

[Archives & Special Collections, Columbia University Health Sciences Library](#)

[A. Bernard Ackerman Papers](#)

**ACKERMAN, A. BERNARD, 1936-
Papers, 1965-2004.**

1.5 cubic feet (4 document boxes, 1 half document box)

#M-0003

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE: Noted U.S. dermatopathologist Albert Bernard Ackerman, generally known as A. Bernard Ackerman, was born on November 22, 1936, in Elizabeth, New Jersey. He was educated at Princeton (BA, 1958) and Columbia (MD, 1962) and did a residency in dermatology at the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center. He was on the medical school faculties of the University of Miami, New York University and Thomas Jefferson University. Ackerman was an expert in the field of dermatopathology and his textbook, *Histologic Diagnosis of Inflammatory Skin Diseases* (1978), is considered a landmark in the field. He also served as an expert medical witness in numerous trials. Ackerman died in New York City in 2008.

SCOPE AND CONTENT: The Ackerman papers chiefly document two important episodes in his career: his role as an expert medical witness for the defense in the celebrated trial of Jean Harris for the murder of Dr. Herman Tarnower in 1981; and his own trial for malpractice in *Dubin v. Thomas Jefferson University, et al.*, in 2000. The Dubin case documents are largely trial transcripts, though there is a small amount of background matter. The Harris case materials are more varied and include trial transcripts – many extensively annotated by Ackerman – newspaper clippings and correspondence, two books on the trial, and the manuscript of Ackerman's own unpublished book on the case.

Among other materials in the papers are a small number of reprints of Ackerman's scientific articles and his curriculum vitae.

ARRANGEMENT: Arranged in three series: I. Biographical/Subjects; II. *Dubin v. Thomas Jefferson University, et al.*; III. Jean Harris Trial.

LANGUAGE: English.

ACCESS: Open. Columbia University does not possess the copyright to this material.

PROVENANCE: Gift of the estate of A. Bernard Ackerman, 2011 (accession #2011.007).

PREFERRED CITATION: A. Bernard Ackerman Papers, Archives & Special Collections, Columbia University Health Sciences Library.

PROCESSING INFORMATION: Rehoused into new folders. Duplicates discarded.

Subjects

Ackerman, A. Bernard, 1936-

Dermatology - Study and teaching.

Evidence, Expert.

Harris, Jean, 1923-2012.

Malpractice – United States.

Medical jurisprudence.

Skin Diseases.

Trials (Murder) - New York (State)

Trial and arbitral proceedings.

Papers processed and finding aid written by Stephen E. Novak, 2022.

A. Bernard Ackerman Papers

Container List

Box	Fo.	Title	Date
Series I: Biographical/Subject Files			
1	1	Curriculum vitae	circa 1972
1	2	"The Impartial Medical Witness"	circa 1980
1	3	Okun, Milton R.: correspondence and documents	1988-2004
1	4	Reprints	1965-1975
1	5	Reprints	1976-1978
Series II: Dubin v. Thomas Jefferson University, et al.			
1	6	Miscellaneous depositions, background materials	1999-2000
1	7	L. Dubin deposition	June 17, 1999
1	8	J. Dubin deposition	December 31, 1999
1	9	Trial transcript (A.M.)	April 25, 2000
1	10	Trial transcript (P.M.)	April 25, 2000
2	1	Trial transcript (A.M.)	April 28, 2000
2	2	Trial transcript	May 2, 2000
2	3	Trial transcript (A.M.)	May 4, 2000
2	4	Trial transcript (P.M.)	May 4, 2000
2	5	Trial transcript (A.M.)	May 5, 2000
2	6	Trial transcript	May 8, 2000
2	7	Trial transcript (P.M.)	May 9, 2000
3	1	Trial transcript (A.M.)	May 11, 2000
3	2	Trial transcript (P.M.?)	May 11, 2000
Series III: Jean Harris Trial			
3	3	Trial transcript	January 23, 1981
3	4	Trial transcript	February 11, 1981
3	5	Trial transcript	various dates
3	6	Trial transcript	various dates
4	1	Trial transcript	date uncertain
4	2	Newspaper clippings, Ackerman's notes, background materials	
4		Ackerman, "Pathology in the Harris Trial: The Implications for	undated
	3	American Medicine, the Law, the Media" (3 versions)	
4	4	Ackerman, "Jean Harris Book," pages 1-155	circa 1981

- | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|--------------|
| 4 | 5 | Ackerman, "Jean Harris Book," pages 156-271 | circa 1981 |
| 5 | 1 | Ackerman, "Jean Harris Book," pages 272-277; appendix: pages 1-107 [unpublished] | circa 1981 |
| Loose in Box: | | | |
| 5 | | Spencer, Duncan. <i>Love Gone Wrong: The Jean Harris Scarsdale Murder Case</i> (New York: Signet, 1981) | June 3, 1905 |
| 5 | | Trilling, Diana. <i>Mrs. Harris: The Death of the Scarsdale Diet Doctor</i> (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1981), with Ackerman's annotations. | June 3, 1905 |