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H88-0124. Ponstein, Lambert J. (1912-2004).
Papers, 1949-1978. 0.25 linear ft.



Abstract

Graduate of Hope College in 1948; served as a professor of religion at Hope College from 1952-1976. The collection contains correspondence, memos, speeches, photographs and book reviews. Topics covered include: administrative issues, class loads, Hope College's philosophy of education, and teaching religion in public schools.

Accession No.: H88-0124
Provenance: Lambert J. Ponstein
Donor: Hope College
Photographs: 11 images
Processed by: Craig Wright, September 1992

Biography

Lambert "Bert" John Ponstein was born on March 2, 1912, in Elburg, the Netherlands, to Henry and Mrs. Ponstein. After immigrating to the United States as a young boy, he attended Grand Haven Christian School and Grand Haven High School. During his high school years, he spent many hours running a fish market in that same town. After high school and a tour in the United States Army, he attended and graduated from Hope College in 1948 with an A.B. degree. In 1952, Ponstein was granted a B.D. degree from Western Theological Seminary, a S.T.M. degree from Oberlin College in 1959, and D.Min. degree from Vanderbilt University in 1974.

Ponstein began his professional career as a teacher at Newaygo High School in 1948, where he taught English until 1949. In 1949, he joined the faculty of Hope College as a part-time speech instructor and continued in that capacity until 1952. That same year, he was licensed by the Classis of Muskegon and ordained by the Classis of Holland before joining the Bible (later religion) department at Hope College with the rank of instructor of religion and Bible. At the time, the college did not have a religion major, only a service department to the college. The department simply taught the required religion and Bible courses, three two-hour courses and one three-hour course which gave students exposure to one course a year. Once the courses were changed to two three-hour course under President Irwin Lubbers' presidential tenure, a religion major offering became available. Ponstein went on to earn the rank of assistant professor in 1955, associate professor in 1960, and professor in 1971. While at Hope College, he also served as the chairperson of the Humanities Division, member of the Public Relations Committee and Committee on Goals and Purposes, advisor to the Hope College Y.M.C.A. chapter, and debate coach and director. His scholarly work focused on religion in public schools, and writings on this subject, among others, were regularly published in *Reformed Review*, where he served as the book review editor. He retired from Hope College in October 1977.

Lambert J. Ponstein passed away on October 21, 2004.

Scope and Content

The collection contains correspondence, memos, speeches, photographs and book reviews. Topics covered include administrative issues, class loads, Hope College's philosophy of education, and teaching religion in public schools. The folders are arranged alphabetically by subject.

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