

# Stephen Gray:

## A Preliminary Inventory of His Papers at the Harry Ransom Center

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### Descriptive Summary

<b>Creator:</b>	Gray, Stephen 1941-2020
<b>Title:</b>	Stephen Gray Papers
<b>Dates:</b>	1960-2000
<b>Extent:</b>	22 boxes (9.24 linear feet)
<b>Abstract:</b>	The papers of South African writer Stephen Gray consists of novels, plays, poetry, short stories, journalism, literary notebooks and editorial work. Also included are incoming and outgoing correspondence, interviews, speeches, and files from his college years, Chilean residence in 1968, and University of Iowa Writer's Workshops, 1966-1969.
<b>Call Number:</b>	Manuscripts Collection MS-01710
<b>Language:</b>	English
<b>Access:</b>	Open for research. Researchers must create an online Research Account and agree to the Materials Use Policy before using archival materials.
<b>Use Policies:</b>	Ransom Center collections may contain material with sensitive or confidential information that is protected under federal or state right to privacy laws and regulations. Researchers are advised that the disclosure of certain information pertaining to identifiable living individuals represented in the collections without the consent of those individuals may have legal ramifications (e.g., a cause of action under common law for invasion of privacy may arise if facts concerning an individual's private life are published that would be deemed highly offensive to a reasonable person) for which the Ransom Center and The University of Texas at Austin assume no responsibility.
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**Administrative Information**

**Preferred Citation:** Stephen Gray Papers (Manuscripts Collection MS-01710). Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin.

**Acquisition:** Purchase, 2002 (R15044)

**Processed by:** Liz Murray, 2002

**Repository:** [Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin](#)

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## Scope and Contents

This comprehensive collection of papers of the South African writer Stephen Gray comprises four decades of literary endeavor from the 1960s to 2000, including novels, plays, poetry, short stories, journalism, and editorial work. Gray arranged his papers prior to shipment to the Ransom Center and this order has been retained throughout, following his assigned headings. Often related papers and correspondence were drawn together under a single topic and were listed in detail. These descriptions are found in the first folder of each grouping. The materials are organized in three series: Series I. Works; Series II. Correspondence, 1960s-1990s; and Series III. Career-Related Material.

The works are divided into subseries by genre, reflecting the breadth of Gray's writing: Subseries A. Literary Notebooks; Subseries B. Novels; Subseries C. Plays; Subseries D. Poetry; Subseries E. Short Stories; Subseries F. Other Writings; and Subseries G. Collaborations and Projects.

The notebooks date from 1961-1994 and contain diary and travelogue entries as well as literary notes and drafts, made in locations such as Cambridge, Athens, Greece, and Bellagio. The Novels subseries contains typescript drafts and related material for *Accident of Birth*, *Born of Man*, *Caltrop's Desire*, *Drakenstein*, *Local Color*, *Necessary Evil*, *Time of Our Darkness*, *Visible People*, *War Child*, and *Yves and Johnny*.

Subseries C contains Gray's produced and unproduced plays, including "Borderlands, " adapted from Perceval Gibbon's novel; "Cold Stone Jug, " an adaptation of Herman Bosman's novel; "An Evening at the Vernes, ""Helena's Hope, Ltd. " based on Stephen Black's play; "Peepshow"; and "Schreiner: A One-woman Play, " based on the correspondence and writings of Olive Schreiner.

Gray's published and unpublished poetry is contained in Subseries D, in works such as *Appolo Café and Other Poems*; *Gabriel's Exhibition: New Poems*; "Heritage Day and Other Poems"; *Hottentot Venus and Other Poems*; *Love Poems, Hate Poems*; *Season of Violence*; *Selected Poems (1960-92)*; and "Taken. " Typescripts, reviews, and related material are present for these works. Additional poetry is found in Subseries G.

Subseries E contains Gray's short stories, from early works in the 1960s to 2001, as well as individual stories published in collections. Other writings include his journalism for *The London Magazine*, *The Weekly Mail*, *Mail & Guardian*, *The South African Review of Books*, and other magazines and newspapers; his work as editor for the periodical, *Izwi* and the collection *Picador Book of African Stories*; a contribution in *The Invisible Ghetto* on Richard Rive; and travelogues, especially "Trek with Shakespeare, " an account of Gray's involvement touring Shakespeare, 1962-1964.

Gray's work with Cecil Skotnes predominates the Collaborations and Projects subseries. Skotnes prints combine with Gray's words in works such as *The Assassination of Shaka* and *The White Monday Disaster*.

Series II. Correspondence includes both incoming and outgoing letters between Gray and Guy Butler, Nadine Gordimer, Bessie Head, Christopher Hope, Dan Jacobson, Wopko Jensma, Etienne Leroux, Douglas Livingstone, Alan Paton, Tom Raworth, Richard Rive, and David Wright. Files also exist for *Contrast*, literary agents and publishers, and Quagga Press.

The career-related material in Series III includes articles about Gray, interviews, speeches, and files from his college years, Chilean residence in 1968, and University of Iowa Writer's Workshops, 1966-1969.

The collection is in good condition except for the lingering odor of moth balls used during storage.

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## Separated Material

Sound recordings were transferred to the Ransom Center's Sound Recording collection and are described individually in a list at the end of this finding aid and in a [searchable database](#).

Books were transferred to the Ransom Center Library

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**I. Works**

## A. Literary Notebooks

Commonplace Book, 1961-1963	<b>Box 1 Folder 1</b>
Cambridge, 1962-1963	<b>Folder 2-3</b>
Mediterranean Summer, 1967	<b>Folder 4</b>
Athens, 1973	<b>Folder 5</b>
Greece, 1973	<b>Folder 6</b>
False Bay, Cape, 1974-1978	<b>Folder 7</b>
Reunion Island, 1975, 1978	<b>Folder 8</b>
False Bay, 1978-1980	<b>Box 2 Folder 1</b>
Transkei, 1981, 1986	<b>Folder 2</b>
Transkei, 1987-2000	<b>Folder 3</b>
<i>Season of Violence</i> , 1990-1992	<b>Folder 4</b>
Hawthornden, 1992	<b>Folder 5</b>
Bellagio, 1994	<b>Folder 6</b>

## B. Novels

Sketches for novels, notes	<b>Box 3 Folder 1</b>
Juvenilia, handwritten draft of first novel	<b>Folder 2</b>
<i>Accident of Birth</i> , first draft, 1990-91	<b>Folder 3-4</b>
<i>Born of Man</i> , partial handwritten draft and promotional material	<b>Folder 5</b>
<i>Caltrap's Desire</i> , typescript	<b>Folder 6-7</b>
<i>Drakenstein</i> , original handwritten draft and associated material	<b>Box 4 Folder 1-2</b>

*Local Color*

"Lynch Blinder," first final draft	<b>Box 4 Folder 3</b>
Notes, early drafts and revisions	<b>Folder 4</b>
Reviews	<b>Folder 5</b>
Author's annotated copy	<b>Folder 6</b>

*Necessary Evil*

Preliminary drafts under title "Boris," 1966-67	<b>Box 4 Folder 7</b>
Rewritten as "Joburg Gold"	<b>Box 5 Folder 1-2</b>
Original typescript	<b>Folder 3-4</b>
Rewrite sections	<b>Folder 5</b>

*Time of Our Darkness*, original draft and reviews**Folder 6-7***Visible People*

Original typescript	<b>Box 6 Folder 1-2</b>
Rewrite	<b>Folder 3-4</b>
Author's annotated copy	<b>Folder 5</b>
Reviews and associated material	<b>Folder 6</b>

*War Child*, typescript drafts**Box 7 Folder 1***Yves and Johnny*, carbon typescript**Folder  
2**

## C. Plays

"Borderlands," 1990	<b>Box 7 Folder 3</b>
"Cold Stone Jug"	<b>Folder 4-5</b>
"An Evening at the Vernes," 1973-1977	<b>Folder 6</b>

"Helena's Hope, Ltd.," adaptation	<b>Box 8 Folder 1</b>
"Oedipus Rex," directed by SG	<b>Folder 2</b>
"Peepshow"	
"Aquarium" reworked as "Peepshow," 1971	<b>Box 8 Folder 3</b>
Typescript draft	<b>Folder 4-5</b>
Reviews, publicity, production photographs	<b>Folder 6</b>
"Schreiner: A One Woman Play," clippings, programs, and production photographs	<b>Folder 7</b>

## D. Poetry

<i>Appolo Café and Other Poems</i>	<b>Box 9 Folder 1</b>
False Bay file	<b>Folder 2</b>
<i>Gabriel's Exhibition: New Poems</i>	<b>Folder 3-4</b>
"Heritage Day and Other Poems"	<b>Folder 5</b>
<i>Hottentot Venus and Other Poems</i>	<b>Folder 6</b>
<i>Love Poems, Hate Poems</i>	<b>Folder 7</b>
<i>Season of Violence</i>	<b>Box 10 Folder 1</b>
<i>Selected Poems (1960-92)</i>	<b>Folder 2</b>
"Shelley Cinema"; "Revisiting Bellagio"	<b>Folder 3</b>
"Taken"	<b>Folder 4</b>
Collected poems	<b>Folder 5-6</b>
Uncollected poems of the 1990s to 2001	<b>Folder 7</b>
Poems in serials and collected works	<b>Box 11-12</b>

## E. Short Stories

Early short stories	<b>Box 13 Folder 1</b>
Later short stories, up to 2001	<b>Folder 2</b>
"The Building Site"	<b>Folder 3-4</b>
"His Name"	<b>Folder 5</b>
"Letters to Pratt"	<b>Folder 6</b>
"Simon Gray: The Holman Candidate"	<b>Folder 7</b>

## F. Other Writings

Cuttings book, journalism, 1964-1970	<b>Box 14 Folder 1</b>
Durrell, Lawrence	<b>Folder 2</b>
<i>Human Interest and Other Pieces</i>	<b>Folder 3-4</b>
<i>Izwi/Voice/Stem</i> , SG editor, with issues 1-20	<b>Folder 5-7</b>
<i>Izwi</i> , cont'd	<b>Box 15 Folder 1</b>
<i>John Ross: The True Story</i>	<b>Folder 2-5</b>
<i>The London Magazine</i> , articles	<b>Folder 6</b>
Miscellaneous pieces, 1980-2000, reviews, articles	<b>Box 16 Folder 1-2</b>
<i>News/check</i> , articles	<b>Folder 3</b>
Open Quote, typescript	<b>Folder 4</b>
<i>The Picador Book of African Stories</i> , SG editor	<b>Folder 5-6</b>
"Richard Rive: A Memoir" in <i>The Invisible Ghetto</i>	<b>Folder 7</b>
Sea and Corsica, unpublished travelogue	<b>Box 17 Folder 1</b>



*South African Literature: An Introduction*

**Folder 2**

*The Southern African Review of Books*

**Folder  
3**

Trek with Shakespeare

**Folder 4-7**

*The Weekly Mail/Mail & Guardian, articles*

**Folder 8**

## G. Collaborations and Projects

With Cecil Skotnes

*The Assassination of Shaka*

**Box 18 Folder 1-2**

*Baudelaire's Voyage, 1975*

**Folder 3**

*Man's Gold, 1980*

**Folder 4**

*Ten Landscapes, 1976*

**Folder 5**

*The White Monday Disaster, 1974*

**Folder 6**

Burwitz, Nils

**Folder 7**

Kushlick presents Katseli, "Greece--Her Extraordinary Women"

**Folder 8**

Scarecrow, with Wilfrido C. Nolleto

**Folder  
9**

**II. Correspondence, 1960s-1990s**

1960s-1970s	<b>Box 19 Folder 1-8</b>
Butler, Guy and related correspondence	<b>Box 20 Folder 1</b>
<i>Contrast</i>	<b>Folder 2</b>
Gordimer, Nadine	<b>Folder 3</b>
Head, Bessie	<b>Folder 4</b>
Hope, Christopher	<b>Folder 5</b>
Jacobson, Dan	<b>Folder 6</b>
Jensma, Wopko	<b>Folder 7</b>
Leroux, Etienne	<b>Folder 8</b>
Literary agents and publishers	<b>Folder 9</b>
Livingstone, Douglas	<b>Folder 10-11</b>
Paton, Alan	<b>Box 21 Folder 1</b>
Publishing	<b>Folder 2</b>
Quagga Press	<b>Folder 3-4</b>
Raworth, Tom	<b>Folder 5</b>
Rive, Richard	<b>Folder 6</b>
Wright, David	<b>Folder 7</b>

### **III. Career-Related Material**

Article about SG	<b>Box 21 Folder 8</b>
Interviews	<b>Folder 9</b>
Speeches, etc.	<b>Folder 10</b>
Undergraduate days at the Univ. of Cape Town, 1960-61	<b>Folder 11</b>
Chilean residence, Sept.-Dec. 1968	<b>Box 22 Folder 1</b>
Univ. of Iowa Writer's Workshops, 1966-1969	<b>Folder 2-4</b>

### **Sound Recordings List**

- R 1108 : reel-to-reel audiotapes : Stephen Gray Recalls the Summer of 1964
- R 1109 : reel-to-reel audiotapes : Stephen Gray Reading "Sea and Corsica"
- R 1110 : reel-to-reel audiotapes : The Deserter, Radio Documentary
- R 1111 : reel-to-reel audiotapes : Radio Program
- R 1112 : reel-to-reel audiotapes : Radio Program
- R 1113 : reel-to-reel audiotapes : Stephen Gray on Voice of America