

∞ The Ward M. Canaday Center ∞  
for Special Collections  
The University of Toledo

Finding Aid

➤ Steve Gordon Papers, 1971-1982 ◀

MSS-123

**Size:** 1.5 linear feet

**Provenance:** Received from Steve Gordon's brother, Dr. Michael Gordon, 9 September, 1997.

**Access:** open

**Collection Summary:** Papers include screenplays related to television and film work, including the film "Arthur;" fragments of screenplays; printed materials; and photographs.

**Subjects:** [Literature](#), [Music](#), [Art](#), [Drama](#), and [Theatre](#)

**Related Collections:** Jamie Farr Papers, MSS-024, Canaday Center.

**Processing Note:**

**Copyright:** The literary rights to this collection are assumed to rest with the person(s) responsible for the production of the particular items within the collection, or with their heirs or assigns. Researchers bear full legal responsibility for the acquisition to publish from any part of said collection per *Title 17, United States Code*. The **Ward M. Canaday Center for Special Collections** may reserve the right to intervene as intermediary at its own discretion.

**Completed by:** Benjamin Grillo, October 1998; last updated: July 2014

**Steve Gordon  
Papers, 1971-1982**

**Biographical Sketch**

Steve Gordon was born in 1938 in the affluent Toledo suburb of Ottawa Hills, Ohio. After graduating Ottawa Hills High School in 1957 he elected not to heed the advice of one of his English teachers to become a writer, deciding instead to major in History and Political Science at Ohio State University, from which he graduated in 1961.

Upon graduation he moved to San Francisco, where, after a series of odd jobs, he became a successful advertising copywriter. He continued his advertising career in New York City, where, goaded by friends to back up his claims of being able to write a better play or film than the ones he watched, he wrote a play that was produced on Broadway under Carl Reiner's direction. Though the play was unsuccessful and quickly folded, the experience led Gordon to writing and directing comedy for television programs. His work appeared on such shows as "The Dick Van Dyke Show," "Chico and the Man," "Barney Miller," as well as a show of his own creation "The Practice" which ran from 1975 through 1976.

His first successful screenplay was produced in 1977 under the title "The One and Only" (originally titled "Mr. Lovely"), starring Henry Winkler. This was followed by 1981's critically and publicly acclaimed "Arthur," which Gordon wrote and directed. Starring Dudley Moore and Liza Minelli, it won two Academy Awards and brought Gordon his highest level of fame.

Tragically, a year later, in November of 1982, Steve Gordon died of a heart attack in New York City at age 44, cutting short his promising career.

**Steve Gordon  
Papers, 1971-1982**

**Scope and Content Note**

The Steve Gordon Papers, 1971-1982, are comprised primarily of typescripts for various films, plays, and television series written by Mr. Gordon. Also included is a deposition, taken in a lawsuit against Mr. Gordon, a collection of newspaper clippings related to "Arthur," a 1981 *New York Magazine*, as well as several promotional materials.

The collection is divided into three primary series. Series 1 is arranged alphabetically, while series 2 is arranged both alphabetically and chronologically. [S1] Typescripts, contains various drafts of films, television programs, and plays written by Mr. Gordon. Also included are a group of unfinished pieces of various lengths. These are grouped together and filed under the heading "Various Typescripts." [S2] Printed Materials, contains a deposition taken in a 1978 lawsuit against Mr. Gordon. Also included in this second series is a collection of newspaper clippings related to "Arthur," as well as a 1981 issue of *New York Magazine* containing an article on Gordon. [S3] Photographs, is comprised of promotional photographs taken of Gordon in 1981 in Paris, France.

**Steve Gordon  
Papers, 1971-1982**

**Series List**

**S1   Typescripts**

1971-1978, 1.2 linear feet

Arranged alphabetically

Included in this series are various typewritten drafts of films, television programs, and plays written by Mr. Gordon. Also included are a group of unfinished pieces which vary in length.

**S2   Printed Materials**

1978-1982, .2 linear feet

Arranged alphabetically and chronologically

This series includes a deposition relating to a 1978 lawsuit regarding intellectual copyright, a 1981 issue of *New York Magazine*, and a collection of newspaper clippings related to "Arthur."

**S3   Photographs**

1981, .1 linear feet

The Photographs series consists of three publicity photographs taken of Gordon in Paris, France.

Folder List

Box	Folder	Description
		<b>S1. Typescripts</b> (1.2 linear inches)
1	1	Arthur, (n.d.), (1 of 2)
	2	Arthur, (n.d.), ( 1 of 2)
	3	Big Eddy, (n.d.), (1 of 2)
	4	Big Eddy, (n.d.), (2 of 2)
	5	Charley's Back In Town, 1978
	6	Mr. Lovely, 1977, (1 of 3)
	7	Mr. Lovely, 1977, (2 of 3)
	8	Mr. Lovely, 1977, (3 of 3)
	9	Mr. Zeke, (n.d.)
		The One and Only (See Mr. Lovely, Box 1, folders 6-8)
	10	The Practice – "Carlotta", 1976
	11	The Practice – "The Doctor's Doctor", 1976
	12	The Practice – "The Dream", 1976
	13	The Practice – "Helen's Beau", 1976
	14	The Practice – "It's All in the Head", 1976
	15	The Practice – "Judy Sinclair", 1976, (1 of 2)
	16	The Practice – "Judy Sinclair", 1976, (2 of 2)
	17	The Practice – "Love and Death", 1975
	18	The Practice – "Mulligan", 1976
	19	The Practice – Revised First Draft, 1975, (1 of 4)
	20	The Practice - Revised First Draft, 1975, (2 of 4)
	21	The Practice - Revised First Draft, 1975, (3 of 4)
	22	The Practice - Revised First Draft, 1975, (4 of 4)
	23	The Roast, (n.d.)
	24	Tough to Get Help, 1971
	25	Various Unfinished Typescripts, (n.d.) (1 of 3)
	26	Various Unfinished Typescripts, (n.d.) (2 of 3)
	27	Various Unfinished Typescripts, (n.d.) (3 of 3)
		<b>S2. Printed Materials</b>
	28	Deposition, 1978
	29	<i>New York</i> Magazine Article, 1981
	30	Newspaper clippings, 1982
		<b>S3. Photographs</b>
	31	Promotional Photographs, 1981