

# University of Miami Special Collections

## Finding Aid - Laura Kalpakian papers (ASM0107)

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# Laura Kalpakian papers

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## Summary information

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<b>Repository:</b>	University of Miami Special Collections
<b>Title:</b>	Laura Kalpakian papers
<b>ID:</b>	ASM0107
<b>Date:</b>	1975-1988 (date of creation)
<b>Date:</b>	1985-1988 (date of creation)
<b>Physical description:</b>	Boxes
<b>Language:</b>	English
<b>Dates of creation, revision and deletion:</b>	

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## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

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### Note

Author Laura Kalpakian, described by some critics as one of the "most unheralded, brightest talents" in the country, has published several novels and short story collections, novellas, short stories, essays and interviews for magazines and newspapers including *Cosmopolitan*, *Good Housekeeping*, *McCall's*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Miami Herald*, and *Hawaii Review*.

Born on June 28, 1945, in Long Beach, California, Kalpakian grew up in Southern California. Before she "took to the typewriter seriously" in the 1970s, she graduated from the University of California, Riverside, and worked briefly as a social worker. She continued her education and obtained the M.A. degree from the University of Delaware, and completed graduate work at the University of California, San Diego. Kalpakian taught English at several universities including the University of Redlands and Western Washington University.

Kalpakian's earliest works include several short stories which she developed into novels. Critics praised her first novel, *Beggars and Choosers* (1978), as "fast-paced and humorous," comparing it to Alison Lurie's *The War between the Tates*. Kalpakian's novel *These Latter Days* (1985) traces a family history, moving from Liverpool to Idaho, California and Utah between 1893 and 1972. The work, considered "a cut above most family sagas," received praise for its characterization and "descriptive flair." The "highly readable story line" and "raucous cast of characters" in *Crescendo* also appealed to reviewers. Kalpakian's most recent work *Graced Land*, appeared in 1992, received enthusiastic reviews and was filmed as a television movie, *The Woman Who Loved Elvis*. Two collections of Kalpakian's short stories have also been published: *Fair Augusto and Other Stories* (1986) and *Dark Continent and Other Stories* (1989). Two of Kalpakian's works *A Winter's Tales* and *Tiger Hill* were published only in England.

## Scope and content

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Author Laura Kalpakian, described by some critics as one of the "most unheralded, brightest talents" in the country, has published several novels and short story collections, novellas, short stories, essays and interviews for magazines and newspapers including *Cosmopolitan*, *Good Housekeeping*, *McCall's*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Miami Herald*, and *Hawaii Review*.

The Laura Kalpakian Papers contain manuscripts and drafts of stories, novels, and speeches. Correspondence relates to the creation and publication of several works. Writings are arranged in chronological order within three series: Novels, Short Stories and Other Writings, and Short Story Collections.

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## Notes

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### Title notes

### Arrangement

#### SERIES I: NOVELS

Contains page proofs of *Tiger Hill* which Kalpakian wrote under a different name. This Gothic novel, begun in 1975, was published in England in 1982.

Kalpakian published *Crescendo*, in the United States in 1987. She began the novel, originally titled *Jerusalem's Curse*, in February, 1985. Drafts of Part I are arranged by chapter, and a complete copy of Part I, the work upon which New York Times Books based their purchase of the novel, appears among the papers. Drafts of Part II, also arranged by chapter, were written during the summer of 1985. Revisions of individual chapters are dated September, 1985, through December, 1985, and the revised whole which Kalpakian turned into New York Times Books, is dated January, 1986. A copy of the novel as completed in January, 1986, is titled *Jerusalem's Curse*.

Based on the editor's suggestions of March, 1986, Kalpakian made revisions which appear in drafts of individual chapters dated April - May 1986, or labelled "Spring Revisions." Kalpakian sent a final revision of the whole to New York in May, 1986; this work is entitled "*Jerusalem Road*." Accompanying this draft are the "revision statements" explaining alterations and responding to "editors queries." Page proofs for the English publication, entitled *The Swallow Inheritance*, also appear in this series.

Pressured to complete *Ravenna Blue* before her fall teaching duties began, Kalpakian completed the novel between June 29, 1987, and September, 1987. Drafts of Parts I-III written in August, 1987, are arranged in sections based on Kalpakian's daily work. A draft of Part IV completed August 16 - August 26, 1987, follows this material. A rewrite of the entire book completed during September, 1987, appears in the files. Two rewrites of Part I, the first completed in August, 1987, and the second in September are also arranged according to the work completed daily. Rewrites of parts II and III completed September 9 - September 17, 1987, are arranged in a similar manner. A complete final draft of the work in 1987 and a mock up follow the rewrites.

Although the novel failed to interest publishers, Kalpakian made revisions which are detailed in her letter of July 6, 1988. The papers contain the new prologue and daily revisions of parts I-II dated March, 1988. These rewrites are followed by a revision of the whole and a second to last mock up and final mock up for the June 16, 1988 printing.

#### SERIES II: SHORT STORIES AND OTHER WRITINGS

Contains drafts of short stories arranged chronologically, based on the earliest dated draft. Most were revised for publication in two collections: Fair

Augusto and Other Stories and Dark Continent and Other Stories. Included in this series is a 1981 revision of "Bare Root Season," a story written in January, 1980 and published in Hawaii Review. The story, also published in England, was listed with "100 Distinguished Stories," of 1984, and with "Best Short Stories," of 1984.

Four rewrites of "Last Page" dated Winter, 1985, are arranged from the first to the final draft. Revisions of a story written in 1983, "Last Dream Before Waking," are dated May-June, 1986. Three rewrites and a final copy of "Habits" dated January, 1986, appear in this series. This story originally written in 1984 was first published in the collection Fair Augusto and Other Stories. Another story "Youth in Asia" first appeared in print in the Fair Augusto collection. The papers contain five original drafts of the story from Fall, 1984.

Seven consecutive drafts of "Civilization and Its Discontents" written February, 1986, appear in the series, but in contrast to the other works had not yet been published as of July 2, 1988. Manila Bay, included in the Dark Continent collection is represented by only a final draft dated October, 1986. Drafts of "Bones of Contention" include several early drafts dated Spring, 1986, a second to last dated Fall, 1986, and an original final draft as well as three copies. "Wine, Women and Song" was first written in 1982 and published in England in Spring, 1986. A complete draft of the story is dated June, 1983. Subsequent revisions, a draft dated May, 1987, and a final draft completed in April also appear in the papers. Kalpakian expanded the work for a possible American Playhouse production.

"Delinquent Virgin" which Kalpakian wrote in December, 1986, remained unprinted as of July, 1988, but four drafts appear in the series. A final and second to last draft of "Sonnet" are dated December, 1986. Five drafts of "Dark Continent" from Fall, 1986, an author's final draft and typed final draft both completed in February, 1987 reveal changes made for publication in Dark Continent and Other Stories. Notes, newspapers clippings and the earliest drafts of "Caveat Emptor" document the background of the story. Kalpakian based her main character Hank Beecham on "a man Hatfield who is famous (or infamous) in the San Diego area for having caused the 1916 floods." A last draft before mock up, mock up of November, 1987, rewrite and final draft dated January, 1988 show subsequent revisions. Kalpakian completed two original drafts, a "mark up" and final draft of a "Christmas Cordial" in December, 1987.

Drafts dated June 17-July 11, 1988, show the progression of "Lavee, Lagair, Lamore and Lamaird," into the final draft dated July 1988. Kalpakian planned a companion piece for this story, hoping to combine the two works with "Caveat" for a third collection of short fiction. A short, humorous work "How to Write

a Novel: A Textbook" also appears in this series, in addition to a speech and several letters.

A first and a final draft of "Unspoken Ambivalence, Unspeakable Experience, Undeclared Goods," a speech given by Kalpakian for a 1988 Armenian American Literature Conference at Columbia University provides insights into Kalpakian's background. In the speech, which was later condensed for publication, she

explains her use of her mother's maiden name: "I very consciously adopted this name...when I first approached the typewriter. My unmarried name is Johnson and I thought this would be too easily lost.

Moreover I chose not to use my married name on paper...I chose the name Kalpakian because the name

and all its associations are personally important and intertwined with my very earliest life, with those memories that elude language altogether, with perceptions that are wholly associational, that connect with my grandfather's small neighborhood grocery store..."

Kalpakian also reveals the connections between her family background and her fiction. Her father and his ancestors who were Mormons inspired *These Latter Days* a story set among a mormon clan in the American west. A novella "A Child of Our Times" draws on the experiences of Kalpakian's grandparents, both "their early experience in the old country and in Los Angeles." Kalpakian explains that these stories represented her earliest undertakings as a writer and became "of those early stories the only ones (she) can still read with pleasure." Kalpakian also reveals her views on writing and on her work and discusses the evolution of "Hunters in the Fields of August" to illustrate the development of her stories.

The letters which Laura Kalpakian wrote between September, 1986, and July, 1988, describe the manuscripts and notes she sent to the University of Miami, explaining her organization of the materials. The letters also provide a record of the evolution of several works, dates for drafts and revisions, and information about title selections. In her letter of July 6, 1988, for example, Kalpakian reveals the various stages in the writing process of *Ravenna Blue*, and explains the changes she makes to the work and the influence these alterations will have on the characters and plot. Letters also distinguish which drafts of novels were selected for purchase.

#### **SERIES III: SHORT STORY COLLECTIONS**

Contains two complete drafts of *Fair Augusto and Other Stories*. The work published by Graywolf Press in 1986 won the PEN/LA Best Short Fiction Award in 1987 and was a finalist in the Boston Globe Literary Press Competition. Stories in the collection include "Veteran's Day," "Bare Root Season," "Land of Lucky Strike," "Habits," "A Time Change," "Hunters in the Fields of August," "Youth in Asia," "The Last Page," "Hairline Fractures," "Sonata in G Minor," "And Departing Leave Behind Us," "The Last Dream Before Waking," and "Fair Augusto." This series also contains a complete typed copy of *Dark Continent and Other Stories*, published in 1989. In addition a copy of "Battle of Manila," from the second draft to last mock up, a mock up of the entire book and "removed changed pages" are included. Other stories from the collection include "Bones of Contention," "Wine, Women and Song" "Sonnet," "Dark Continent," "Christmas Cordial," and "Caveat Emptor."

### **Restrictions on access**

This collection is open for research, but is kept in an off campus storage facility. Please allow up to 72 hours for delivery of requested materials.

### **Conditions governing use**

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### **Other notes**

- **Publication status:** Published
- **Description identifier:** ArchonInternalCollectionID:115

## Access points

- Articles (documentary form)
- Clippings (documentary form)
- Drafts (documents) (documentary form)
- Letters (documentary form)
- Manuscripts (documentary form)
- Scores (documentary form)
- American literature -- Armenian American authors (subject)

## Series descriptions

### Series id357733: Novels

Publication status:

Published

#### File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
id357734	File -			1
id357735	File - Tiger Hill: Page proofs	1975		1 1
id357736	File - Tiger Hill: Page proofs	1975		1 2
id357737	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part 1, Chapter 1	Spring 1985		1 3
id357738	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part 1, Chapter 1	Spring 1985		1 4
id357739	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part 1, Chapter 1	Spring 1985		1 5
id357740	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part 1, Chapter 1	Spring 1985		1 6
id357741	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part 1, Chapter 1	Spring 1985		1 7
id357742	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part 1, Chapter 1	Spring 1985		1 8
id357743	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part 1, Chapter 1	Spring 1985		1 9
id357744	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part 1, Chapter 1 and 2	Spring 1985		1 10
id357745	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part 1, Chapter 1 and 2	Spring 1985		1 11
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id357752	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part 1, Chapter 2 and 5	Spring 1985	1 18
id357753	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part 1, Chapter 4	Spring 1985	1 19
id357754	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part 1, Chapter 4	Spring 1985	1 20
id357755	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part 1, Chapter 4	Spring 1985	1 21
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id357768	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part II, Chapter 1	Summer 1985	2 33
id357769	File - Jerusalem's Curse - Original Drafts - Part II, Chapter 1 and 3	Summer 1985	2 34
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id357771	File - Jerusalem's Curse, Original Drafts, Part II, Chapter 2	Summer 1985	2 36
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id357930	File - The Swallow Inheritance		8 118
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id357932	File - The Swallow Inheritance		8 120
id357933	File -		9
id357934	File - Ravenna Blue - First Drafts	July 29, 1927- July 4, 1987	9 121
id357935	File - Ravenna Blue - First Drafts	July 5, 1987- July 15, 1987	9 122
id357936	File - Ravenna Blue - First Drafts	July 22, 1987	9 123
id357937	File - Ravenna Blue - First Drafts	July 23, 1987	9 124
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id357939	File - Ravenna Blue - First Drafts	July 28, 1987	9 126
id357940	File - Ravenna Blue - First Drafts	August 3, 1987	9 127
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id357945	File - Ravenna Blue - First Drafts	August 13, 1987	9 132
id357946	File - Ravenna Blue - First Drafts	August 21-24, 1987	9 133
id357947	File - Ravenna Blue - Early Draft Part IV		9 134
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id357949	File - Ravenna Blue - Early Draft Part IV		9 136
id357950	File - Ravenna Blue - Early Draft Part IV		9 137
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id357953	File - Ravenna Blue - Final Draft of Original Book	September 1987	10 139
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id357956	File - Ravenna Blue - Mock up		10 142
id357958	File - Ravenna Blue - Mock up		10 143
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id357959	File - Ravenna Blue - Mock up		10 145
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id357987	File - Ravenna Blue - Revision whole book	March 22-26, 1988	13 170
id357989	File - Ravenna Blue - Revision Part IV	May 21, 1988	13 171
id357990	File - Ravenna Blue - Second to Last Mock up for Printing	June 16, 1988	13 172
id357991	File - Ravenna Blue - Second to Last Mock up for Printing	June 16, 1988	13 173
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id357994	File -		14
id357995	File - Ravenna Blue - Final Mock up for Printing		14 176
id357996	File - Ravenna Blue - Final Mock up for Printing		14 177
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### Series id357999: Short Stories

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Published

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id358003	File -			15
id358004	File - "The Bare Root Season:" Draft	1981		15 180
id358005	File - "Caveat Emptor" Notes			15 181
id358006	File - "Caveat Emptor" Draft	1983		15 182
id358007	File - "Caveat Emptor" Last draft before mock up			15 183
id358008	File - "Caveat Emptor" Mock up	November 1987		15 184
id358009	File - "Caveat Emptor" Rewrite	January 1988		15 185

id358010	File - "Caveat Emptor" Second to last draft	January 29-30, 1988	15 186
id358011	File - "Wine, Women and Song" Draft	1983	15 187
id358012	File - "Wine, Women and Song" Draft and revisions	Spring 1986	15 188
id358013	File - "Wine, Women and Song" Draft and revisions	Spring 1986	15 189
id358014	File - "Wine, Women and Song" Second to last draft	March 1987	15 190
id358015	File - "Wine, Women and Song" Second to last draft	March 1987	15 191
id358016	File - "Wine, Women and Song" Final draft	April 1987	15 192
id358017	File -		16
id358018	File - "Youth in Asia" Original drafts	Fall 1984	16 193
id358019	File - "Youth in Asia" Original drafts	Fall 1984	16 194
id358020	File - "Youth in Asia" Original drafts	Fall 1984	16 195
id358021	File - "Youth in Asia" Original drafts	Fall 1984	16 196
id358022	File - "Youth in Asia" Original drafts	Fall 1984	16 197
id358023	File - "Last Page:" rewrites	Winter 1985	16 198
id358024	File - "Last Page:" rewrites	Winter 1985	16 199
id358025	File - "Last Page:" rewrites	Winter 1985	16 200
id358026	File - "Last Page:" rewrites	Winter 1985	16 201
id358027	File - "Habits" Rewrites	January 1986	16 202
id358028	File - "Habits" Rewrites	January 1986	16 203
id358029	File - "Habits" Rewrites	January 1986	16 204
id358030	File - "Habits" Final version	January 1986	16 205
id358031	File - "Civilization and Its Discontents" Draft 1	February 1986	16 206
id358032	File - "Civilization and Its Discontents" Draft 2	February 1986	16 207
id358033	File - "Civilization and Its Discontents" Draft 3	February 1986	16 208
id358034	File - "Civilization and Its Discontents" Draft 4	February 1986	16 209
id358035	File - "Civilization and Its Discontents" Draft 5	February 1986	16 210
id358036	File - "Civilization and Its Discontents" Draft 6	February 1986	16 211
id358037	File - "Civilization and Its Discontents" Final	February 1986	16 212
id358038	File - "Bones of Contention" Drafts	Spring 1986	16 213
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id358040	File - "Bones of Contention" Drafts	Spring 1986	16 215
id358041	File - "Bones of Contention" Drafts	Spring 1986	16 216
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id358043	File - "Bones of Contention" Drafts	Spring 1986	16 218
id358044	File - "Bones of Contention" Second to last draft	Fall 1986	16 219
id358045	File - "Bones of Contention" Final draft	Fall 1986	16 220
id358046	File -		17
id358047	File - "Last Dream before Waking"	May-June 1986	17 221
id358048	File - "Last Dream before Waking"	May-June 1986	17 222

id358049	File - "Last Dream before Waking"	May-June 1986	17 223
id358050	File - "Manila Bay" Final draft	October 1986	17 224
id358051	File - "Dark Continent"	Fall 1986	17 225
id358052	File - "Dark Continent"	Fall 1986	17 226
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id358055	File - "Dark Continent"	Fall 1986	17 229
id358056	File - "Delinquent Virgin" Drafts	December 1986	17 230
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id358058	File - "Delinquent Virgin" Drafts	December 1986	17 232
id358059	File - "Delinquent Virgin" Final Draft	December 1986	17 233
id358060	File - "Sonnet" Drafts	December 1986	17 234
id358061	File - "Sonnet" Drafts	December 1986	17 235
id358062	File - "Sonnet" Drafts	December 1986	17 236
id358063	File - "Sonnet" Second to last draft		17 237
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id358066	File -		18
id358067	File - "Dark Continent:" Final draft	February 1987	18 239
id358068	File - "Dark Continent:" Final draft	February 1987	18 240
id358069	File - "A Christmas Cordial" Draft	n.d.	18 241
id358070	File - "A Christmas Cordial" Draft	December 1987	18 242
id358071	File - "A Christmas Cordial" Draft	December 1987	18 243
id358072	File - "A Christmas Cordial" Mark up	December 1987	18 244
id358073	File - "Lavee, Lamore, Lagair, Lamaird:" Draft sections	June 15, 1988	18 245
id358074	File - "Lavee, Lamore, Lagair, Lamaird:" Draft sections	June 17, 1988	18 246
id358075	File - "Lavee, Lamore, Lagair, Lamaird:" Draft sections	June 17, 1988	18 247
id358076	File - "Lavee, Lamore, Lagair, Lamaird:" Draft sections	n.d.	18 248
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id358078	File - "Lavee, Lamore, Lagair, Lamaird:" Draft sections	June 29, 1988	18 250
id358079	File - "Lavee, Lamore, Lagair, Lamaird:" Draft sections	June 30-July 1, 1988	18 251
id358080	File - "Lavee, Lamore, Lagair, Lamaird:" Draft sections	n.d.	18 252
id358081	File - "Lavee, Lamore, Lagair, Lamaird:" Draft sections	n.d.	18 253
id358082	File - "Lavee, Lamore, Lagair, Lamaird:" Draft sections	n.d.	18 254
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id358090	File - Speech: "Unspoken Ambivalence..." Draft 1	April 1988	18 262
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### Series id358094: Short Story Collections

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Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
id358095	File -			19
id358096	File - Fair Augusto and Other Stories - Two Complete Drafts			19 266
id358097	File - Fair Augusto and Other Stories - Two Complete Drafts			19 267
id358098	File - Fair Augusto and Other Stories - Two Complete Drafts			19 268
id358099	File - Fair Augusto and Other Stories - Two Complete Drafts			19 269
id358100	File - Fair Augusto and Other Stories - Two Complete Drafts			19 270
id358101	File - Fair Augusto and Other Stories - Two Complete Drafts			19 271
id358102	File - Dark Continent and Other Stories - Second to last mock up of whole book			19 272
id358103	File - Dark Continent and Other Stories - Second to last mock up of whole book			19 273
id358104	File - Dark Continent and Other Stories - Second to last mock up of whole book			19 274
id358105	File -			20
id358106	File - Dark Continent and Other Stories - Final Mock Up			20 275
id358107	File - Dark Continent and Other Stories - Final Mock Up			20 276
id358108	File - Dark Continent and Other Stories - Final Mock Up			20 277
id358109	File - Dark Continent and Other Stories - Final Mock Up			20 278
id358110	File - Dark Continent and Other Stories - Final Mock Up			20 279