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**THE PAPERS OF NINA SCHNEIDER**

**Accession #2008-016**



Herman and Nina Schneider

**Dates** Inclusive dates: 1950s-1990s

**Extent** 17 boxes / 8.5 cubic feet

**Creator** Nina Schneider (1913-2007)

**Access / Use** The collection is open to researchers.

Copyright is retained by the Schneider family.

These files can be accessed at the Brooklyn College Library Archives & Special Collection, 2900 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, New York 11210, Main floor (Room 130).

**Languages** English

**Finding aid** Guide presently available in-house and online.

**Acquisition/Appraisal** Papers were donated by the Schneider family to the college library in 2008.

**Description Control** Finding aid content adheres to that prescribed by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Processing of this collection was begun by Barbara Allier and finished by Edythe Rosenblatt.

**Preferred Citation** Item, folder title, box number, The Papers of Nina Schneider, Brooklyn College Archives & Special Collections, Brooklyn College Library

**Subject Headings** Schneider, Nina, 1913-2007.

Jewish families -- Fiction.  
Jewish women -- Fiction.  
Older women -- Fiction.  
Jews -- Fiction.  
Domestic fiction.  
Science -- Experiments -- Juvenile literature.  
Science -- Experiments.  
Scientific recreations.  
Bridges -- Models.  
Machinery -- Models.  
Science -- Juvenile literature.  
Shades and shadows -- Juvenile literature.  
Flashlights -- Juvenile literature.  
Science -- Experiments.  
Engineering -- Juvenile literature.  
Power (Mechanics) -- Juvenile literature  
Telephone -- Juvenile literature.

### Biographical Note

**NINA SCHNEIDER** was born Nina Zimet in Antwerp, Belgium, in 1913, the daughter of Helen Silber Zimet and Manassah Zimet. The family moved to New York City when Nina was still a child. She attended Evander Childs High School in the Bronx and married Saul Chernowitz, an engineer, while still in her teens. They moved to a Jewish Utopian community that had been formed in New Jersey. Nina had a little boy, Steven, but soon afterwards Nina and Saul divorced. Thereafter, Ms. Schneider moved to Brooklyn, attended Brooklyn College graduating magna cum laude. It is there that she developed her love for the works of William Shakespeare.

In 1941, Nina's younger brother Julian introduced her to his high school science teacher, Herman Schneider. Herman and Nina soon married and were together for the next 52 years –until his death. At first, Mr. Schneider taught science in the New York City public school system. In time, he became supervisor of the science program. Nina in the meantime taught at the progressive Bank Street School. In the 1950s, Herman and Nina Schneider together wrote a classic textbook series, the "Schneider Science Series." These books answered questions children might ask on topics as varied as the human body, electricity, plants and bridges. The two collaborated on over eighty volumes of science books for children.

Ms. Schneider continued to write in other venues; her poetry appeared in The New American Review and in The Nation. In 1979, at the age of 66, she published a highly acclaimed novel, *The Woman Who Lived in a Prologue*. Ms. Schneider did admit that it wasn't "until her children and the (science) series were fully grown" that she actually had the time to turn her attention to writing fiction full time. Over a ten-year period she wrote brief sketches which turned into short stories and, in the end, grew into *The Woman Who Lived in a Prologue*. The novel demonstrates the progress of an immigrant who grows up to become a grandmother and, in the final analysis, helps her peace-loving activist grandson cross the border into Canada during the Vietnam war. Although Nina never admitted that her own experiences were incorporated into this tale, some of it may well have reflected her personal life.

Nina Schneider and her husband Herman lived their final years on Martha's Vineyard. Herman died in 2003. Ms. Schneider passed away in 2007 at the age of 94. Ms. Schneider's sister, Judith Singer, brother Julian Zimet, son Steven, and daughters Elizabeth and Lucy, survived her.

## Scope and Content

This collection contains materials primarily about Nina Schneider, although there are some items related to her husband Herman as well. There are articles, biographical information, book reviews (in different languages), press releases, fan mail, photographs, and program data.

There are also Ms. Schneider's diaries/letters, her lectures and speeches (with notes), poetry that she wrote, items regarding her only published book *The Woman Who Lived in a Prologue* as well as bound copies of the final manuscript. In addition, there are drafts, notes, and several chapters of her unpublished book *Coming to Terms: A Fact Finding Memoir*.

Finally, there are assorted miscellaneous materials such as some short stories Ms. Schneider wrote, audiocassettes, and book reviews.

## Series Outline / Series Descriptions

### **Series 1: Nina & Herman Schneider**

### **Series 2: Nina Schneider's Personal Items**

### **Series 3: Lectures**

### **Series 4: Poems by Nina Schneider**

### **Series 5: *The Woman Who Lived in a Prologue* / Letters, Reviews, Proofs**

### **Series 6: *Coming to Terms: A Fact Finding Memoir* (unpublished)**

### **Series 7: Miscellaneous**

#### **Series 1: Nina & Herman Schneider, 1 bx. / .5 cu. ft.**

This series is filed alphabetical.

Series 1 has an assortment of items about either Nina or Herman Schneider. There is an article by Mr. Schneider titled "What is a Good Science Book?" (1951), biographical information, book reviews (in French and/or German newspapers), newspaper clippings, correspondence, photographs and booklets.

#### **Series 2: Nina Schneider's Personal Items, 1 bx. / .5 cu. ft.**

This series is comprised of Nina Schneider's personal diaries as well as her personal letters.

#### **Series 3: Lectures, 1 bx. / .5 cu. ft.**

Series is filed in alphabetical order.

Series 3 contains information on Nina Schneider's lectures as well as notes, speeches and articles on Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Nikolai Gogol, Vladimir Nabokov, and others.

#### **Series 4: Poems by Nina Schneider, 2 bxs. / 1 cu. ft.**

Series 4 bears the poetry that Ms. Schneider wrote. Titles include "The Gardener's Calendar," "Snowstorm on the Ides of March," "Barefoot the Monster," "The Unevent," and "Worn Words." There are also some articles Ms. Schneider wrote that were published in assorted publications.

#### **Series 5: *Woman Who Lived in a Prologue* / Letters, Reviews, Proofs, 6 bxs./3 cu. ft.**

This series contains material related to Ms. Schneider's one and only book that she had published, *The Woman Who Lived in a Prologue*. There are drafts, correspondences and notes related to the book. There are also manuscripts with corrections as well as bound manuscripts.

#### **Series 6: *Coming to Terms: A Fact Finding Memoir* (unpublished), 4 bxs. / 2 cu. ft.**

Series 6 is comprised of a memoir that Ms. Schneider was working on titled *Coming to Terms: A Fact Finding Memoir*. There are Chapters 1 through 9 as well as assorted drafts, historical material, and notes related to this book in addition to handwritten and typewritten material as well.

#### **Series 7: Miscellaneous, 3 bxs. /1.5 cu. ft.**

This series has an assortment of miscellaneous material. There are short stories that Ms. Schneider wrote, a box of audiocassettes, and book reviews on the Schneiders' science books (including one review from the Saturday Evening Post).

## Container List

### **Series 1: Nina & Herman Schneider**

#### **Box 1:**

Schneider / Article by Herman Schneider: "What is a Good Science Book?" Sept. 1951  
 Schneider / Biography & Published Information  
 Schneider / Book Reviews, French News Paper, German, Crossword Puzzle Entry  
 Schneider / Book Reviews, Newspaper Clippings, Photo Copies/ 1979-82  
 Schneider / Copyrighted Paragraph - "The Mother's Voice," 1994  
 Schneider / Correspondence, Agreement, Press Releases - Houghton Mifflin Co., 1978-81  
 Schneider / Correspondence, 1969-92  
 Schneider / Fan Mail, Book Reviews, 1949-53  
 Schneider / Fan Mail/ 1975-81  
 Schneider / Fan Mail/ 1975-81  
 Schneider / Junior Literary Guild/ Booklets/ "Young Wings" (July 1947), "Magic Lantern" (May-July 1946)  
 Schneider / Photographs & Letter - Milk Carton Program, John Hopkins University, 1952  
 Schneider / Photographs - Nina & Herman Schneider, Book Store Window Display, (1940's or 1950's)  
 Schneider / Photographs - Herman Schneider  
 Schneider / Programs-New School Associates '79; Honoring Ms Schneider;  
 White House Conf. (1/27/81) – Speaker

### **Series 2: Nina Schneider's Personal Items**

#### **Box 2:**

Schneider / Diaries /letters

### **Series 3: Lectures**

#### **Box 3:**

Schneider / Lectures/ Tolstoy/ Notes, Articles, Speeches  
 Schneider / Lectures/ Notes, Invoices, Drafts, Correspondence/ 1981-95  
 Schneider / Lectures/ Dostoyevsky/ "The Brothers Karamazov"/ Articles, Notes, Speech  
 Schneider / Lectures/ Nikolai Gogol/ Articles, Map, Speech  
 Schneider / Lectures/ Vladimir Nabokov/ Articles, Map  
 Schneider / Lectures/ Glasnost, Perestroika & 19<sup>th</sup> Century Great Books/ Agenda, Notes, Articles - 1989  
 Schneider / Lectures/ "What's Past is Prologue" by Nina Schneider/ Q & A  
 Schneider / Lectures/ Ivan Turgenev/ Notes  
 Schneider / Lectures/ Literature/ American, European/ Criticism  
 Schneider / Lectures/ T.S. Eliot, Marianne Moore, Wallace Stevens, Wm. C. Williams

### **Series 4: Poems by Nina Schneider**

#### **Box 4:**

Schneider / Poems, Articles (Vineyard Gazette), Paper on the Gardens/ 1987-94  
 Schneider / Poems "The Gardener's Calendar" with "Certainty of Bees", "Seaside  
 Rose Garden", "Snowstorm on the Ides of March"  
 Schneider / Poems "Ontogeny Recapitulates Phylogeny," "Earth Science," "Chores Of the Equinox"

Schneider / Poems "Barefoot the Monster," "The Unevent," "This Drivelling Love," "Worn Words"

Schneider / Poems "Unpacking", "The Formal Face", "Application to the Heralds"

Schneider / Poem "What of Dwindling?"/ New American Review/ Aug. 1970

Schneider / Poem "He Saith Among the Trumpets, Ha, Ha, and He Smelleth the Battle

Afar Off"/ Mademoiselle Magazine/ Dec. 1971

Schneider / Poem "Astronomy Lesson"/ the Nation/ Oct. 5, 1974

Schneider / Poem "The Blood Bond"/ the Nation/ March 15, 1975

Schneider / Poem "Elie Nadelman's Sculptures"/ The Nation/ Nov. 20, 1976

Schneider / Poem "The Certainty of Bees"/ the Nation/ July 1, 1978

Schneider / Poem "Earth Science"/ Paris Review/ Summer 1980

**Box 5:**

Schneider / Interview with Nina Schneider

Schneider / Kalliope: A Journal of Women's Art/ Spring-Summer 1981

Schneider / Correspondence, Notes / 1972

Schneider / Poems by Nina Schneider

Schneider / Poems by Nina Schneider

Schneider / Poems by Nina Schneider

Schneider / Poems by Nina Schneider

**Series 5: The Woman who Lived in a Prologue / Letters, Reviews, Proofs**

**Box 6:**

Schneider / Correspondence/ To Nina from Erica Jong/ 1980

Schneider / Correspondence/ from Publishers & Reviewers/ 1979-88

Schneider / Notes

Schneider / *The Woman Who Lived in a Prologue* / Press release by Publisher

Schneider / *The Woman Who Lived in a Prologue*/ Corrected Xerox Copy/ Jan. 1979

Schneider / *The Woman Who Lived in a Prologue*/ Draft with Notes/ pgs. 3-368

Schneider / *The Woman Who Lived in a Prologue*/ Draft with Notes/ pgs. 369-648

**Box 7:**

Schneider / *The Woman Who Lived in a Prologue*/ Manuscript/ pgs. 1-200

Schneider / *The Woman Who Lived in a Prologue*/ Manuscript/ pgs. 201-400

Schneider / *The Woman Who Lived in a Prologue*/ Manuscript/ pgs.401-522

Schneider / *The Woman Who Lived in a Prologue*/ Master Set – 1<sup>st</sup> Pass

Schneider / *The Woman Who Lived in a Prologue*/ Draft with Notes/ pgs. 124-260

**Box 8:**

Schneider / *The Woman who Lived in a Prologue*/ Draft with Notes/ pgs. 261-633

Schneider / *The Woman who Lived in a Prologue*/ Manuscript with Corrections/ pgs. 1-150

Schneider / *The Woman who Lived in a Prologue*/ Manuscript with Corrections/ pgs. 151-340

Schneider / *The Woman who Lived in a Prologue*/ Manuscript with Corrections/ pgs. 341-527

**Box 9:**

Schneider / Bound Manuscripts/ *The Woman who lived in a Prologue*

**Box 10:**

Schneider / Bound Manuscripts/ *The Woman who Lived in a Prologue*

**Box 11:**

Schneider / Uncorrected Proof/ *The Woman who Lived in a Prologue*

**Series 6: "Coming to Terms: A Fact Finding Memoir"****Box 12:**

Schneider / Chapter 1/ Draft, Notes  
 Schneider / Chapter 2 (Way Stations)/ Draft, Notes  
 Schneider / Chapter 3/ Draft, Notes  
 Schneider / Chapter 4/ Draft, Notes  
 Schneider / Book II/ "The Fall"/ Draft, Notes  
 Schneider / Chapter 6 (A Country Woman)/ Draft, Notes  
 Schneider / Chapter 7/ (Book II)/ Draft, Notes  
 Schneider / Chapter 7/ Draft, Notes  
 Schneider / Chapter 8 (Book 3)/ Draft, Notes  
 Schneider / Chapter 9/ Draft, Notes

**Box 13:**

Schneider / Alternative Introduction & Fragments  
 Schneider / Part I - "Benjamin's Story"  
 Schneider / Draft/ Chapter - "Mr. Brown"/ Notes  
 Schneider / Draft/ Chapter - "Benjamin Brown"/ Notes  
 Schneider / Draft/ Chapter - "Looking for the House"/ Notes  
 Schneider / Draft/ "Meeting the House"- 1934/ Notes  
 Schneider / Draft/ Chapter - 1930-31/ Dec. 1987  
 Schneider / Draft/ Chapter - 1931 - "Getting Married"/ Notes  
 Schneider / Draft/ Chapter - 1932-34/ Notes  
 Schneider / Draft/ Chapter - "Signing our Lease"/ Notes  
 Schneider / Drafts, Notes/ March 1972  
 Schneider / Draft - "Neatness Counts"/ 1979  
 Schneider / Historical Material/ Nov. 1979  
 Schneider / Historical References & Unincorporated Material (to Section 5)/ "The Enemy Within," 1985  
 Schneider / Part 2 - Home/ Draft, Notes  
 Schneider / Political Markers & Education/ Ideas in Order/ 1933/ Extra Copies

**Box 14:**

Schneider / Draft  
 Schneider / Draft with Notes  
 Schneider / Draft with Notes  
 Schneider / Political Comments Related to Period/ Draft, Notes  
 Schneider / Last Section - "the Return"  
 Schneider / Section 6 - "Desert of Disposition", Chapter 1 - "Wandering", Chapter 2 -  
 "Evading the Cherubim or a Kind of Farewell"  
 Schneider / Section 2 - "The Boarding House" - Mrs. Ely/ Draft, Notes  
 Schneider / Draft/ Chapter - "The Gospel According to Mrs. Ely"  
 Schneider / Book Chapters - Uncle Max's Funeral  
 Schneider / Book Chapters - Tourist Restaurant  
 Schneider / Drafts - "Remembering Louise Bogan: A Verse Memoir"



**Box 15:**

Schneider / Calendar of Project / Notes, draft  
Schneider / "Coming to Terms," Notes – Section IV  
Schneider / Handwritten and Typewritten notes

**Series 7: Miscellaneous**

**Box 15:** (Cont'd )

Schneider / Short Stories by Nina Schneider: "Naked with Nets", "The Flute Lesson", "We did it for the Children", "The Funeral Baked Meats", "The Boys Suit"  
Schneider / Justice James J. Leff/ Articles, Letters, Notes, Resume/ 1977

**Box 16:**

Schneider / Audio Cassettes (18)

**Box 17: (oversized)**

Schneider / Book Reviews of Herman & Nina Schneider's Science Books including  
"Saturday Evening Post" – Feb. 5, 1938 & "The Houston Press" – Sept. 26, 1959