

Walker Percy Papers

3.75 linear feet, 10 boxes, 1 OS folder

**Special Collections & Archives
J. Edgar & Louise S. Monroe Library
Loyola University New Orleans**

Collection 64

Walker Percy Papers

Reference Code

Collection 64

Name and Location of Repository

Special Collections and Archives, J. Edgar & Louise S. Monroe Library, Loyola University New Orleans

Title

Walker Percy Papers

Date

1945-2000, bulk 1970-1990

Extent

3.75 linear feet, 10 boxes, 1 OS folder

Name of Creator

Percy, Walker, 1916-1990.
Percy, Mary Bernice Townsend.

Administrative/Biographical History

Walker Percy was born on May 28, 1916 in Birmingham, Alabama. After his father's death in 1929, Walker's family relocated to Athens, Georgia. Percy's mother died in an automobile accident a couple of years later, and Percy and his brothers relocated to Greenville, Mississippi to live with their father's cousin, William Alexander Percy. Walker Percy attended the University of North Carolina where he received a B.A. in Chemistry in 1937. He later attended the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia University from where he graduated in 1941. In 1944, after battling and recovering from tuberculosis, Percy abandoned his medical career to pursue a career in writing.

Percy married Mary Bernice ("Bunt") Townsend in 1946, and shortly thereafter the new couple relocated to Covington, Louisiana. They had two daughters. Around the time they moved to Louisiana both Percy and his wife joined the Roman Catholic Church.

Percy published a number of essays in the 1950s. His first novel, *The Moviegoer* (1961), won the National Book Award for Fiction in 1962. Percy continued to publish fiction and

nonfiction covering subjects such as philosophy, semiotics, religion, science and life in the South.

Percy died of cancer at his home in Covington, Louisiana in 1990.

Scope and Content

This collection originated from Walker Percy's office at his home in Covington and was donated by his daughter after the death of Mrs. Mary "Bunt" Percy. Handwritten notes, typescripts with marginalia, drafts of speeches and lectures, and correspondence and photocopies of correspondence make up majority of the collection. There are a number of collected articles and academic journals that contain pieces written about Percy as well as unpublished academic papers and theses about him and his writing. The range of the material in the collection focuses mainly on the latter half of Percy's life.

System of Arrangement

For majority of the series in the collection, the arrangement scheme for the collection has been maintained from the time of acquisition. When necessary, order was imposed during processing to maintain cohesion between series.

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research use.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

Physical rights are retained by the J. Edgar and Louis S. Monroe Library, Loyola University New Orleans. Copyright is retained in accordance with U.S. Copyright Laws.

Language and Scripts of the Material

Collection is in English.

Processing Information

Finding aid written by Jennifer Waxman, 2014.

Related Archival Materials

Percy-Walsh Correspondence, 1980-1999

Percy-Romagosa Collection

Walker Percy and Charles Suhor Letters

Patrick Samway, S.J. Papers

Series Description

- Series I Correspondence**
Letters received by both Walker and his wife, Mary Bernice Percy. Some authors of note include Madison Smart Bell, Shelby Foote, and Robert Giroux. The second half of the series includes photocopied invitations to speak, requests for permission to publish pieces from Percy's writings, or requests for interviews.
- Series II Typescripts, Speeches, Notes**
Drafts of essays, speeches and other handwritten notes by Percy. Some handwritten notes originate from binders or subject files with titles. Any binder or folder with handwritten marks by Percy have been retained or photocopied.
- Series III Publications by Walker Percy**
This series contains mainly photocopies of articles written by Percy for magazines, newspapers and journals.
- Series IV Publications about Walker Percy**
This series contains journals and magazines that contain articles and essays written by others about Percy. The publications are listed individually.
- Series V Unpublished writing about Walker Percy**
This series contains a number of academic papers, including undergraduate and graduate theses, written about Walker Percy.
- Series VI Publicity and Honors Received**
This series contains pamphlets and other ephemera related to award ceremonies and honors received by Percy.
- Series VII Research and Subject Files**
This series contains photocopies and clippings of articles collected by Percy as well as handwritten notes from file folders. File folders with handwriting by Percy have been photocopied and discarded.
- Series VIII Ephemera and Oversize**
This series contains unidentified photographs, oversize posters, and other documents related to Percy's writings.

Container List

Series I: Correspondence

Box	Folder	Description
1	1	Correspondence undated, 1945-1986
	2	Correspondence 1987-2000
	3	Photocopied correspondence 1967-1986
	4	Photocopied correspondence 1973-1987
	5	Photocopied correspondence 1964-1980
	6	Photocopied correspondence 1975-1992

Series II: Typescripts, Speeches, Notes

Box	Folder	Description	
1	7	Typescript—book reviews	
	8	Typescript—edited 3 rd party works	
	9	Typescript—unidentified drafts	
	10	Typescript—Opinion essay <i>The Times Picayune</i> (1985)	
	11	Typescript—transcript of interview with Zoltan Abadi-Nagy (1986)	
	12	Typescript—original packaging for Nagy transcript	
	13	Typescript—transcript of interview with Worldnet	
	14	(1986)	
	2	1	Typescript—“Physician as Novelist”
		2	Typescript—“Symbol and Existence” (photocopy), 1 of 5
		3	Typescript—“Symbol and Existence” (photocopy), 2 of 5
		4	Typescript—“Symbol and Existence” (photocopy), 3 of 5
		5	Typescript—“Symbol and Existence” (photocopy), 4 of 5
		6	Typescript—“Symbol and Existence” (photocopy), 5 of 5
7		Typescript— <i>The Thantos Syndrome</i>	
8		Typescript—“Three Signs”	
9		Typescript—Verse by W. Percy	
10		Speech—various untitled drafts, including On Bourbon	
11		Speech—“The State of the Novel”, “A Novelist Looks at Psychotherapy”	
3	1	Speech—“Is a Theory of Man Possible?”, untitled	
	2	Speech—Eudora Welty Chair of Southern Studies inaugural talk	
	3	Speech—“Science, Religion, and the Tertium Quid” (photocopy)	
	4	Speech—“The Fateful Rift” (draft) 1 of 2	

	5	Speech—"The Fateful Rift" (draft) 2 of 2
	6	Speech—"The Fateful Rift," "Why are you Catholic?"
	7	Speech—binder contained contents of previous folder
4	1	Notes—unidentified, loose
	2	Notes—unidentified, loose
	3	Notes—untitled binder 1 of 2
	4	Notes—untitled binder 2 of 2
	5	Notes—binder, contained contents of previous two folders
	6	Notes—from binder titled "Sources"
	7	Notes—"Sources" (binder)
	8	Notes—from binder titled "Journal"
	9	Notes—"Journal" (binder)
5	1	Notes—from binder titled "Linguistics"
	2	Notes—"Linguistics" (binder)
	3	Notes—from binder titled "Existence and Human Types"
	4	Notes—"Existence and Human Types" (binder)
	5	Notes—International Summer Institute for Semiotic and Structural Studies

Series III: Publications by Walker Percy

Box	Folder	Description
6	1	<i>Diagnosing the Modern Malaise</i> (photocopy)
	2	Articles (photocopies)
	3	Articles
	4	Articles (reprints)
	5	Dust jacket mock ups

Series IV: Publications about Walker Percy

Box	Folder	Description
6	6	Journals 1 of 3 Madathiparampil, George. <i>Prophecy in American Fiction: a study of the novels of Walker Percy</i> . Changanacherry: Sandesanilayam Press. <i>Innostrannaâ literatura</i> (1988) Allen, William Rodney. "All the Names of Death: Walker Percy and Hemingway." <i>Mississippi Quarterly</i> . Hynes, Joseph. "Percy's Reliques." <i>Cross Currents</i> Winter (1972): 117-128. Samway, Patrick, S.J., "A Backward Glance at Walker Percy's <i>The Moviegoer</i> ." <i>Fordham University</i>

- Quarterly*. Rpt from *Thought* 66.261 (June 1991).
- Chesnick, Eugene. "Novel's Ending and World's End: The Fiction of Walker Percy." *The Hollins Critic* 10.5 (October 1973): 1-11.
- Desmond, John F. "Love, Sex, and Knowledge in Walker Percy's Lancelot: A Metaphysical View." *The Mississippi Quarterly* 39.2 (Spring 1986): 103-110.
- Multiple authors. "Walker Percy in Memoriam" in *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature*. 74.3 (Spring 1992).
- Browning, Preston. "Walker Percy and Gabriel Marcel: The Dialectical Self in *The Moviegoer*." *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature*. 70.4 (Summer 1988): 279-287.
- 7 Journals 2 of 3
- Multiple authors. "Special Issue: Walker Percy." *The Southern Quarterly: A Journal of the Arts in the South* 18. 3 (Spring 1980).
- Multiple authors. *The South Carolina Review* 13.2 (Spring 1981).
- 8 Journals 3 of 3
- Moynihan, Robert. "Lancelot." *The Harvard Advocate* 111.1 (November 1977): 26-30.
- Hicks, Jack. "Lancelot by Walker Percy." *San Francisco Review of Books*. 2.12 (April 1977): 12-13.
- Walter, Scott. "Nuns, Nazis, and the Poor Old Pope: An Interview with Walker Percy." *Crisis: A Journal of Catholic Opinion* 7.7 (July-August 1989): 12. *Suhrkamp Verlag* (1985)
- 9 Magazines 1 of 4
- Swindle, Michael. "At Court with Walker Percy." *New Orleans Magazine* January 1989: 38.
- "The Last Gentleman." *Time Magazine*. 87.24 (June 17, 1966): 104.
- 10 Magazines 2 of 4
- Coles, Robert. "Profiles (Walker Percy—Part I)." *The New Yorker* Oct 2, 1978: 43.
- Reed, Julia. "The Last Southern Gentleman." *U.S. News & World Report* March 16, 1987: 75.
- Ford, Richard. "Walker Percy: Not Just Whistling Dixie." *National Review* May 13, 1977: 558.
- 7 1 Magazines 3 of 4
- "21 Great Writers on the U.S.A.: With Introduction and Excerpts Chosen by Elizabeth Hardwick." *Vogue* February 1963: 114.

2	Magazines 4 of 4 Shelton, Ron. "Why <i>The Moviegoer</i> is not a Movie." Louisiana <i>Cultural Vistas</i> Spring 2000: 8. Multiple authors. "Walker Percy: Jefferson Lecturer." <i>Humanities: National Endowment for the Humanities</i> 10.3 (May/June 1989). <i>Book of the Month Club News</i> (March 1977, May 1987).
3	Clippings 1 of 3
4	Clippings 2 of 3
5	Clippings (photocopies) 3 of 4
6	Clippings (obituaries) 4 of 4
7	Photocopies and print outs Photocopies and print outs

Series V: Unpublished writing about Walker Percy

Box	Folder	Description
7	8	Unidentified academic papers
	9	Unidentified academic papers
	10	Unidentified academic papers
8	1	Unidentified academic papers
	2	Unidentified academic papers
	3	Unidentified academic papers

Series VI: Publicity and Honors

Box	Folder	Description
8	4	Barnes & Noble 2007 Desk Diary, Rebellion and Reflection: Great Writers of the Sixties
	5	St. Louis Literary Award; NEH Jefferson Lecture in the Humanities
	6	Programs from ceremonies, conferences

Series VII: Research and Subject Files

Box	Folder	Description
9	1	Articles
	2	Articles
	3	Articles
9	4	Articles and papers
	5	Subject file: Sklovskij, Viktor
	3	Subject file: Thom, Renee
	4	Subject file: Big Bang; Brain Mechanis; Science and Religion; Ostreanenie; Language Roots; TV Influence on novels; Advertising "Semiotics";

Nova Program; Devolutions of Sign; Cosby Show

Series VIII: Ephemera and Oversize

Box	Folder	Description
9	8	Walker Percy Educational Project, Inc. materials
	9	Correspondence with Gene Winick and John Hadd re: “The Fateful Rift” and <i>Resurrecting Genesis</i>
	10	Miscellaneous
OS Box 10		Oversize folder: photographs, posters
Box 11		Suspenders
OS Box 12		Oversize folder: obituary clippings