary: Box 1: Shelved in SPEC MSS manuscript boxes (1 inch)
Location: Special Collections, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/

Source: Gift of Jennie Skerl, December 2011.
Processing: Processed and encoded by Elyse Brown, February 2013.
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Biographical Note

American Beat scholar Jennie Skerl served as the associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at West Chester University. She is also a founding board member and former President of the Beat Studies Association (founded December 2004). She met Paul Bowles in May 1985 when she visited his home in Tangier, Morocco, where he hosted "open-house" style social gatherings each evening. Skerl's publications include *William S Burroughs* (1985), *William S. Burroughs at the Front: Critical Reception, 1959-1989* (co-editor, 1991), *A Tawdry Place of Salvation: The Art of Jane Bowles* (1997), and *Reconstructing the Beats* (2004).

**Sources:**


Additional biographical material derived from the collection.
Scope and Content Note

The Jennie Skerl Paul Bowles collection contains correspondence from Paul Bowles to American Beat scholar Jennie Skerl, as well as additional correspondence, notes, and transcripts of interviews about Bowles's life, work, and Tangier literary circle.

The collection contains eight letters and two postcards from Bowles to Skerl. The early letters indicate that Skerl had planned and completed a trip to Tangier during which she met Bowles and spent several evenings at his home, where she watched him entertain guests and informally interviewed him. The collection includes Skerl's notes of her recollections of these visits, which she had been required to compose after leaving Bowles's home, as he had declined to give formal interviews.

Also present in the collection is correspondence between Skerl and other individuals regarding Bowles and the Tangier literary circle. Correspondents include Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Bowles biographer Gena Dagel Caponi, Ned Rorem, and Gore Vidal.

Copies of transcripts of interviews conducted by Caponi in preparation for *Paul Bowles: Romantic Savage* (1994) are also included; the interviews were conducted between 1984 and 1987 with individuals who had known Paul and Jane Bowles personally: Aaron Copeland (1900-1990); Virgil Thomson (1896-1989); David Diamond (1915-2005); Maurice Grosser (1903-1986); and Oliver Smith (1918-1994).
Selected Search Terms

**Personal Names**

Bowles, Paul, 1910-1999--Correspondence.

Caponi, Gena Dagel--Correspondence.

Ferlinghetti, Lawrence--Correspondence.

Rorem, Ned, 1923- --Correspondence

Skerl, Jennie--Correspondence.

Vidal, Gore, 1925-2012--Correspondence.

**Topical Terms**

Authors, American--20th century--Correspondence.

**Geographic Names**

Tangier (Morocco)--History--20th century.

Tangier (Morocco)--Intellectual life--20th century.

**Form/Genre Terms**

Correspondence.

Notes.

Postcards.

Transcripts.

**Occupation**

Authors.

Poets.

Scholars.

**Personal Contributors**

Caponi, Gena Dagel, correspondent.
Ferlinghetti, Lawrence, correspondent.
Rorem, Ned, 1923-, correspondent.
Vidal, Gore, 1925-2012, correspondent.

Related Materials in this Repository

MSS 163, Paul Bowles papers
MSS 165, Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno papers related to Paul Bowles
MSS 323, Paul Bowles letters to William Saroyan
MSS 324, Paul Bowles letters to John Martin
MSS 099, F838, Paul Bowles letters to Pud Gadiot
Detailed Description of the Collection

Paul Bowles letters to Jennie Skerl, 1984-1988 [Box 1 F1]

11 items

Eight letters and two postcards; many of the letters include the original airmail envelope. The letters concerned Skerl's trip to Tangier, questions for Bowles about his work, and Bowles's reactions to Skerl's work.

Jennie Skerl interviews with Paul Bowles in Tangier, 1985 May 24 and 29 [Box 1 F2]

2 items

Typed notes written by Skerl, recording her recollections after her visits to Bowles's apartment in Tangier. Bowles hosted social gatherings at his home each evening on an "open house" basis.

Jennie Skerl correspondence with others, 1985-1998

Ferlinghetti, Lawrence, 1985 September 16 [Box 1 F3]

Date from Ferlinghetti's mailed City Lights envelope; he wrote his reply on Skerl's letter she had sent to him.

Caponi, Gena Dagel, 1985-1986 [Box 1 F3]

Scaramelli, Richard A., 1988 July 11 [Box 1 F3]

Rorem, Ned, 1997 October 2 [Box 1 F3]

Vidal, Gore, 1998 April 2 [Box 1 F3]

Transcripts of interviews conducted by Gena Dagel Caponi, 1984-1987

Copies of transcripts of interviews conducted by Bowles's biographer, Gena Dagel Caponi (Tabery), with individuals who knew Paul and Jane Bowles.

Letter from Dagel Caponi to Skerl, 1987 June 24 [Box 1 F4]

Copeland, Aaron, 1984 October 3 [Box 1 F4]

Diamond, Dave, 1984 October 5 [Box 1 F4]

Grosser, Maurice, 1984 October 5 [Box 1 F4]

Thomson, Virgil, 1984 October 1 [Box 1 F4]

Smith, Oliver, 1985 March [Box 1 F4]