

**University of Toronto Archives  
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**David Lewis Stein fonds**

B2024-0027

Brittany Jeans, 2025

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## Biographical note

David Lewis Stein (1937-2019) was a journalist, novelist, adjunct professor at the University of Toronto, and a Toronto political activist. Stein's journalism and other writings often centred around civic politics and life in Toronto, which positioned him at the forefront of local political movements throughout his career. He was a founding member of The Writers Union of Canada.

Stein graduated from the University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy and English in 1960, after which he began a long career in journalism. He wrote for Maclean's Magazine in the early 1960s before moving to Paris to write for The International Herald Tribune from 1965-1967. In 1969, he moved back to Toronto and began working for The Toronto Star, where he would write as a municipal affairs columnist for over 30 years. He also returned to U of T to begin a Master of Science, Urban and Regional Planning, which he completed in 1974. During his Master's degree, he became a Fellow and part-time lecturer at Innis College, where he would return to teach as an adjunct professor after his retirement from The Toronto Star in 2001.

Through his work and personal life, Stein became a central figure in Toronto's municipal politics, reporting on issues such as the development of the Spadina Expressway and the Eaton Centre. He had served as a board member for the Housing Design Council of Canada, the Annex Ratepayers, the Jewish Community Centre, the Southern Ontario Newspaper Guild, and was an active member of the Shaarei Tzedek Synagogue.

Outside of journalism, he authored both fiction and non-fiction, including four novels, numerous short stories, three non-fiction books, and a play.

How creators of archival records identify themselves and are identified by others is a key contextual aspect of understanding their perspectives and approach. David Lewis Stein identified as a Caucasian, heterosexual man of Jewish ethnicity. This information has been sourced from Stein's family.

### References:

["Star columnist David Lewis Stein, who 'made a difference in how we view civic politics', dies at 82." Toronto Star. September 6, 2019.](#)

["David Lewis Stein." Mount Pleasant Funeral Centre. September 2019.](#)

## Scope and content

[196-]-2019

0.40 m of textual records (1 box)

1 photograph

1 folder of oversized material

Fonds consists of professional and personal correspondence, drafts of Stein's published and unpublished writing, and ephemera collected from his life and work in Toronto. The majority of correspondence represent his activities in Toronto and his local political involvement, with some earlier records depicting his time in Paris. Most writing is from his endeavours outside of journalism. Fonds is divided into two sub-series: Correspondence; and Writing. See series descriptions for more detail.

**Arrangement:** Records have been ordered chronologically within each series, as no original organization could be identified.

**Access:** Files B2024-0027/001 (03), (07)-(09), (12) and (18) in Series 1 are restricted.

Material includes private information about third parties and is reviewed following the terms of the Freedom for Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Please [contact the University Archivist](#) for additional information.

**Boxes:** B2024-0027/001-/002, B2024-0027/001P

## Series 1: Correspondence

[196-]-2019

0.20 m textual records

1 photograph

1 folder of oversized material

Series contains correspondence about Stein's personal matters, journalistic interests, politics local to Toronto, involvements in legal proceedings, and publication efforts. Stein's membership of The Writers Union of Canada, the Annex Ratepayers, and other associations is represented in the correspondence. Select ephemera and press clippings Stein collected are also included in this series.

**Access:** Files B2024-0027/001 (03), (07)-(09), (12), and (18) are restricted. Material includes private information about third parties and is reviewed following the terms of the Freedom for Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Please [contact the University Archivist](#) for additional information.

**Boxes:** B2024-0027/001 (01)-(20), B2024-0027/002, B2024-0027/001P

## Series 2: Writing

[196-]-2017

0.20 m of textual records

Series contains working materials pertaining to Stein's writing endeavours in fiction, non-fiction, and theatre, as well as select records of his journalism. Most records are drafts of published and unpublished fiction, including for his first book *Scratch One Dreamer*, and his later work *Taking Power*. Other records include reviews of Stein's work, assorted short story manuscripts, and the script for his play *The Hearing* which was performed on CBC Radio.

**Access:** Open

**Boxes:** B2024-0027/001(21)-(43)

## Appendix

### Series 1: Correspondence

File number	File title	Date range
B2024-0027/001(01)	Personal histories and academic record	[1960, 2000-2019]
B2024-0027/001(02)	Personal correspondence	[1960s-1980s]
B2024-0027/001(03)	Professional correspondence [Restricted]	[c. 1960s-1990s, predominantly 1970-1976]
B2024-0027/001(04)	Local press clippings and other ephemera	[c. 1960s-1990s]
B2024-0027/001(05)	Personal correspondence	1967-1970, 2008
B2024-0027/001(06)	"A Letter to the Movement" by Jerry Rubin	1969
B2024-0027/001(07)	Legal documents [Restricted]	[1969, c. 1970s]
B2024-0027/001(08)	Personal correspondence [Restricted]	[c.1970s-1980s]
B2024-0027/001(09)	Assorted correspondence [Restricted]	[c.1970s-2006]
B2024-0027/001(10)	Professional correspondence	[1972-1992]
B2024-0027/001(11)	Correspondence concerning public morality and Yonge St. development	1975-1977
B2024-0027/001(12)	Professional correspondence and transcriptions [Restricted]	[1979-201-]
B2024-0027/001(13)	Professional correspondence	1980-1984
B2024-0027/001(14)	Personal correspondence	[1983, c. 2000s]
B2024-0027/001(15)	Professional correspondence	[1984]
B2024-0027/001(16)	Reader's report on <i>Taking Power</i>	August 1991

File number	File title	Date range
B2024-0027/001(17)	Honours and tributes to Stein	2001, 2019
B2024-0027/001(18)	Fortunado vs. Oberon Press et al. libel case and settlement documents [Restricted]	2003-2004
B2024-0027/001(19)	The Writers Union of Canada meeting minutes and report, 1976	2019
B2024-0027/001(20)	Expression of condolence for David Lewis Stein from Toronto City Council	September 2019
B2024-0027/002	Certificate of Southam Newspapers Fellowship for Journalists, received by David Stein [Oversized]	1972
B2024-0027/001P	Professional portraits of David Stein	[196-]

## Series 2: Writing

File number	File title	Date range
B2024-0027/001(21)	Creative writings, including <i>Scratch One Dreamer</i> drafts	[196-]
B2024-0027/001(22)	<i>Three Short Stories</i>	[196-]
B2024-0027/001(23)	Poetry	[c. 1960s-1970s]
B2024-0027/001(24)	Writing excerpts, correspondence, and ephemera from Toronto life	[c. 1960s-2000s]
B2024-0027/001(25)	<i>Scratch One Dreamer</i> reviews [correspondence and newspaper clippings]	[1965-1967]
B2024-0027/001(26)	<i>Fourteen Short Stories</i>	[197-]
B2024-0027/001(27)	"The Coin Tossers"	[197-]
B2024-0027/001(28)	Short story drafts	[197-]
B2024-0027/001(29)	Creative writings	[c. 1970s-1980s]
B2024-0027/001(30)	"Grownups"	[c. 1970s-1980s]
B2024-0027/001(31)	Creative writings, including proposal for CBC drama	[c. 1970s-1980s]
B2024-0027/001(32)	Drafts, correspondence, and press clippings for <i>Taking Power</i> and assorted short stories	[c. 1970s-1980s]
B2024-0027/001(33)	Creative writing excerpts	[c. 1970, 1998]
B2024-0027/001(34)	"Journalism, Politics, and Pornography"	1971
B2024-0027/001(35)	Reporting notes regarding Yonge St. Mall	[1974]
B2024-0027/001(36)	<i>The Hearing</i> , play script	August 1978
B2024-0027/001(37)	<i>The Avenue</i>	[c. 1980s-1990s]
B2024-0027/001(38)	Writing drafts about Toronto life	[199-]
B2024-0027/001(39)	Writings about Toronto life, including draft of speech at Shaarei Shomayim	[199-]
B2024-0027/001(40)	<i>The Laughingstock</i> [possibly unpublished]	[c. 2000s-2010s]
B2024-0027/001(41)	Children's book about Oak Ridges Moraine, created by family for Stein's grandchildren	2001

File number	File title	Date range
B2024-0027/001 (42)	University of Toronto urban studies teaching materials and contemporary reporting	[2007-2012]
B2024-0027/001 (43)	<i>Rumours of Truth: A City Story</i>	October 2017