
Guide to the Dorothy J. Gaiter and John Brecher Papers D-669

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Language of Material: English

Contributing Institution: University of California, Davis Library, Dept. of Special Collections

Title: Dorothy J. Gaiter and John Brecher Papers

Creator: Gaiter, Dorothy J.

Creator: Brecher, John

Identifier/Call Number: D-669

Physical Description: 15 linear feet

Date (inclusive): 1998-2009

Abstract: The Dorothy J. Gaiter and John Brecher Papers document the couple's career in wine writing from 1998-2009. The collection includes forty-four albums of labels and tasting notes related to the *Wall Street Journal* column "Tastings" (1998-2009), select pieces of art, publication materials, notes, assorted news stories and clippings, and materials related to their books *The Wall Street Journal Guide to Wine* (1999), *The Wall Street Journal Guide to Wine: New and Improved* (2002), *Love by the Glass: Tasting Notes From a Marriage* (2002), and *Wine for Every Occasion: Red, White and Bubbly to Celebrate the Joy of Living* (2004). Also included are letters from readers, recordings of their television appearances, materials related to Open That Bottle Night, and born-digital materials including email correspondence and article drafts.

Researchers should contact Archives and Special Collections to request collections, as many are stored offsite.

Biography

Award-winning journalists Dorothy J. Gaiter and John Brecher have been exploring wine together for more than thirty years. The couple met in June of 1973 while working at the *Miami Herald* and, thanks to a gift of Alexis Bespaloff's *The New Signet Book of Wine* from John's brother, soon began sampling wines and keeping track of what they had tried. Over the course of twenty-five years, the two kept notes on thousands of bottles of wine tied to large and small moments in their life.

In 1998, Gaiter and Brecher decided to integrate wine writing into their professional lives. At the time, both were working for the *Wall Street Journal*: Brecher was the newspaper's page-one editor and Gaiter was a news editor covering race and urban issues. Their wine column "Tastings" ran as part of a new weekend section in the *Wall Street Journal* and quickly became a success. Gaiter and Brecher wrote in an approachable, engaging way, rating wines "OK," "Good," "Very Good," "Delicious" or "Delicious!"

After two years of writing both hard news and about wine while also raising their daughters Media and Zoë, the couple decided to dedicate their professional time solely to wine writing. They continued to write "Tastings" until late 2009. In 2010, Dorothy J. Gaiter was named Food and Wine Editor for *France Magazine*. In 2013, she was named Senior Editor for the online wine magazine *Grape Collective*, where she and John Brecher are now both Senior Editors and continue to write about wine.

Together, Gaiter and Brecher have written the books *The Wall Street Journal Guide to Wine* (1999), *The Wall Street Journal Guide to Wine: New and Improved* (2002), *Love by the Glass: Tasting Notes From a Marriage* (2002), and *Wine for Every Occasion: Red, White and Bubbly to Celebrate the Joy of Living* (2004), made numerous television appearances, and given radio interviews. One of their most enduring legacies is Open That Bottle Night, an annual tradition they created in 1999 to encourage people to open and enjoy a special bottle of wine that they have been saving.

Sources:

Colwell, Sarah. "Wall Street Journal Wine Couple Donate Life's Work to UC Davis Library." UC Davis Library News, 19 February 2020. <https://www.library.ucdavis.edu/news/wall-street-journal-wine-couple-donate-lifes-work-to-uc-davis-library/>. Accessed 26 February 2020.

"Dorothy J. Gaiter." *Wall Street Journal*, 2020. <https://www.wsj.com/news/author/dorothy%20j.-gaiter>. Accessed 26 February 2020.

"Dorothy J. Gaiter and John Brecher." Wikipedia, 2020. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorothy_Gaiter_and_John_Brecher. Accessed 26 February 2020.

"John Brecher." *Wall Street Journal*, 2020. <https://www.wsj.com/news/author/john-brecher>. Accessed 26 February 2020.

Scope and Contents

The Dorothy J. Gaiter and John Brecher Papers thoroughly document the couple's life in wine appreciation and wine writing. Currently, the collection documents Gaiter and Brecher's work from 1998-2009. The collection includes forty-four albums of labels and tasting notes related to the *Wall Street Journal* column "Tastings" (1998-2009) and select pieces of art that accompanied the column. Also included are publication materials, notes, and assorted news stories and clippings, as well as materials related to their books *The Wall Street Journal Guide to Wine* (1999), *The Wall Street Journal Guide to Wine: New and Improved* (2002), *Love by the Glass: Tasting Notes From a Marriage* (2002), and *Wine for Every Occasion: Red, White*

and *Bubbly to Celebrate the Joy of Living* (2004). Letters from readers, recordings of their appearances on national television, materials related to Open That Bottle Night; and born-digital materials including email correspondence and article drafts are also represented in the collection.

Processing Information

Collection is unprocessed.

Access

This collection is not yet processed. Please contact Archives and Special Collections in advance to request access.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Dorothy J. Gaiter and John Brecher Papers, D-669, Archives and Special Collections, UC Davis Library, University of California, Davis.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Dorothy J. Gaiter and John Brecher, 2020.

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Subjects and Indexing Terms

Wine writers -- New York (State)

Wine tasting

Wine labels

Wine and wine making

Wine and wine making -- Guidebooks

Brecher, John -- Archives

Gaiter, Dorothy J. -- Archives
