



EXTENT: approx. 27 linear feet, with 21 bankers boxes and 1 oversized box measuring 24 x 16 x 10 in; 22.3 GB of digital files (approx. 10,321 files); 22.5 GB of email (approx. 85,785 messages).

DATES: 1952-2025, bulk 1980s-2025.

CONTENT: The complete literary and personal archive of the critically-acclaimed novelist and writer Rachel Kushner. The archive includes drafts of work, notebooks, correspondence, working files, literary and cultural ephemera, personal and family files, photographs, artworks, extensively-annotated books, and digital files. All of Kushner's major literary works (*Telex from Cuba*, *The Flamethrowers*, *The Mars Room*, *The Hard Crowd*, and *Creation Lake*) are well-represented through extensive drafts, correspondence with her longtime editor Nan Graham, and scarce research materials. Of note is a substantial collection of correspondence, legal documentation, and ephemera related to the California women's prison system, collected by Kushner throughout and after the writing of her Booker-nominated novel *The Mars Room*. The archive also includes a unique collection of material from Cuba, predating the Cuban Revolution, as retained by Kushner's grandparents, and research materials related to Kushner's process, from her earliest writings to present day.

The archive is located in Los Angeles, California.

Granary Books presents
the archive of

RACHEL KUSHNER

Granary
Books

ABOUT RACHEL KUSHNER

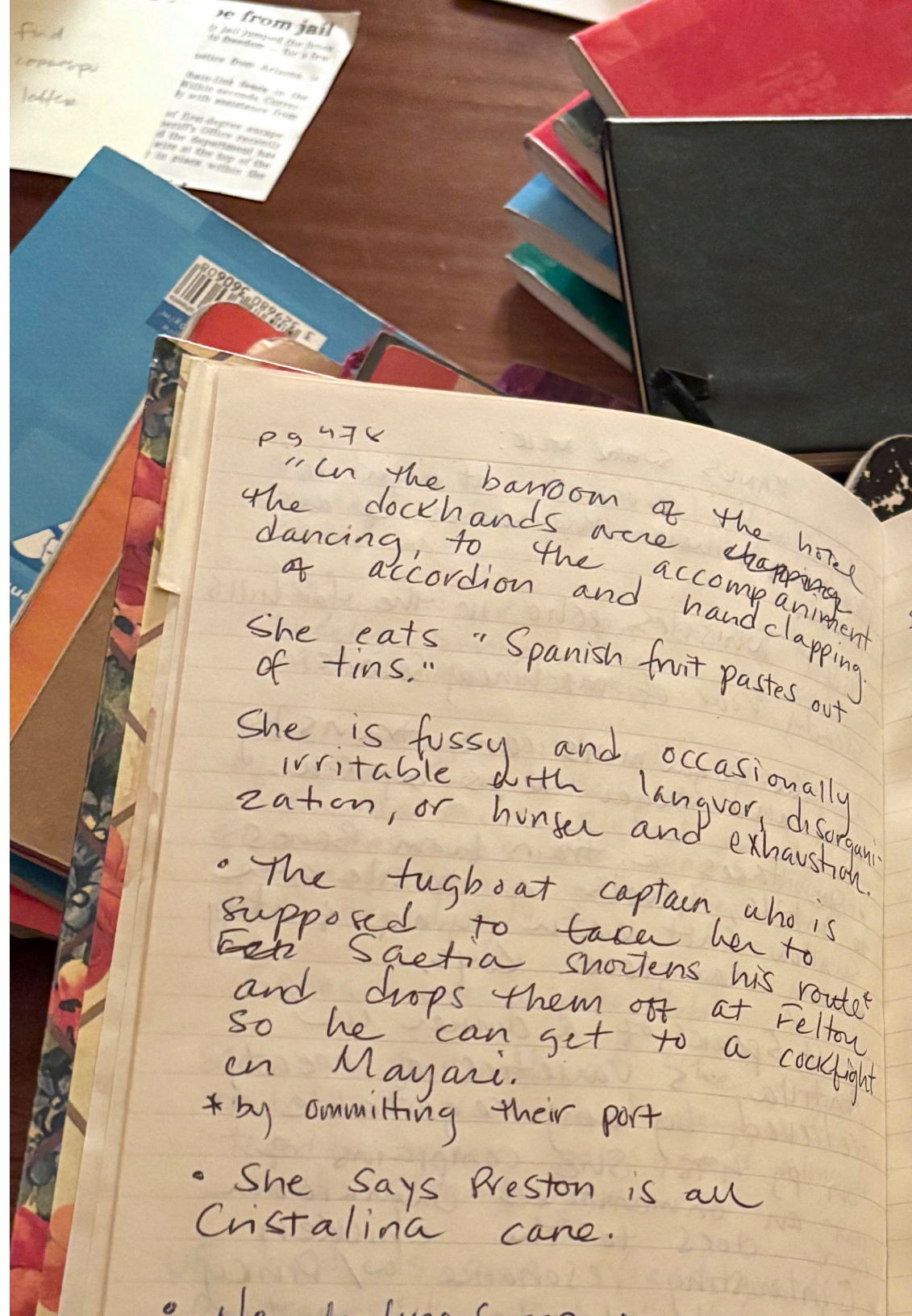
Rachel Kushner (b. 1968) is a critically-acclaimed novelist, essayist, and writer. She was born in Eugene, Oregon, to which her family had moved in an old school bus, obtained by her father and retrofitted by her mother, and later utilized for summers on the road with beatniks and hippies. In Eugene, Kushner was an inaugural attendee of the experimental Eastside Alternative School, before moving to San Francisco's Sunset District with her parents in 1979, then a working-class Irish neighborhood by Ocean Beach where Kushner undertook an adventurous and wide-roaming adolescence that has pervaded her writings. In 1985, at the age of 16, Kushner enrolled at the University of California, Berkeley, where she studied American political intervention in Nicaragua (and proudly amassed a collection of never-paid parking tickets, as included in the archive). She would go on to study poetry with Lyn Hejinian at the New College of California, fiction with Thom Jones at the University of Iowa, and immerse herself in the world of motorcycle riding and racing in San Francisco, an interest that culminated in a 130 miles-per-hour crash in Mexico that she chronicled in an essay, "Girl on a Motorcycle," in her book, *The Hard Crowd*.

In 1996, Kushner moved to New York, where she enrolled in Columbia University's MFA in fiction writing. While in New York, Kushner wrote for *Grand Street*, *BOMB*, and *ArtForum*, and notebooks from the period not only document her life and writing during this time but contain early instances of writing on pre-Castro Cuba, a topic close to her family's history. In 2002, Kushner took her first of several trips to Cuba, extensively documenting its architecture and landscapes, as well as conducting oral histories concerning United Fruit and the colonial residues of pre-revolutionary Cuba, in addition to studying files and ephemera retained by her maternal grandparents from their time living in the country in the 1950s. In 2003, she moved from New York to Los Angeles to concentrate on writing fiction, and there completed her debut novel, *Telex from Cuba* (Scribner, 2008).



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ARCHIVE

- **Drafts of Work**—Drafts (often with extensive annotations by Kushner, or her longtime editor, Nan Graham) for all of Kushner's major works, including research files, autograph notes, and works in various stages. Of note is a 37-page autograph chapter draft from *The Flamethrowers*, along with autograph and heavily annotated printed typescript drafts from Kushner's collaboration with novelist Ottessa Moshfegh on a screenplay adaptation of *The Mars Room*. There are also unpublished screenplay drafts written by Kushner for a forthcoming project directed by the artist Ed Ruscha.
- **Notebooks**—Nearly 80 autograph notebooks, substantively filled and containing drafts of both published and unpublished works, creative exercises, diaristic entries, daily appointments and notes, and research into topics including Cuba, incarceration, and artistic and philosophical movements. Highlights include two notebooks kept by Kushner during her travels through the West Bank in 2016, an experience captured in her essay "We Are Orphans Here." Another notebook from her travels depicts Kushner's first trip to Cuba in 2002 and contains some of the early instances of creative work related to her debut, *Telex From Cuba*.
- **Correspondence**—Correspondence traces Kushner's literary and personal life from her teenage years onwards, and includes the first letter she received from her mentor and friend, the novelist Don DeLillo. There is also a folder of incoming correspondence from incarcerated women Kushner met and became close with during the process of writing and researching *The Mars Room*. These letters document not only Kushner's relationship with the writers, and at times her involvement in their legal representation, but the daily lives, rhythms, and routines of women incarcerated in California.



ABOUT THE ARCHIVE

The archive was identified and collected by Kushner, with guidance from Granary Books, following a preliminary meeting in April 2025. In December 2025, Granary Books and Kushner jointly organized the physical archive, with Kushner providing additional context and information for many items, including, at times, on autograph sticky notes. After organization was completed, Granary Books created a folder-level, and at times item-level, inventory and photographed representative contents of the archive.

SERIES & DESCRIPTION

The physical archive was described by the following series, at box level with folder and item-level details as applicable.

Photographs (1 box)

Correspondence (5 boxes)

Works (10 boxes)

Notebooks (5 boxes)

Working Files (5 boxes)

Personal Files (2 boxes)

Ephemera (4 boxes)

Early Files, Early Writings, Juvenilia (6 boxes)

Annotated/Important Books (2 boxes)

Periodicals (2 boxes)

Oversize (1 box)

In addition to the physical archive, Kushner identified and organized the digital component of the archive. These files were exported onto a hard drive by Granary Books in December of 2025. In February 2026, Kushner completed the organization of emails. These files were exported in February 2026.

DIGITAL MEDIA

The archive includes 22.3 GB of digital files, or approx. 10,321 files, and approx. 85,785 (22.5 GB) emails (48.8 GB total).





DESCRIPTION OF THE ARCHIVE

PHOTOGRAPHS

There are over 500 photographs in the archive, many of Kushner from youth onward. Photographs include documentation of Lannan Foundation events with Ruth Wilson Gilmore and Michael Silverblatt, The American Academy of Arts and Letters with Don DeLillo, photostrips from the Academy Awards, and other literary and film events.

Kushner's love of vintage cars (including her '63 Impala) and motorcycles appears in this series, as well as places including Berkeley, Italy in 1987, the Lower East Side, Iowa City, and other spaces. People include Alex Brown, Kim Gordon, Remy Kushner, Peter Kushner, Pinky Kushner, Maggie Nelson, Harry Dodge, Dan Koenig, early school photographs of Kushner, Britt Withey, Gale Harold, "Cowboy" Ray Kelly, David Morgan, Buddy Kushner, Kushner learning to use a drill press in San Francisco in 1991, Emily and Rachel from *The Hard Crowd*, Jonn Westphal, Miller Duvall, Patrick Hambrecht, Kushner in a handmade dress (as featured in her *New Yorker* piece), DeeDee Halleck (aunt), Tovey (cousin), Crissy Joka, Kortni Mendiz, Jeanne Hicks, Jennifer Hicks, and others. Kushner has labeled almost all individuals in photographs on the back.

Pictured from left: photostrip with Kushner and friend; Kushner and Alex Brown (Gorilla Biscuits musician and artist); Kushner on the Lower East Side with cousin Tovey, "Cowboy" Ray Kelly, and Scotty; Kushner with Kim Gordon.



In addition to several folders in the Photographs series, notable groupings of photographs located elsewhere in the archive include hundreds of photographs Kushner took on several trips to Cuba for research as she prepared her debut, *Telex from Cuba*; family photographs from Cuba at midcentury and prior; and over 60 photographs from Cooperative Camps, an alternative summer camp that Kushner was involved in during her youth.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Correspondence series complements Kushner's extensive digital correspondence, with notes from recent personal and literary correspondents as well as long-term friends and collaborators, such as editor Nan Graham, Kushner's aunt DeeDee Halleck, Barbara Epler of New Directions, the artist Laura Owens, and the novelist Don DeLillo. Of note are handprinted cards from Owens, along with the first letter Kushner received from DeLillo in March 2008 in which, having finished reading *Telex from Cuba* for the first time, he writes to congratulate her on the work and muses: "We write because we have to but in a way the responses of an engaged reader superimposes itself on this primal urgency, calms it down, suggests to the writer that the effort was worthwhile."

Notable figures and organizations found within the 2000s correspondence include: Jeff Angus, James Benning, G. A. Boland, Susan Brody, Christopher Brown, Don DeLillo, Herman Diaz, Ellie Ellwand, Barbara Epler, Vivian Gornick, Nan Graham, Pee Wee Herman, Sally Howe, Tayari Jones, Tina Kaminsky, Wade Kuhn, Emma Lewis, Loren Madsen, Leslie Martin, Alison McDonald, Sarah McGrath, Thomas Meaney, Caille Millner, Katie Monaghan, Ottessa Moshfegh, Laura Owens, Sergio de la Pava, Paul Reubeus, Ed Ruscha, Irene Sardanis, Salvatore Scibona, Gary Sherrill, Lewis Stadlen, Courtney Van Arsdale, Connie Walsh, Abby Walthausen, and Scott Wood. Organizations include the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Aperture, Center for the Art of Translation, Gagolian,

Pictured: correspondence with Don DeLillo and Alex Brown.

ALEXANDER D. BROWN

Hi honey,

How's it going?...I guess a belated happy birthday would be in order. So happy 30th and all that. Did I ever tell you about the worst birthday of my life? It was my 30th, I was taking a train to NY and got violently ill, eventually winding up in the hospital wearing a paper sack, an IV tube spilling all over me, crackheads screaming bloody murder, general misery surrounding my every move. Needless to say I hope yours was better. I was going to get you that Badfinger book but can't seem to track it down and I'll try to get you a good mix tape but it seems like that is all I've done since returning and I don't know if I can spend another 90 minutes in front of my stereo with my Radio Shack headphones, circa 1979, looking and feeling like some sort of detritus left in an abandoned state institution. In other words they suck. But I do have some good stuff to...dude. I'm going to forever have this photo of me in rock a lot younger than where have you out to the



LEO TOLSTOY (1828-1910). PHOTOGRAPHER UNIDENTIFIED
18 JUN 2014 AM 4:11

Rachel-
I've got my knapsack,
with provisions for four;
my Siberian tigerskin boots;
my mercurial watch cap;
my hand-me-down greatcoat;
and my vintage hardwood
walking stick.
The beard is a work-
in-progress. But I'm
ready to walk. -DJ
14850524119



Rachel Kushner

Ithaca NY 14850

to 'turn you on' hate em. So you like looking a hell of a youth and innocence, chance to check I really do when layer on my most nicely. I just about the work. almost everything I'm just making that is taking ing gelatin-

little more s the apt said he looking for bened up l St place and s the only you are able not seen or the hell is I can party guitar amp...hopefull roll career pt2. I've based on the name Amish Hot on a local news story concerning signal-orange triangles on their buggies ing court battle. In a gesture of solidarity I've a

Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, Kalamazoo College, Lannan Foundation, MacDowell, Magic Hour Press, Minnesota Prison Writing, National Book Foundation, Oprah Magazine, University of Miami, and Writers House.

This series also includes a folder with over four linear inches of incoming correspondence from individuals, primarily women, who Kushner met during her research for *The Mars Room*. Individuals in this grouping were incarcerated at the time of their correspondence, and many remain so to this day. These letters are often multiple pages and discursive, offering intimate insights into the daily routines and textures of life within California's carceral state. Notably, topics range from seeking Kushner's advice on writing to her assistance with parole and questions about her daily life in the outside world. The letters are often personal, with many correspondents appearing multiple times over the course of multiple years (and long after the publication of *The Mars Room*), reflecting Kushner's deep involvement with and advocacy for women incarcerated in California. Letter writers with a significant presence include: Christy P., currently incarcerated; Michele Scott, formerly incarcerated and now working as a prison activist; Mychal M. (who went by Cookie Maiseer at the time of writing); and Elizabeth L., currently incarcerated.

DRAFTS OF WORKS

The Works series contains significant printed typescript and autograph drafts (often with autograph and holograph annotations) of all Kushner's major works of fiction, *Telex from Cuba*, *The Flamethrowers*, *The Mars Room*, and *Creation Lake*, and her collection of essays, *The Hard Crowd*. Along with partial and complete drafts, the series also contains autograph and printed typescript editorial notes and correspondence related to specific works, annotated publishers' proofs and galleys, and autograph and annotated research materials.

Pictured: editorial correspondence with Nan Graham, for Creation Lake.

CREATION LAKE

31 May 23

Dearest Rachel.

Have you so.
I do think there's a way to get
more Bruno in the last pages.
Polaris in that sky, though also
in the sky at Lucien's place.

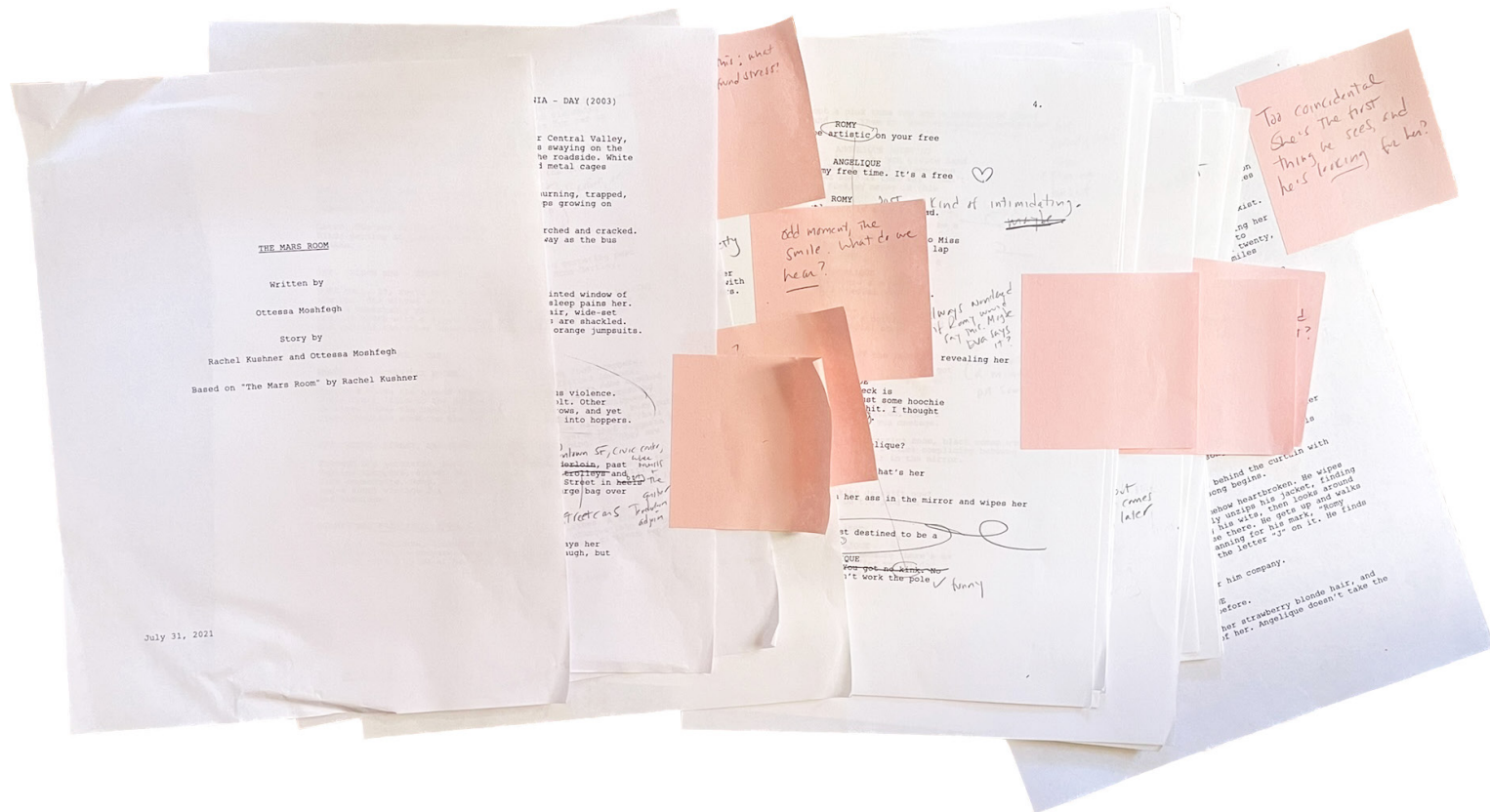
I've marked adverbs — practically,
probably, almost, nearly.

I'm being a perfectionist. As you are.

It's a stunner of a novel.

Love & Thanks.

could there be
a little
more ambiguity
here? This looks so
blatantly
like entrapment.
Can he
have a
little more
agency?
What has he
done
before?



Printed typescript drafts of Kushner’s booklength projects frequently have holograph emendations from Kushner’s longtime editor at Scribner, Nan Graham. Graham’s annotations throughout the manuscripts are often conversational with Kushner, as are her attached cover letters, and at times are accompanied by notes from Kushner with her reflections on Graham’s editorial suggestions. Through evidence of editorial intervention, Kushner’s drafts offer insights into her structuring and character development, as is seen in editorial correspondence with Graham as well as her contemporaries, such as Marisa Silver and Ben Lerner. Annotated drafts, printed emails, and notes between Kushner and her interlocutors explore the political and social dimensions of her work, from notes on French radical groups in relation to *Creation Lake* or Track Changes edits on printed drafts of *The Flamethrowers*.

Based on Kushner’s original order, the Works series also contains many of her research materials, notes, and other ephemera directly related to her writing projects. Kushner’s files on Cuba are extensive and contain recorded interviews conducted by Kushner (with figures such as Carol McCartney, Patty Chamberlain, and E.C. Smith, among many others), family records retained by her maternal grandparents related to their life in Cuba in the 1950s, and a purple binder in which Kushner has interfiled autograph notes on character development for *Telex from Cuba* with historical and family records.

The Works series also contains materials that underscore towards screenwriting’s relationship with contemporary fiction. Annotated printed drafts of a screenplay adaptation of *The Mars Room*, written in collaboration with the novelist Ottessa Moshfegh, are included and document the pair’s years-long working through of the project. A screenplay adaptation of *Creation Lake*, by John Raymond, is also included, with Kushner’s

autograph annotations throughout, as is a folder containing autograph, printed, and Xerox drafting files related to Kushner's forthcoming collaboration with the artist Ed Ruscha, a remake the 1953 noir film, *Inferno*.

NOTEBOOKS

Notebooks have been consistent organizational and creative outlets throughout Kushner's life, as evidenced by the nearly 80 notebooks that comprise the series. The earliest notebooks in the archive date to the mid-1980s, from Kushner's time as an undergraduate at the University of California, Berkeley, and contain her reflections on coursework, readings, early creative works, and other daily

Pictured: work by Kushner, annotated heavily by Jonathan Franzen; printed typescript draft of Telex from Cuba with annotations.

little boys. The couple spoke in soft tones to one another as they lifted their bags from the trunk. A long day of driving on a family vacation. The woman scooped up one little boy and carried a suitcase in her other hand. The father did the same. And as they passed through the doorway that Shannon held open, their nods of acknowledgment were as distant and unfamiliar as the cold, blue stars that blinked at her from up above.

good story.
of work to do here,
are — especially the last
sign when the ending is working.
Suggested work sites: Always
mixture now of the slangy and high flown; something
in-between might be ideal. Pretty much every description
can be sharpened & made more vivid. 1.) The writing. Uneasy
have the inclination. 2.) Integrity the other stripper
into the story — right now they're mainly co.
Good reportage, but we don't learn enough
about Shannon or her situation for
them to justify so many
pages.

doesn't surprise me. They had the personal beef with us and whatever was ours, those brothers made a point of making theirs. Fidel still talks about Saetía and Preston and the rest of it, when he makes those multi-hour speeches.

We were all thrilled about the fishing trip, five days of living off the sea. M.L. stayed home and at the time I couldn't figure out why—I thought he was crazy to miss out. I'm sure it was because of Tee-Tee. He was always trying to figure out where she'd be and what she'd be doing. And she definitely wouldn't be over at Saetía, catching octopus with a bunch of boys. ^{and maybe he figured that with Bully and me} I remember that Mother was happy that M.L. was staying, because Daddy had gone to Havana to meet with Batista. This was the spring of 1952. Batista had suddenly become president and there were all sorts of negotiations to figure out with the company. Daddy said it was a good thing, a positive thing for United Fruit. We had a relationship with Batista, from when he'd been president before, ⁱⁿ He'd even worked for the company, grown up in a United Fruit town, and there was a real fidelity. I think he respected Batista, but it was difficult to tell how much Daddy respected anyone. He had a way of treating you like you were a very clever person, and then again a total idiot.

Mitty, Earl, and Mr. LaDue's nephew Clarence, who was visiting from Missouri, and I all helped load the boat with supplies—rice, cooking oil, sugar, coffee, that kind of stuff. Bully passed a case of his Methuselah rum to me and told me to be careful, and to handle it like it was a carton of hen's eggs. We had three Cubans with us: Perequin, his brother Victor, and their old man Tomas Línia. The sons rowed and the old man sat in the boat chewing on his cigar—he didn't really smoke, he just chewed on that cold cigar stub

and ~~after~~ Fucking thing just wouldn't let up. Bob came out in his robe. Didn't say a word. Just picked up the dead rooster and plucking it, and ~~told me to go prepare the coals.~~ Then he ^{lied} to Bambecue. I guess he wasn't really mad anymore. ^{That delinquent} ~~Having to~~ rubbin' bands.

"How many scorpions were in your boots?" Walter asked.
"Just one. ~~He looked~~ ^{Beard} drunk. Kind of waddled away."

"You drove a rocket in Nevada. You drove a Fanari

~~where~~ I took the F train to Coney Island," Hiddle said. "But far away. The far-awayness tugs and tugs ^{at you} as you rumble. You set off the train and feel like you'll never see you again. I got into it and went several days in a row. I like taking a daily trip to Europe."

"Place is a nightmare," Ronnie said "It's nothing like

"It's not a nightmare Ronie. ~~But~~ But you have to get to understand it. It's like ^{coffee and} ~~smoking~~ cigarettes: either ^{these are habits you} ~~you~~ do it day or there's ~~just~~ no point." You have to speak ^{the} ~~the~~ language radioactive, ^{yellow} ~~looking~~ corn on the cob. The ^{been} ~~broken~~ bottle stands the boardwalk. The ^(sunlit) ~~sunlight~~ vomiting and Shitlers stagger drunks. The timeless swindles: a ball hoop ^{that isn't quite} ~~that~~ the cyclone. The ^{ball} ~~hoop~~ is just slightly larger than its hoop. ^{Try your luck} The fragile. Huge, bone-jarring rattle traps that make you feel pathetic and suddenly like you really really want to live in a ^{wimpering and desperate way.} But they're key to understanding the place is ~~it~~ the game prizes. You have to win a giant stuffed animal popside-blue giraffe a big dirty purple panda stuffed something meaty and industrial, sawdust, metal shavings. You to spend all your money trying to win it. Everything but

observations. Her notebooks kept during her time in Columbia's MFA program in the mid-to-late 1990s are more focused on creative work, and display how Kushner learned to conceive of and structure fiction while working with writers including Richard Howard, Stephen Koch, and Patricia O'Toole.

A trove of nearly 30 journals from the early 2000s documents Kushner's extensive dive into Cuban life, culture, and history ahead of the writing of *Telex from Cuba*. These journals relate to Kushner's first trip, in 2002, and her second, in 2004, and contain not only daily observations but extensive and at times heavily annotated notes on interviews she conducted and recorded on 16 cassettes and 5 mini-DV tapes. Notebooks also capture all of Kushner's subsequent major works.

A Kunst & Papier notebook, purchased in Marfa, Texas, contains a significant, 37-page chapter draft from *The Flamethrowers*, and Kushner has stated that when she is stuck in the writing process, acquiring a single notebook to focus on returning to writing by hand is a crucial vehicle for moving projects forward. Kushner's notebooks also capture the political dimensions of her work. Numerous notebooks related to *The Mars Room* not only show her writing process, but her research into incarceration in California and her relationships with incarcerated women. Two notebooks kept while visiting East Jerusalem's Shuafat Refugee Camp contain reflections that became her essay on Gaza in *The Hard Crowd*.

Pictured: below, notebook with writing from Shuafat Refugee Camp in East Jerusalem; notebook from Cuba on the Nicaro Mine.

Judge only sees Hebrew Confession.

75% of cases children are not informed of their right to silence. If they do inform of rights, another interrogator says, if you don't speak, we will rape you.

"You've got a right to consult w/ a lawyer. DO you know a lawyer?"

"I don't know any children who carry the name of a lawyer in their pajamas."

For first 24 hours they are at interrogation center, then transferred to military prison.

Attempts are made to separate children fr adults.

Israeli military does not provide legal aid. Lawyers are from NGOs, European + American lawyers & pays.

Child says they are innocent. Lawyer encourages a plea: If they want a trial, they have to stay in jail until trial. At trial 99.4% of trials end in guilt.

Nicarao Mine

* Western Union

Ammonia leaching - Nicarao was the trail blazer. At Nicarao ammonia leaching involved roasting the nickel ore in the presence of hydrogen and carbon monoxide generated from anthracite coal.

American interests in Cuba: it's strange to know that the U.S. used to be a real financial presence in Cuba - Woolworth's, Sears, United Fruit Corp, dozens of American Sugar mills, banks, and the refineries of Shell, Texaco, and Esso.

Cuba has 4th largest supply of nickel in the world.

The U.S.S. Kleinsmith was sent to rescue Americans from Nicarao after the Cuban Revolution.

WORKING FILES

Working Files in the archive relate primarily to projects that are either literary-adjacent, such as teaching files, public appearances, and contracts, or non-literary files, such as editorial work within the art world. Kushner's teaching files date from her time at California State in 2006 and at Scripps College in 2018 and are comprised of autograph and printed preparatory materials, including 17-pages of autograph course planning related to the work of Proust, along with annotated syllabi, readings, and course notes. Kushner's editorial files run from the late-1990s into the mid-2000s, during her time as a writer and editor at *Grand Street*, *BOMB*, and *Artforum*. Arranged by Kushner into folders by topic, materials within are interfiled and reflect artists of note at specific publications and also the inner workings and production needs of art publications at the turn of the century. Kushner's *Grand Street* files contain correspondence from colleagues, such as the artist Tam Miller (a friend and coworker, at the time), copies of outgoing correspondence from Kushner to individuals such as Jack Bankowsky, editor of *Artforum*, printed inter-office emails, clippings annotated with sticky notes about artists and exhibition openings, and ephemera related to the art world. Additional labeled folders contain writings on Walter Hopps and the band Gogol Bordello, slides of work by Scott Reeder, and ephemera from artists including Marlene McCarty and David Korty.

In addition, the Working Files series contains a subseries of files collected and retained by Kushner relating to incarceration and parole. Three black, three-ring binders contain printed typescript and Xerox printed typescript transcriptions of oral proceedings from “The People of the State of California vs. Christy Clinton Phillips,” one of the incarcerated women Kushner became close with while working on *The Mars Room*. A fourth binder contains printed typescript materials prepared by Phillips’ legal team ahead of her parole hearings and provided to Kushner as part of her assistance with Phillips’ appearance before the parole board.

Pictured: close-up of oversized drawing of CIW (California Institute for Women in Chino) by Theresa Martinez, used in the writing of The Mars Room.



These materials emphasize not only how involved Kushner became in the lives and cases of the women she met within the California prison system, but the complex and labyrinthian systems which incarcerated persons must navigate to return to freedom. An additional printed and bound typescript, *The LWOP [Life Without Parole] Book Project*, is included, with writing from women serving life without parole in the California prison system. The book is divided into chapters related to the crimes the women are accused of and reflections on what they have learned while incarcerated, with each woman contributing writing to fit the chapter's theme.

PERSONAL FILES

A brief series, Personal Files contains a selection of ephemera from Kushner's life, including professional awards and items related to her personal life. Awards include certificates and honorary degrees from Kalamazoo, the National Book Award finalist award, National Book Critics Circle award, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. A collection of business cards, passports, driver's licenses, and employer IDs track Kushner's life and travels, including her time working in San Francisco at locations including The Blue Lamp, a bar at which Kushner booked musical acts, and Baskin Robbins, where Kushner worked as a teenager under a fake name. Some humorous items are also included, such as a copy of *The New Testament*, from the Driver's Brotherhood for Christ and subtitled "Delivering Jesus Christ Through the Trucking Industry," gifted to Kushner by her mother, Pinky.

EPHEMERA

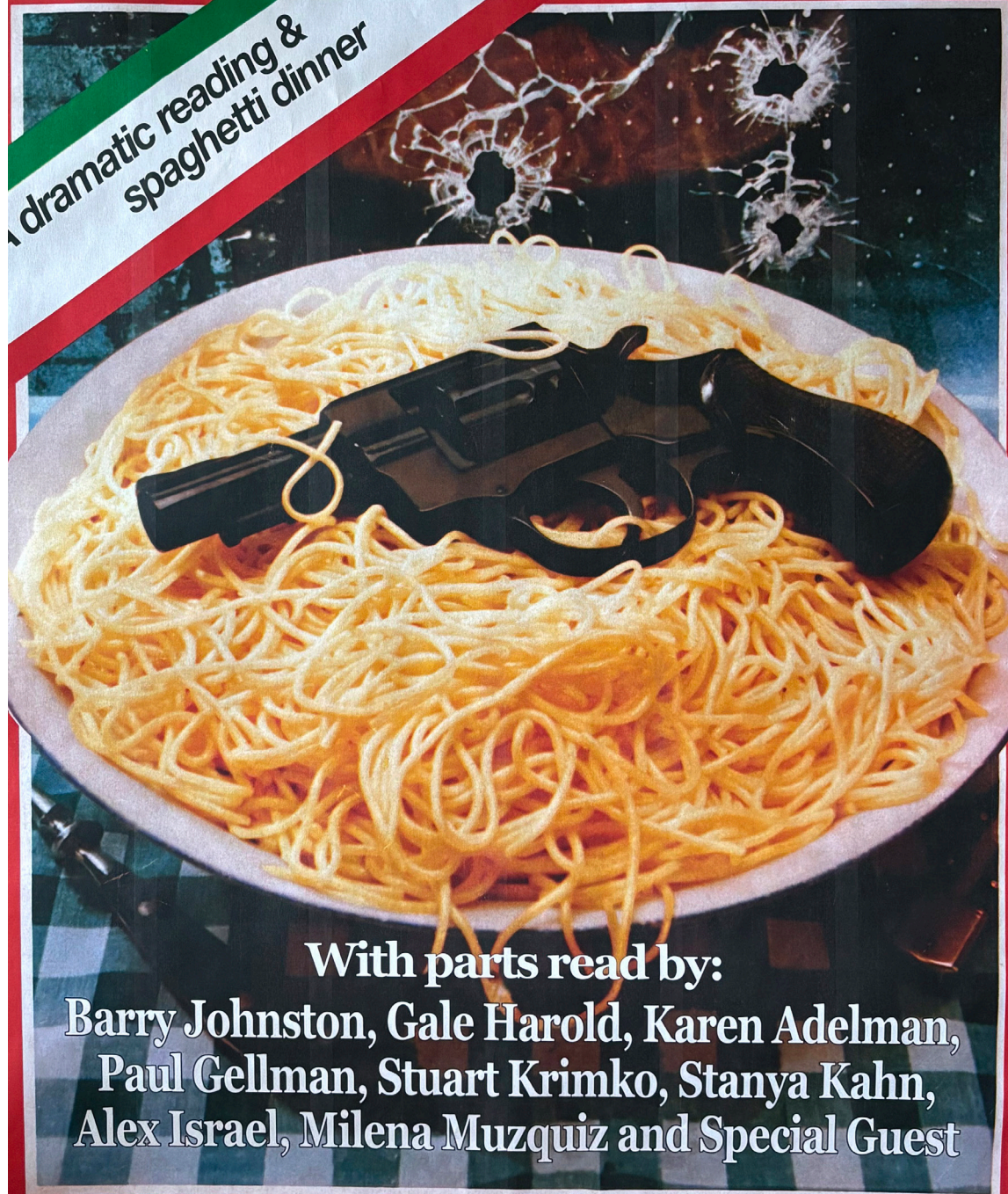
There is both literary ephemera and art ephemera in this series; the latter is largely collected or retained by Kushner from her editorial work at *Grand Street*, *BOMB*, and *Artforum*.

RACHEL KUSHNER'S THE FLAMETHROWERS

356 S. Mission Rd
LA, CA 90033

Date: April 18
Time: 7:30pm

dramatic reading &
spaghetti dinner



With parts read by:

Barry Johnston, Gale Harold, Karen Adelman,
Paul Gellman, Stuart Krimko, Stanya Kahn,
Alex Israel, Milena Muzquiz and Special Guest

rsvp@356mission.com

Literary ephemera includes primary and secondary research material on incarceration and criminal justice collected by Kushner during her research for *The Mars Room*, with informational flyers, essays, writings, and handouts related to incarceration, especially abuse and living conditions for women in women's prisons; material related to The Black Panthers, including a 1997 press release and two issues of *The Black Panther Community News Service*, provided to Kushner by her DeeDee Halleck; a white, three-ring binder containing information for those interested in becoming correctional officers in prisons in California, obtained by Kushner while "undercover" as an interested applicant; and approximately 19 additional ephemeral glossy and newsprint periodicals related to incarceration, abolition, criminal justice, and police work and abuse.

Ephemera related to art and Kushner's editorial career includes gallery announcements, postcards, printed photographs, press packets, and other artworld ephemera related to figures including Mindy Shapiro, Jim Drain, Jim Shaw, Teresa Hubbard and Alexander Birchler, and Anne Carson, among others.

OVERSIZE (EPHEMERA)

The Oversize series contains approximately 43 items ranging in size from 8 x 11 ¾ inches to 26 x 60 inches, with most material measuring less than 24 x 36 inches.

The series includes posters related to Kushner's work, such as foamcore-mounted color posters for *Telex from Cuba*, a reading poster for a reading with Janet Sarbanes, an advanced reader edition cover proof of *The Flamethrowers*, a poster for a "Spaghetti Western" reading/dinner to celebrate *The Flamethrowers*, held in San Francisco in 2013, and a copy of *On the Rag*, vol. 1, a newsprint/tabloid periodical published in 2025 with Kushner as editorial director.

Of significant inclusion is the Dainese leather motorcycle racing suit worn by Kushner while participating in the Cabo 1000, a race from San Ysidro, California to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. Kushner participated in 1993, at the age of twenty-four, riding a Kawasaki Ninja 600. Somewhere near Guerrero Negro, Kushner crashed, riding at 130 miles-per-hour, when another rider pulled out in front of her. This incident would be vividly recounted in her



essay "Girl on a Motorcycle" and echoed in the opening scenes of her novel *The Flamethrowers*.

Two additional items of note include a series of extensive holograph letters to Kushner by the artist Shadowman/Richard Hambleton. The letters are attached together by drywall tape and loosely coiled in a long spiral and were written to Kushner during her time in New York. In addition, three holograph illustrations, measuring approximately 22 x 28 inches, by Theresa Martinez are included, with each intricately reconstructing, from Martinez's memory, the physical layouts of the Central California Women's Prison in Chowchilla, C and D yard in Chowchilla, and the California Institution for Women in Chino. Martinez drew these layouts for Kushner after her release from prison and provided them for reference during Kushner's writing of *The Mars Room*. Kushner recalls that without these physical renderings of the prisons, notoriously unavailable to the public for obvious reasons, many of the novel's scenes and sequences would have been challenging to render with the accuracy she achieved.

EARLY WRITINGS, EARLY FILES, AND JUVENILIA

Documents in the Early Files, Early Writings, and Juvenilia series date from the early 1970s onwards and capture Kushner's childhood (Juvenilia), undergraduate years, and early writings from her coursework at the University of Iowa, and Columbia (Early Writings), as well as materials related to her attendance at alternative spaces like the Eastside Alternative School and the New College of California (Early Files).

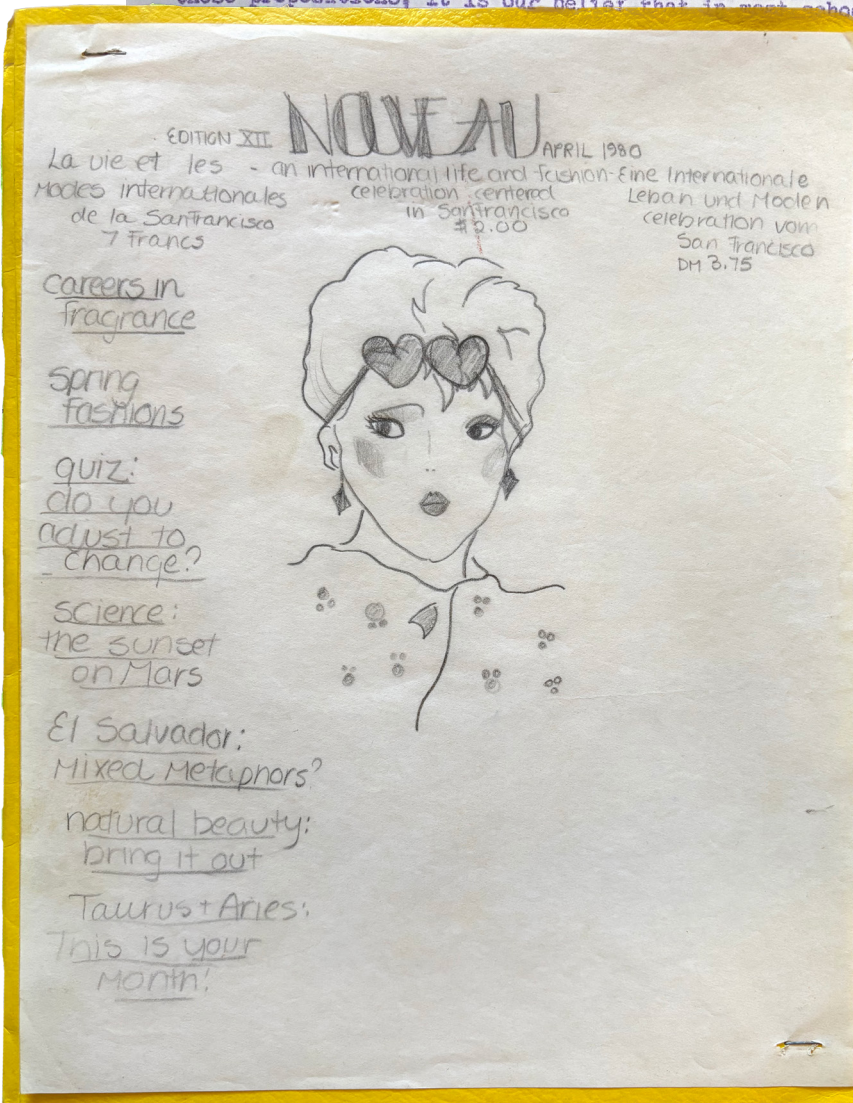
Early correspondence between Kushner and her family show Kushner's loquacious and curious writing style, including existential reflections on the nature of happiness. As a child, Kushner attended the Eastside Alternative School in Eugene, Oregon, whose school records as an alternative cooperative are included, as well as early creative projects by Kushner include the hand-drawn *Nouveau* magazine, replete with fashion writing,

Eastside School Philosophy Statement

This statement is written to acquaint you with the three basic educational assumptions which are the framework of the Eastside School Program. For to function we must follow all three and we must have your acceptance of

- 1) Mutual Responsibility for Learning
- 2) Willingness to Take Calculated Risks
- 3) Reciprocal Trust and Good Faith

Although there appears to be nothing particularly innovative or radical in these propositions, it is our belief that in most schools little more is



to the learning environment of other students. It should be obvious

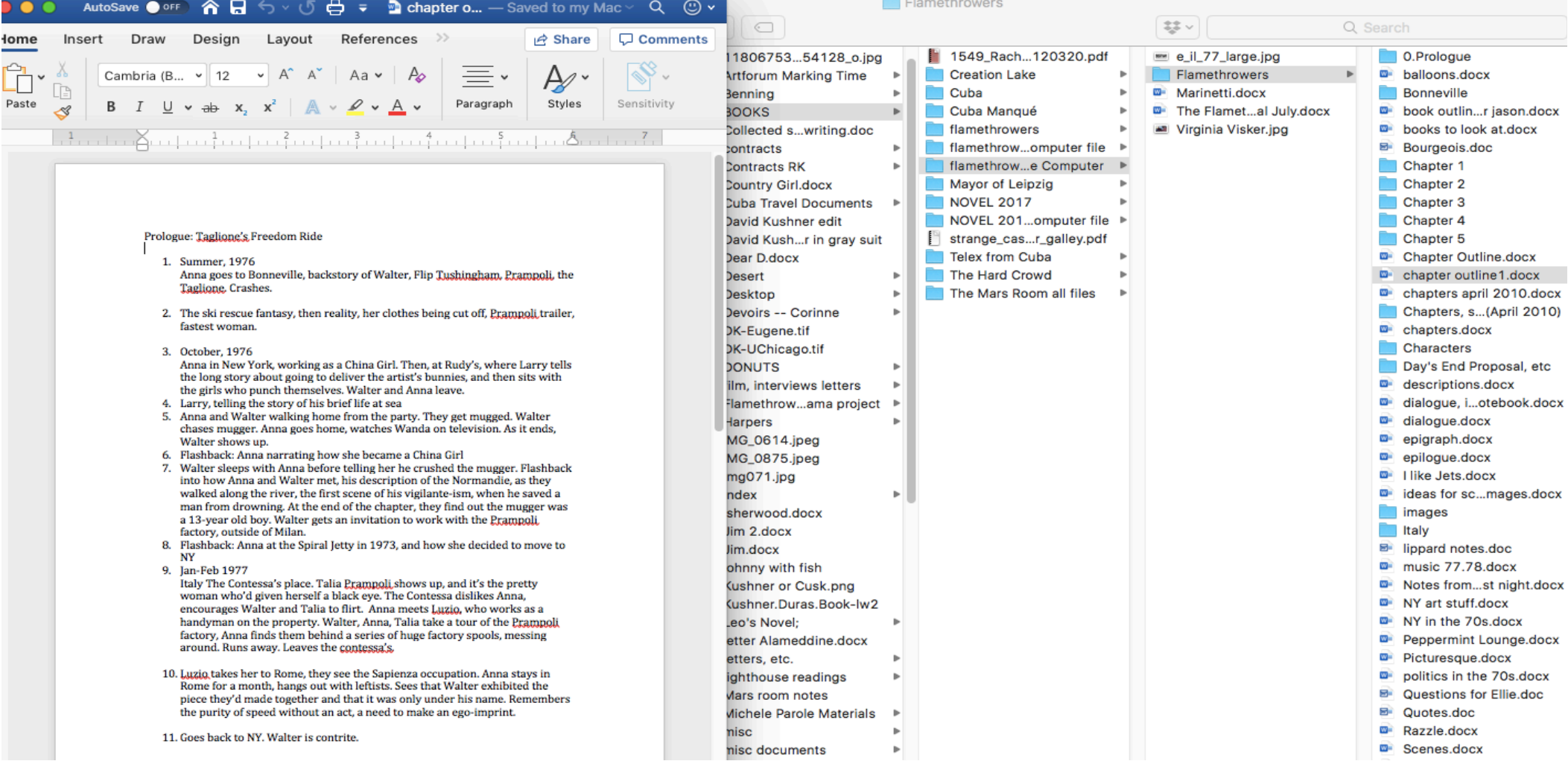
make-up tips, and advertisements. Notebooks and binders from Kushner's high school coursework are included, as well as a collection of approximately 50 ticket stubs and nightclub cards documenting shows and concerts Kushner attended in her youth, including The Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd, The Grateful Dead, Mudhoney, Black Sabbath, and The Who, among others, at venues including the Cow Palace, Shoreline Amphitheatre, The Back Room, Noh Club, and many others.

Kushner's college files and early writings contain typescript and printed typescript drafts of unpublished early fiction and poetry, along with her college essays and assignments. Many of the themes of her mature work (geopolitical positioning, female bodies in the world, class structures and incarceration) are present, situating these early pieces comfortably among her published works. Of note is a 27-page printed typescript work, *The Voyeur and the Violet Angel*, housed in a binder collaged with photographs by the artist Gale Morgan Harold, and amounting to Kushner's first "artist's book." In addition, a substantive collection of materials from Kushner's time at the experimental New College of California includes not only her own school materials but ephemeral documents from the college's existence, such as issues of the school's newsletter, reading materials, flyers, solicitations, and other documentation.

ANNOTATED/IMPORTANT BOOKS AND PERIODICALS

Items included in the Annotated/Important Books and Periodicals series include one-of-a-kind or publisher-proof editions of Kushner's books, annotated books, and some scarce or ephemeral instances of Kushner's writing appearing in print. Items of note include: Booker Prize editions of *The Mars Room* and *Creation Lake*, hand-bound editions of Booker-nominated novels given to shortlist nominees and housed in handmade clamshell boxes, and 17 annotated books, many heavily annotated, referenced and consulted by Kushner during the writing of *The Flamethrowers*, *The Mars Room*, and *Creation Lake*.





DIGITAL

Totalling 22.3 GB and approximately 10,321 files, the Digital series contains significant drafts, correspondence, preparatory and research material, interview and publicity material, editorial work, and teaching records related to Kushner's literary career.

One of the most significant folders is "BOOKS," containing labeled subfolders with drafts, outlines, character sketches, research materials, scans, photographs, interviews, publisher files, working files and contracts, and other documents created and retained by Kushner related to all of her major works.

Two folders, "Cuba" and "Cuba Manqué," represent early and abandoned versions of what would become Kushner's debut, *Telex from Cuba*, showcasing how Kushner's writing evolved from her time at Columbia to the story that would ultimately form her debut. Two other folders titled "NOVEL 2017" contain materials related to *The Mars Room*, created while it existed under working titles, such as *I Am a Destiny*, and include significant materials on incarceration within California along with drafts depicting variations on the narrative. Folders for Kushner's other novels contain significant outlining material, along with clearly-titled fragments of excised materials, new starts, chapter drafts, and other work-in-

progress drafting files. Feedback and edits on Kushner's writing from longtime collaborators, such as editor Nan Graham and agent Susan Golomb, are included. Additional drafts in the digital series relate to Kushner's art writing, her screenplay collaborations with Ottessa Moshfegh and Ed Ruscha, contributions to others' projects, and editorial/journalistic writing, such as her contributions to *Harper's Magazine*, and are housed in separate folders labeled by topic.

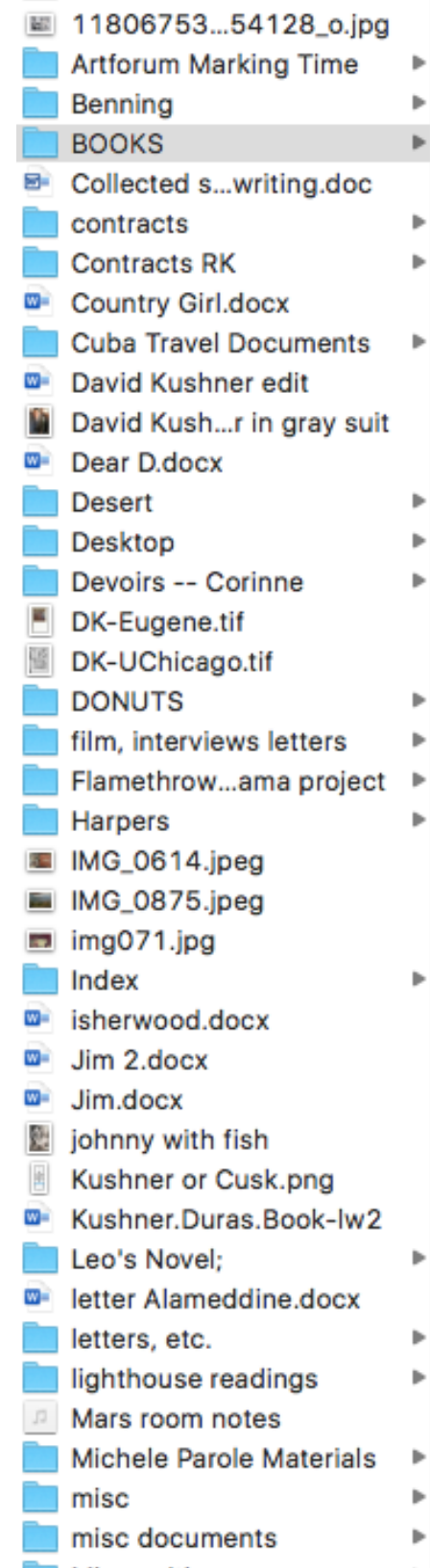
In addition to drafts, the Digital series contains significant working files, such as a records from her teaching and lectures, exercises from her efforts to teach herself French (including translations by Kushner of the noir novelist Jean-Patrick Manchette), lists of notes that captures her interests (band names, words in English and Spanish, films, facts, articles on other authors), and editorial records from her co-editing of the early-aughts arts and literary journal *Soft Target*.

EMAIL

Spanning 2010 to 2026, Kushner's email, at 22.5 GB and over 85,000 messages, is the most robust representation of her professional and literary correspondence. Beginning two years after the publication of *Telex from Cuba*, email tracks the vast majority of Kushner's public-facing career and contains substantive and generative dialogues between Kushner, her agent, Susan Golomb, and her editor, Nan Graham, about the evolution and shape of her novels. Conversations containing feedback on Kushner's work, thoughts about its placement in periodicals and abroad, its adaptation, and other details related to the editing and publishing of Kushner's fiction thoroughly illuminate the editorial process behind her writing while also showcasing the thought and labor that goes into its public presentation.

Kushner's exchanges with her literary peers are also well documented. Throughout her inbox, exchanges with writers such as Teju Cole, Bret Easton Ellis, Jonathan Franzen, Jonathan Lethem, Nam Le, Colm Tóibín, and Ayelet Waldman capture personal details, such as an exchange between Kushner and Ellis following up on a dinner party, and professional collaborations, such as Kushner's trip to the West Bank in 2016 as part of her participation in *Kingdom of Olives and Ash: Writers Confront the Occupation*, a volume edited by Ayelet Waldman and Michael Chabon. Kushner's exchanges with Lethem are warm and professional, with Kushner often turning to him for advice in matters related to teaching and academia. In turn, contemporary events taking place and influencing her literary colleagues are also well documented, such as Lethem's advocacy work to obtain a pardon for Edward Snowden.

Kushner's email contains over 2,000 unique contacts, a number that reflects both the wide-ranging scope of the collection as well as the in-depth nature and frequency of Kushner's conversations with those included. A list of select correspondents of note contains: Laurie Anderson, James Benning, Michael Chabon, Joshua Cohen, Jem Cohen, Teju Cole, Anne Carson, Rachel Cusk, Don DeLillo, Stan Douglas, Bret Easton Ellis, Joshua Ferris, Jonathan Franzen, Ruth Wilson Gilmore, Jean-Pierre Gorin, Robert Gober, Kim Gordon, Susan Golomb, Nan Goldin, Nan Graham, Hari Kunzru, Benjamin Kunkel, Karyn Kusama, Katie Kitamura, Wayne Koestenbaum, Amitava Kumar, Zachary Lazar, Donovan Leitch, Nam Le, Jonathan Lethem, Katherine Monaghan, Paul Morrissey, Alexander Payne, Richard Prince, Ariana Reines, Paul Schrader, George Saunders, Marisa Silver, Zadie Smith, Robert Stone, Gus Van Sant, Colm Tóibín, Lynne Tillman, Ayelet Waldman, and Tobias Wolff.



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