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## HOME PLANET NEWS ARCHIVE

With the Papers of Enid Dame and Donald Lev



**Extent:** Approx. 16 bankers boxes containing approx. 19 linear feet. Contains also a small volume of audio/visual (approx. 14 audio cassettes, 7 CDs, 2 VHS tapes, 1 DVD) and digital items (approx. 54 floppy discs plus a hard drive).

**Date:** 1960s–2018.

**OVERVIEW:** The archive is comprised of three thematically-distinct yet intermingled parts: the papers of Enid Dame (8 boxes), the papers of Donald Lev (3.5 boxes), and shared materials including production materials regarding *Home Planet News* (4.5 boxes), the tabloid they began in 1979 and published continuously until Lev's death in 2018 (Dame passed in 2003).

**ABOUT THE ARCHIVE:** *Home Planet News* [HPN] is one of the longest-running periodicals of its kind, as a literary and arts-focused tabloid that was dedicated to the alternative and independent scenes of New York City and beyond. As a rare example of literary community not associated with two heavyweight organizations at the time—St.

Mark's Poetry Project and the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street YMCA—HPN tells an important story about New York's independent literary history from the 1970s onward.

Dame and Lev were the tabloid's founding editors, and stewarded the project for the duration of their lives. In doing so, they became valued members of the New York City, upstate New York, and local Jewish poetry communities. They were also prolific writers in their own right, whose poetry and prose works were published by small presses such as Downtown Poets, Cross-Cultural Communications, Shivastan Press, Presa Press, and others (for additional biographical notes, please see p. 9 of this document).

The bulk of materials in the archive are printed typescript, typescript, and holograph drafts of work, followed by Dame's notebooks, production files for *HPN* issues, correspondence, photographs, other writings (such as reviews), and a few oversize items. Correspondence and works by others includes Tuli Kupferberg, Ed Sanders, Guy Beining, Janine Pommy Vega, Fielding Dawson, Alicia Ostriker, Shirley Gellis, Jenny Tango, Linda Lerner, Dorian Borsella, Amiri Baraka, and many others including close friends and family.

These materials will be of interest to scholars of Jewish poetry, New York City's poetry scene during the 1970s and onward, small presses in the United States (including the evolution of desktop publishing in the post-mimeograph era), and alternative/independent poetry communities in the Northeast.

**HIGHLIGHTS:** As a research collection, the archive thoroughly documents the interrelatedness of *HPN* to its editor's daily lives; it contains a variety of documents that speak to Lev and Dame's own work in addition to their editorial projects. The archive is a mixture of personal and family history, individual creative work (in poetry and prose), editorial correspondence, and production materials related to *HPN*. *HPN* production files mostly address issue no. 44 and onward. Highlights include:

- **Extensive drafts of works** by both Dame and Lev. For Dame: poems from 1970 onward, drafts of extended works on biblical women, George Gissing (her dissertation subject), and Israel-Palestinian writing. For Lev, drafts from the 1960s onward, including many of his book-length projects with annotations, corrected proofs, and other process-related documents.
- Approx. 82 **notebooks** by Enid Dame, ca. 1966–2000s, containing holograph drafts of works, reading and research notes, teaching notes, mailing lists, poetry workshops, *HPN* projects, and journal entries.
- Files of **production materials for *HPN* arranged by issue**, including correspondence (ALS, TLS, ANS, and printed emails), drafts of work, pasteups, and other production-related items. Files are only for issues nos. 53, 56, 58, 59, 60, 62, 67, and 68, as well as nos. 44, 45, 49, and 52.
- **Administrative files for *HPN***, including mailing lists, oral histories of the project, the development of the archive, and also Dame's complete publication history.
- **Correspondence** with Ed Sanders, Tuli Kupferberg, Shirley Gellis, Kirby Congdon, Alicia Ostriker, Linda Lerner, Peter Lamborn Wilson, and many others involved in the *HPN* scene. There is also an extensive correspondence series between Enid Dame and Morton and Berenice Jacobs (her parents), with significant autobiographical details and daily goings-on, including *Home Planet News* and other projects.
- **Audio/visual and digital materials**, including audiocassette recordings of poetry readings, Lev's hard drive as of July 2018, and approx. 54 floppy discs that document *HPN* issues from roughly issue no. 44 to no. 64, as well as other writing projects by Lev and Dame.
- **Family and personal photographs**, including portraits of Lev's parents, family photo albums, and photos of poetry readings, travel, pets, and other important facets of Lev and Dame's life together.
- **Print ephemera documenting** the community of *HPN*, including pasteups for flyers announcing readings and other events.

## INVENTORY

### *ENID DAME*

**BOX# 1 Works by Enid Dame.** Typescripts and holograph drafts of prose works, especially short stories and longer fiction pieces. Contains drafts for *Forces*, “What Mother Left,” *Traveling*, *Who’s Not Ready*, and other novel-length projects, as well as a publishing files related to her work on the anthology, *Which Lilith?*, with submissions and correspondence. Includes also reviews of others’ work, and essays on the philosophy of education.

**BOX# 2 Works by Enid Dame.** Typescript and holograph drafts of poetry, including early poems from 1970, “California Poems” and correspondence with Lev, “Robin Poem,” “The Woman Who Was Water,” and *The River Wasn’t Enough*, a collection of unpublished poems gathered by Lev, and other drafts of individual poems and manuscript-length projects. Includes also reviews and writing about Dame and reviews by Dame, as well as two folders of works by others containing a manuscript by R. Cobirik, Constance Norgren, Kenneth Tindall, and others, inscribed to Dame.

**BOX# 3 Works by Enid Dame.** Typescript, printed typescript, and holograph drafts of work, including one folder of poetry, a project file for the *Bridges* poetry issue and another file for the *Bridges* Palestine-Israel book, project files for Dame’s work on the biblical Miriam, including notebooks, correspondence, research, and drafts. There are several folders containing drafts of Dame’s Ph.D. dissertation on George Gissing and the representation of the working class in Victorian novels.

**BOX# 4 Notebooks by Enid Dame.** Ca. 2000s (dated notebooks include 2001, 2003, and 2004, but most are undated). Includes approx. 36 notebooks, mostly 1-subject spiral-bound notebooks, with holograph notes. Reading notes on biblical topics, coursework (Bible as Literature), drafts of correspondence, drafts of poems, journal/diary-style entries by date (no year given), bibliographies of reading lists, global twentieth-century history, teaching notes/syllabi, longer essays, mailing lists (New York Poets Cooperative, where she and Lev met), ancient history, extended prose pieces, writing prompts, book drafts, and other writings. Notebooks are generally mostly complete, and many show evidence of drafting process. Includes also a 1999 at-a-glance planner.

**BOX# 5 Notebooks by Enid Dame.** Ca. 1966–2000s (dated notebooks include 1966, 1971, and 1976, but most are undated). Includes approx. 28 notebooks (with 12 additional large notebooks in **BOX# 8**, as well as 6 smaller notebooks enumerated below), including journal as early as 1966 that reflects on Dame’s early years and later, losing her mother. Includes notes on oral exam, poetry drafts, journal/diary entries, ideas for “Women’s Poetry Workshop,” prose works, reading notes, teaching notes and syllabi, George Gissing (her dissertation research), reading notes and bibliographies, *HPN* projects, a travel notebook, undergraduate composition coursework, ideas for writing projects, and writings about poetry. Laid in is a business card for Donald Lev’s “Sunspot Distributing,” “specializing in art, music, literary and small press books and periodicals” at a Brooklyn address—this was another one of Lev’s editorial and business projects. Includes also approx. 6 smaller notebooks, including guest notebook for memorial reading at Cedar Tavern in 2004, 2003 monthly planner, 1998 weekly planner, “notebook for Cummingham,” and other notebooks with small notes. With two folders containing holograph notes from journals (loose leaves), as well as folder of holograph notes on Dame’s dreams, ca. 1997–2003.

**BOX# 6 Correspondence to/from Enid Dame.** Mostly ALS, with a few TLS, as well as APC, ANS, and other notes. This box is mostly comprised of personal correspondence ca. 1970s–1980s and onward, including both incoming and outgoing letters (well over 100) from the 1970s onward with Dame’s parents, Morton and Berenice Jacobs. As such, this correspondence is mostly autobiographical, although beyond this, there are numerous letters regarding Dame’s work on *HPN*, and personal letters with friends that convey her writing projects and editorial activities. Correspondents include: Enid Dame’s father (Morton Jacobs), mother (Berenice Jacobs), and brother (Phil Jacobs); American Jewish Conference; Poetry Society of America; West End Press; Fielding Dawson; Alicia Ostriker; Jenny Tango (regular *HPN* contributor); Shirley Gellis (numerous, beginning in 1970s); Donald Lev; Shirley Powell; Stephen Booker; Careufel de Lamiere; Susan Einsenberg; Linda Lerner; Catskill Reading Society; The Bright Hill Center; Theresa Quinn; Sharon Olinka; Linda Bisgaard; Bruce Browning; Phoebe Grigg; George Montgomery; Leonard Cirini; Alison Colbert; Dorian Borsella; Emily Borenstein; Robin Dame; Robert Gould, and numerous others.

Of particular interest is a copy of a mailing list, titled “Poetry Workshop List prepared June 3, 1991,” with numerous names of collaborators, including Enid Dame herself. A useful document in tracing first-name correspondents and participants in the scene. There are also printed emails in a file about Israel and poetry, including conversation related to Claire Kinberg (at *Bridges* journal) and the publication of a poem by Adrienne Rich, including exchange with Adrienne Rich and Lois Bar-yaacov.

A family friend or colleague partially organized the correspondence, including the addition of a few sticky notes identifying personal correspondents, and housing certain letters in protective Mylar sleeves.

**BOX# 7 Correspondence, teaching, and print ephemera re: Enid Dame.** With approx. 4 linear inches of correspondence, 8 linear inches of teaching materials, and 3 linear inches of print ephemera.

**Correspondence:** printed emails, TLS, and ALS regarding *Home Planet News*, local political issues (such as construction and protests), and correspondence with friends. Correspondents include Donald Lev (in short notes), Dorian Borsella, Faith Jones, Clare Kinberg, correspondence regarding Amiri Baraka, Linda Esposito, Will Inman, Linda Lerner, Shirley Gellis, Andrew Gettler (with typescript), Margaret Gilbert, Madeline Tiger, Phyllis Stern, Mika’il DeVeaux (at Eastern Prison, submitting to *HPN*), and others. Include also an autograph draft of a letter documenting her separation from her first husband, Robin, to her parents. Include also a file of letters related to publishing, with inquiries from publishers regarding edited volumes and manuscripts by Dame. Contains also a file of copies of letters Dame sent to Dorian Borsella, likely sent from Borsella to Lev after Dame’s death.

**Teaching files:** Includes syllabi, holograph notes from classes, rosters, printouts, student work with feedback, teaching reports and student evaluations, Poetry Club flyers, and teaching notes from courses at New Jersey Institute of Technology (including Poetry Club), Polytechnic University, and other institutions.

**Other files:** folder with publishing contracts, resumes and CVs, and Towson College diploma. With 1 linear inch of family files, containing materials related to Berenice Jacobs’ (Dame’s mother) passing, including tribute by Donald Lev ca. 1984, clippings, and holograph pages which together

Dame has labeled “mama”; file with holograph poem written upon receiving the news of her father, Morton Jacobs’ death, with additional typescripts and clippings.

**Print ephemera:** includes poetry flyers for readings with Dame, protest flyers, conference proceedings, publication announcements, pasteups for her memorial reading, posters from The Poetry Project, *HPN* events and flyers, poetry reading calendars for New York City, and New Direction’s 2005 catalog, and *Pulp* vol. 10, no .1, edited by Howard Sage (1984) containing Dame contribution. With plenty of downtown ephemera, including brochures such as “Jews for Racial and Economic Justice with the Village Voice presents: In Struggle: A Cultural Festival and History Teach-In at Cooper Union’s Great Hall.” Includes also a folder of clippings and ephemera related to Dame’s research interests and current events.

**BOX# 8 Additional notebooks, files and personal files.** Notebooks are of the kind as described in previous boxes. Contains also a file on Dame’s participation in the Institute of Contemporary Midrash, including a residency she attended, related correspondence, and related print ephemera (Dame was known for her work on artistic practice as a type of midrash). This box also includes financial statements, paystubs, bills, pet burial information, healthcare, checkbooks, and other personal information that was included with the archive and can be weeded or restricted as per the policies of the acquiring institution.

#### *DONALD LEV*

**BOX# 9 Works by Donald Lev.** Holographs, typescripts, and printed typescripts, as well as edited pages of mostly poetry. Includes *Yesterday’s News: Poems 1998–2001* (folder with various drafts, tables of contents, and other organizational notes); drafts for *Selected Poems*; *A Prisoner of the Internet* and *And There Is Also Chaos* drafts housed together; corrected proofs for *Twilight Poems* along with typescript of work; folders of poetry as part of the “footnotes” series; poems ca. 2016–2018; *Only Wings*; *A Very Funny Fellow*; *100 Love Poems to Enid*, with many earlier works on ephemeral papers and in holograph; *Artifacts*; *Adventures at the Upstate!* in multiple folders arranged by Lev; folder titled “My Latest Work in Progress, Spring/Summer 2013”; folder titled “New Poems for Print”; *Sledding Down Murray Hill*; *Letters on the Table: Poems Begun in November*, a bound manuscript from 2005 for circulation at poetry readings; several untitled poetry manuscripts.

**BOX# 10 Works by Donald Lev.** Holographs, typescripts, and printed typescripts, as well as annotated pages. Includes *Twentieth Century Limited*; *The Book of Edges by Zeno the Sincere*; 1979; *A Symbol of the Sun* (fiction manuscript); corrected proofs ca. 1995; *Pasticci*; several untitled poetry manuscripts and loose poems. Includes also a small cloth-bound journal that Lev used like a “poetry scrapbook,” with poems and writings ca. 1981 on a few pages, some in different hands.

**BOX# 11 Works by Donald Lev, and reviews.** Holographs, typescripts, and printed typescripts, as well as annotated pages. A significant volume of printed (computer) typescripts ca. 2010s, including poetry on contemporaneous topics. With short story “Civics”; a copy of *Letters on the Table: Poems Begun in November*, a bound manuscript from 2005 for circulation at poetry readings with additional poem laid in; bound poetry manuscript labeled *Mud Fish*; *My Memoirs*; *Storage Space*; *The Second Book of Edges of Zeno the Sincere*; poems dating to ca. 1960s–1980s; “New Writing: Fiction,” undated; “Poems 1994 Donald Lev”; “Pasticci: Poems 1988–1989” in folder, with additional manuscript names on front; two folders of reviews of Lev’s work,

one titled “Reviews of Enemies” with additional material. Includes also several manuscripts that have been laid in copies of *Home Planet News* for storage, with additional annotations on covers.

### **BOX# 12 Donald Lev correspondence, other files, and audio/visual/digital.**

**Correspondence:** Includes approx. 1.5 linear inches of correspondence to Lev, at times with autograph drafts of outgoing correspondence. Many items concern Lev’s attempts to publish Dame’s work after her passing, or correspondence with his publishers. With ALS, TLS, ANS, and printed emails. Correspondents include Ed Sanders (with a beautiful glyph Christmas 2008 card, as well as poetry manuscripts with letter drafts by Lev on back); Rudolph Scherreiks; Shirley Gellis; Kirby Congdon; Ben Wilensky; Judith Saunders; Laura Boss; Alicia Ostriker (Lev draft outgoing); Linda Lerner; Enid Dame, and others. With a few related items, such as photographs and publisher’s royalty statements.

**Other files/reviews:** Includes approx. 3 linear inches, including an original drawing of Lev by J. Middleton; certificate for Lev from the National Campaign for Tolerance; printed typescripts of reviews by Lev; folder regarding Lev’s participation in the World Congress of Poets for Poetry Research and Recitation, with certificate, photographs, and broadside; two folders of family files, including cemetery plot information and items belonging to Mary Lev, Lev’s mother.

**Print Ephemera:** Includes approx. 1.5 linear inches, with folder for Lev’s “Dedicatory Psalm,” a holograph poemcard. Includes original artwork by Lev for piece, as well as print pasteups of postcards/poemcards and related material. Print ephemera includes “Yak” broadside by Lev (removed from frame, significant dirt); clippings of Lev’s poetry reading announcements in local news; reading flyers and pasteups of reading flyers.

### **AUDIO/VISUAL/DIGITAL [MOSTLY HPN] includes:**

- Donald Lev’s hard drive, dated July 2018, with 160 GB capacity (for Windows 10 operating system).
- 2 VHS tapes: “Don Lev Public Library Mar. 16, 2000” and “The Source—About the Beat Generation / Norman Mailer (incomplete),” both hand-labeled.
- DVD hand-labeled “A Little More Nothings: A Tribute to Tuli Kupferberg Bowery Poetry Club, NYC, Various Artists.” Mailing envelope of hand-labeled DVDs from Leslie Gerber to Lev/*Home Planet News* with multiple copies of “Enid Dame + Donald Lev 1996–2000,” some with small “\$10” note on front of sleeve.
- Approx. 14 audiocassette tapes, most hand-labeled and recordings of poetry readings by Enid Dame and Donald Lev, audio interviews recorded for *Home Planet News* (such as with Bob Holman), and copies of the Cross-Cultural Communications poetry tape series for both Dame and Lev’s contributions.
- Approx. 7 CDs, including poetry readings for Lev and Dame, Clare Kinberg (ca. 2007), and Chris Wood.
- Approx. 54 floppy discs (3.5 in.), many labeled. Most are related to *HPN*, and are labeled by issue number, including 44–49; 50–59 (3 discs for 58), 60–61 (2 discs for 61), 63–64 (plus index disc); discs by Donald Lev ca. 2002–2013, identified by “begun” and “ended” dates on label; “California Correspondence”; midrash works by Dame; other projects by Dame; “HPN History”; “HPN

Sunspot Business” (referring to Lev’s book business); “Addresses”; discs related to Dame’s festschrift, and other projects.

**BOX# 13 Donald Lev and Enid Dame photographs, including friends and family.** Several hundred photographs of Dame and Lev. Events include Dame’s graduation, poetry readings, road trips, Dame’s festschrift publication, author headshots, and pictures with friends. Mostly developed film, and also printed digital photographs. Includes red photo album of Dame’s first marriage and family photographs; small black photo album of Lev family photographs; orange and gold album with Lev family photos, including Lev as a young boy; album labeled “Abe Lev” with clippings of his obituaries and carbon TS by Lev to his father’s rabbi, documenting his work in Queens as a well-appreciated telegraph operator for sports news; formal portraits of Lev as a young graduate; glamour shots of Lev’s mother, Mary Lev, as a young dancer; photographs of event in Woodstock; small brown album with photographs of Lev; several envelopes labeled by name of Lev’s family photographs, and other general family and friends photographs.

### *HOME PLANET NEWS*

While *Home Planet News* suffuses the entire archive, including the individual files of both Dame and Lev, the following are specific files for the production of the magazine. Types of files include administrative materials, works by others, and individual issue files.

**BOX# 14 HPN individual issue files.** These materials were arranged in folders by *HPN* issue, and contain correspondence (ALS, TLS, ANS, and printed emails), drafts of work, production drafts, and other items related to the production of individual issues. Often includes a copy of the issue, at times annotated and used as a makeshift file folder. Includes folders as labeled by Dame or Lev for issues no. 53, 56, 58, 59, 60, 62, 67, and 68. With the exception of no. 53, most folders are several inches thick. Of particular note:

- No. 56: significant correspondence, including poems on grief by Ed Galing and discussion; TLS from Vincent Ferrini, Sept. 9, 2006; pasteups for chapbook by Donald Lev titled *Grief* by Bardpress/Ten Penny Players, Inc.; folders for advertisements (noted “paid”); manuscripts for the issue wrapped in an annotated copy of no. 51.
- No. 58: mostly printed typescripts of work by Lev.
- No. 59: ANS with copies of manuscripts by Tuli Kupferberg, Mar. 1, 2007; Ed Sanders typescript, “In Praise of William Morris” (photocopy here, though original is elsewhere in the archive); ALS and manuscript from Patricia Eakins; and reviews and contributor manuscripts.
- No. 60: TLS from Janine Pommy Vega; letter to the editor from June Hildebrand; ALS from Robert Joe Stout; several manuscripts of reviews; copy of 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary “Stained Sheets” tabloid; copy of small chapbook *Coyote and Others: Poems by Alison Koffler*; works by Alan Catlin, Linda Lerner, Nikki Stiller, and many others.
- No. 62: envelope from Guy Beining; ALS from Peter Lamborn Wilson; advertisements from Presa Press; typescript manuscript from Fritz Hamilton; reviews by Vernon Frazer, Hilary Sideris, Cheryl Rice, and others; edited printed typescript of “The Story of Home Planet News” by Enid Dame and Donald Lev.
- No. 67: Bob Strother manuscript; announcement of launch of online site; manuscripts by Don Rayan, Dave Hunter, Ginnah Howard; and numerous others; Guy Beining artwork within an issue of no. 67 and ANS; several annotated copies of the issue serving as folders.

- No. 68: letter from Christopher Presfield (incarcerated contributor); manuscript from Diana Anhalt; review by Cindy Hochman; works by Stephen Graf; Linda Lerner reviews; Fritz Hamilton carbon autograph cartoon and poem, ca. 2008; manuscript by Eric Greinke; letters from Roger Taus.

In addition to these files, there are several instances of *HPN* issues serving as file folders for manuscripts that appear to be related to the issue, including nos. 44, 45, 49, 52, 53, and 59. Within these of particular note are a holograph draft of “Voices: In Response to Sept. 11 and its Aftermath” event with pasteup of event flyer (no. 44); several photographs of Dame and Lev (no. 53); copy of Tuli Kupferberg cartoon (no. 45); extensive contributor manuscripts and correspondence (1 linear inch) for nos. 49, 52, and 59. All covers are annotated with additional information on the items housed within.

Includes also approx. 36 issues of *Home Planet News* that have annotations in Lev’s hand on the covers, suggesting their varied use for organizational purposes, random jottings, and various editorial needs. Includes notations such as “columns,” “reading for July 1 and July 2,” “Artaud’s letters: original and proofs,” “articles,” “copying,” “Xerox,” “articles and letters,” “new poems to consider,” “leftovers” and other such notes. Housing of these continues into BOX# 15.

**BOX# 15 *Home Planet News* administrative files, works by others. Enid Dame bibliography file.** Includes the rest of the annotated issues as described above, as well as approx. 4 linear inches of administrative files and approx. 5 linear inches of files of works by others. Administrative files include folder of pasteups and flyers for events and reading (a wonderful file, many events at the Cedar Tavern); two envelopes from Tuli Kupferberg with works included; letter with small chapbooks from Ed Galing, an *HPN* contributor; a folder of author headshots, including some of Lev and many by Layle Silbert, who often did photographs for *HPN*; and folders with mailing lists and institutional subscriptions to *HPN*, with many autograph notes and additional correspondence from *HPN* to subscribers. Includes also a pasteup copy of *Fighting to Be Heard* by Richard Davison, subtitled “Poems and other writings from the pages of *Home Planet News*, 1979–1994.”

There is also a folder with information about the development of the archive and context on *HPN*, Lev, and Dame, including biographical information about Lev and Dame, a history of the magazine (annotated), clippings, author bibliographies, annotated typescript of speech on small presses, and typescripts of work by Lev on Dame.

Works by others includes envelope of comics and ALS from Tuli Kupferberg; a manuscript of “Crucifying the Christ Within: A personal Guide to Self-Damnation” by Yonni Jackson; submissions from Michael Hathaway, Paul Stroher, Herschel Silverman (a tribute to *HPN*); large packet of material from Max Schwartz with ALS and heavily annotated envelope; manuscript by Saul Bennett, Joseph DeLuise, and unidentified contributors; original portrait by J. Middleton (ca. 1974), and other materials.

Housed in this box also is a card filing system of 3.5 x 5-inch index cards, approx. 7 linear inches deep, with Dame’s complete list of publications. Includes many publications in *Home Planet News*, and accounts for poems, reviews, books, and other writings. An in-depth look at her publishing history, with a level of detail that most poets’ bibliographies never achieve.

**BOX# 16 OVERSIZE Dame, Lev, and HPN.** Includes legal-size poetry manuscripts by Lev, larger photographs of Lev as a young man (Edward Tarr portrait), old Lev family portraits, Lev poetry manuscripts and ephemera in Cedar Tavern cardstock menu, along with program for Cooper Square Arts Festival in 1978, two “baba wawa press” broadsheets ca. 1977, and tribute 3-ring binder to Dr. Enid Dame at the New Jersey Institute of Technology, with symposium on her work. Includes also a fundraising campaign button: “Save Home Planet News,” and local poetry reading flyers.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

*HOME PLANET NEWS* is a literary tabloid, published from upstate New York and affiliated with the later streams of the so-called mimeograph revolution. Donald Lev and Enid Dame began publishing *HPN* in 1979, after meeting at the New York Poets Cooperative in 1976. At the time, Dame was working on her Ph.D. in English at Rutgers University, and Lev had been working on a small literary tabloid called *Poets* with Michael Devlin, publishing many of the contributors that would continue on with *HPN*, including Tuli Kupferberg (whose cartoons became a regular fixture of the magazine from 1983 onward), Harold Goldfinger, Emilie Glen, Barbara Holland, Ree Dragonette, Bob Kramer, Bob Holman, and of course, Enid Dame. When Devlin indicated that he would not be able to continue supporting *Poets*, Dame and Lev asked “Could we start a magazine of our own? Could it combine *Poets*’ funky vision and mad energy with a more settled political and communal commitment? A place where the new feminist poetry (this was 1978) could share space and dialogue with neo-Beat bardic effusions?”<sup>1</sup>

The answer was *yes*, and Dame and Lev moved into together, “procured an electronic typewriter in a Bleeker Street shop, got as many files from the Union Square office as [they] could carry out before the landlord locked the door, and [they] were in business.” They called the tabloid after a poem of Lev’s titled “Fragment of a Letter from One’s Home Planet,” which was also the name of a bookshop on East 9th Street that he ran in 1971. The first issue was published in March 1979, with jazz poets Steve and Gloria Tropp on the cover, inaugurated at West End Bar on upper Broadway.

Specific focuses of issues included cronyism at the National Endowment for the Arts (1982), the AIDS crisis (1995), Yiddish poetry in translation (1982), a festschrift for Enid Dame (2005), reflections on Woodstock (2009), prison writing (1999), computer/desktop publishing (1993), progressive arts (1991), a festschrift for Harold Goldfinger (1990), an index of the first 24 issues (1988), and a variety of other political and artistic themes. In 2004, *HPN* published an index of contributors to the first 50 issues, which stretched for six pages of three columns each, containing hundreds of contributors and the titles of their works within.

As one of the longest-running literary tabloids in the United States, *HPN* was jointly edited by Dame and Lev until Dame’s death in 2003, at which point Lev continued to publish the tabloid until his death in 2018. The circulation of each issue was approx. 1000 copies, with the goal of three issues per year (though this varied over time), and it was published in High Falls, New York. The complete print run includes 68 issues, spanning from 1979 to 2018. Occasional issues tend to be scarce, as are complete collections.

*Home Planet News Online* continues today, and is an offshoot of the print publication edited by Frank Murphy. The online version, which is a different project than the print version of *HPN* and is thus not represented in the archive, began after Donald Lev’s passing in 2018, and is currently on their ninth issue as of 2021.

**ENID DAME (1943–2003)** was born in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, and completed high school in Baltimore, Maryland. After attending Towson State College in Maryland, she began teaching high school English in Baltimore. In 1967, she moved to New York City, where she served as a caseworker in the Department of Social Services until 1971, when she began graduate work at City College in 1971. In 1977, her first book of poetry was published by Downtown Poets, titled *Between Revolutions*. She and Lev met in 1976 through the auspices of the New York Poets Cooperative, and began editing *Home Planet News* together in 1979.

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<sup>1</sup> Citations are from a typescript titled “The Story of HPN,” included in the archive.

In 1982, she received the New York State Creative Artists Public Service Fellowship, and a year later, she completed her Ph.D. at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, where she worked as a researcher and assistant on the magazine, *Women and Literature*. She was the Associate Director of the Writing Program at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, and on the faculty of the New Jersey Institute of Technology. After living in Manhattan for a number of years, she moved to High Falls, New York, where she continued to publish *HPN* and became particularly active in the Woodstock and upstate literary communities.

Of her writing, Dame notes a strong Jewish influence, which she combines with her academic training and longstanding participation in counterculture poetry scenes. In particular, her philosophy of writing is related to the idea of midrash, or a Jewish mode of biblical exegesis, about which she states:

“Many of my poems are dramatic monologues, in which characters from Jewish mythology (particularly women) explain or re-interpret their experiences, often from a modern sensibility. In the past, I’ve called these poems, ‘confessions’ but they are in fact midrashim. If a midrash is a way of filling in gaps left in a text, then much of my art is indeed mishrashic. For there were many gaps in my Jewish education. I grew up in a small milltown near Pittsburgh. Most people in my neighborhood were not Jewish. At first, I was the only Jewish child in my grade school. My parents were secular Jews, freethinkers, former radicals and union activists...they were still connected to their Jewish upbringings in various ways. They transmitted bits of these pasts—which they obviously found sustaining—on to me. I never received a complete picture, though, which is perhaps why I turned to poems and stories to do the job.”<sup>2</sup>

A festschrift for Dame was published by the New York Quarterly Foundation in 2010, including contributions by Bob Holman, Barry Wallenstein, Alicia Ostriker, Janine Pommy Vega, Ed Sanders, Roberta Gould, D. H. Melhem, Walter Hess, and others. Selected publications by Dame include *Interesting Times* (X-press Press for the Downtown Poets Co-op, 1978); *Between Revolutions* (X-press Press for the Downtown Poets Co-op, 1979); *On the Road to Damascus, Maryland* (Downtown Poets, 1980); *Confessions* (Cross-Cultural Communications, 1982); *Lilith and Her Demons* (Cross-Cultural Communications, 1986); *Anything You Don't See* (West End Press, 1992); *Stone Shekhina: Poems* (Three Mile Harbor, 2002); *Where is the Woman? Letters and poems from California, July & August 2003* (Shivastan Press, 2006).

**DONALD LEV (1936–2018)** was born in New York City, whose cultural milieu would be a fixture for much of his life. He attended Hunter College, worked at the *Daily News*, *New York Times*, and *Village Voice*, and ran the Home Planet Bookshop on the Lower East Side, which became the namesake of the literary tabloid he began in 1979 with Enid Dame. He was also the host of WNYC radio’s “Open Poetry” program, and hosted readings at The Cedar Tavern (Greenwich Village), the Café Bookstore (Park Slope), The Day of the Poet (Stone Ridge), Outloud Festival (Catskills), and others. Lev published his first poems in 1958, and continued to write throughout his life. Selected publications include *The Darkness Above: Selected Poems 1968–2002* (Outloudbooks, 2008); *Only Wings: 20 Poems of Devotion* (Presa Press, 2010); *A Very Funny Fellow* (NYQ Books, 2012); *Where I Sit* (Presa Press 2015); and anthologies including *Ten Jewish American Poets* (Downtown Poets, 1982) and *A New Geography of Poets* (University of Arkansas Press, 1992). He belonged to the Woodstock Poetry Society (with other members including Ed Sanders), and remained active in his literary communities until his passing in 2018.

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<sup>2</sup> “Art as Midrash: Some Notes on the way to a Discussion,” from the Jewish Women in the Arts Conference at the Jewish Women’s Resource Center, n.d., included in the archive.