



WAYNE STATE
UNIVERSITY

Walter P. Reuther Library

Guide to the Brendan Sexton Papers LP001046

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English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Walter P. Reuther Library

5401 Cass Avenue

Detroit, MI 48202

URL: <https://reuther.wayne.edu>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Walter P. Reuther Library
Creator:	Sexton, Brendan, 1911-1988
Title:	Brendan Sexton Papers
ID:	LP001046
Date [inclusive]:	1938-1988
Physical Description:	8.5 Linear Feet (17 MB)
Language of the Material:	English
Language of the Material:	Material entirely in English.
Abstract:	Brendan Sexton held various offices in key labor organizations, including president of the New York Workers Alliance, national secretary of the Workers Defense League, regional director of United Steelworkers of America (USWA), and United Auto Workers (UAW) director of education. He served as a faculty member and advisor on labor education to numerous academic institutions, among them the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Harvard, Princeton and Cornell. Sexton's papers document his prolific career in the labor movement and the academic community, particularly relating to the UAW Education Department and his research in labor history and labor education.

Citation Style

"Brendan Sexton Papers, Box [#], Folder [#], Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University"

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History

Brendan Sexton was born in New York on June 9, 1911. Throughout his career, he held various positions with key labor organizations. Before joining the UAW, he served as president of the New York Workers Alliance, vice president of the Workers Alliance of America and national secretary of the Workers

Defense League. He was also a member of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. In 1941, Sexton joined UAW Local 50, Ford Willow Run, after four years as regional director and International representative of the United Steelworkers of America. He had become president of his local in 1947, when he was named to the first of a series of posts with the International Union. From 1949 to 1960, he was the director of education of the UAW. In 1960, Sexton was appointed coordinator of organization for the UAW. He then became director of the union staff training facility, the Leadership Studies Center. In 1968, he was appointed Director of UAW Educational Activities, which included the Family Education Center at Black Lake, Michigan, as well as the Leadership Studies Center. In addition to labor union activities, Sexton taught or lectured on labor studies at Harvard, Princeton, the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Cornell, Rutgers, and the University of California. He served on advisory committees on workers education at Cornell, Michigan State University, Roosevelt University, the University of Chicago and Wayne State University. At New York University, Sexton taught a special course with his wife, Dr. Patricia Cayo Sexton. He served as an American delegate to UNESCO's Consultative Committee on Adult Education and as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Institute of Labor Education. Sexton took leave of his UAW work several times to direct training programs for the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity and for the UAW-backed Citizens Crusade Against Poverty. He retired from the UAW in 1971, but continued and expanded his teaching activities. Throughout his career, Sexton wrote and spoke extensively on labor and union issues. He published frequently in magazines and journals and authored a book, "Blue Collars and Hard Hats," with his wife. He died in New York on January 17, 1988.

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Scope and Content

Part 1 of this collection includes material from the UAW Education Department dated from the 1950s to 1970s. Part 2 is comprised of correspondence from the 1930s to 1980s, general office files and teaching materials from the UAW and academia.

Important subjects covered in the collection are: Black Lake Family Education Center. "Eye Opener" Radio program, 1955-1960. Labor Education theory. UAW Leadership Studies Center.

Among the important correspondents are: Cesar Chavez, Dr. John A. Childs, Congressman John D. Dingell, Judah Drob, Senator Paul Douglas, James T. Farrell, Irving Howe, Lane Kirkland, Emil Mazey, Jack Rubenstein, Norman Thomas, W. Paul Tippet, Esteban Torres, Leonard Woodcock.

Part 1: Series 1, UAW Education Department, 1955-1972, Boxes 1-3: Correspondence, radio scripts and other materials relating to the UAW Education Department.

Part 2: Series 2, Correspondence, 1938-1988, Boxes 4-5: Personal and business correspondence spanning Sexton's entire career. Also, sympathy cards and letters received by his wife after his death.

Series 3, General Office Files, Boxes 5-11: Articles, speeches and notes written by Sexton. Clippings and materials from committees served on as Reuther representative.

Series 4, UAW Education Department, Boxes 11-14: Teaching materials produced by the department, background materials and Black Lake operations.

Series 5, University Classes, Boxes 15-17: Sexton's lecture notes, teaching materials, student papers and transcripts of guest speakers' remarks.

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Arrangement

Part 1: Arranged in 1 series. Series 1 (Box 1). Files are arranged alphabetically by subject.

Part 2: Arranged in 4 series. Series 2 (Boxes 4-5), Series 3 (Boxes 5-11), Series 4 (Boxes 11-14), Series 5 (Boxes 15-17). Files are arranged alphabetically.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Revision Description

Additional materials were added to the collection. 1988-10

Acquisition

The papers of Brendan Sexton were placed in the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in May 1981 by Brendan Sexton and opened for research in August 1983. Additional papers were placed in the Archives by his wife, Dr. Patricia Cayo Sexton, in February 1988 and opened for research in October 1988.

Processing History

Processed and finding aid written by Walter P. Reuther Library in August 1983 and revised in October 1988. Finding aid revised and updated September 2020.

Access

Collection is open for research.

Use

Refer to the Walter P. Reuther Library "Rules for Use of Archival Materials."

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Related Materials

Transfers

Approximately 100 photographs relating to Brendan Sexton and various UAW functions and 25 transparencies of an art mural have been placed in the Reuther Audiovisual Collection. Material received and placed in the Reuther library include numerous labor magazines, newspapers and pamphlets, Union publications and government documents, many with articles written by Brendan Sexton, as well as two copies of "Blue Collars and Hard Hats," by Patricia Cayo Sexton and Brendan Sexton, New York: Random House, circa 1971.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Labor education
- Labor unions
- Labor -- History
- International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America

Collection Inventory

Part 1

Series 1: UAW Education Department, 1955-1972

Scope and Contents

Correspondence, scripts for the UAW Radio Broadcast, "Eye Opener", materials from the Leadership Studies Center and items relating to the Education Department. Files are arranged alphabetically by subject.

Title/Description	Instances	
Correspondence, 1949-1958	box 1	folder 1-2
Eye Opener; Index	box 1	folder 3
Eye Opener, 1955 January-October	box 1	folder 4-13
Eye Opener, 1955 November-1957 March	box 2	folder 1-13
Eye Opener, 1957 April-1960 January	box 3	folder 1-7
UAW Educational Conference; James T. Farrell interview	box 3	folder 8
UAW Education Department; Effective Writing, 1972	box 3	folder 9
UAW Leadership Studies Center; evaluation, 1966 June	box 3	folder 10
UAW Leadership Studies Center; manual	box 3	folder 11-16
Union Leadership Academy; program	box 3	folder 17

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Part 2

Series 2: Correspondence, 1938-1988

Scope and Contents

Primarily business correspondence spanning Mr. Sexton's entire spectrum of professional positions and activities. Some personal correspondence included in the earliest years. Sympathy letters and cards written to his wife, on his death and the published obituaries on Mr. Sexton are included in 1988. Files are arranged alphabetically.

Title/Description	Instances	
Correspondence, 1938-1939, 1940s, 1951-1973	box 4	folder 1-13
Correspondence, undated and 1974-1988	box 5	folder 109
Sympathy cards, letters, obituaries	box 5	folder 10-11

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Series 3: General Office Files

Scope and Contents

Articles written by Mr. Sexton, both published and unpublished, with notes, on labor issues, labor personalities, labor history and his own reminiscences. Speeches, with notes, given by Mr. Sexton on labor issues to a wide range of audiences. Transcripts of interviews given by Mr. Sexton on labor issues and labor history. Also records of his association, as a UAW representative, with a variety of political and cultural organizations.

Title/Description	Instances	
Appointment books, 1950, 1953-1955	box 5	folder 12
Appointment books, 1955-1960, 1965, 1967-1970	box 6	folder 1-3
Articles, proposals, position papers, 1955, 1959, 1962-1965	box 6	folder 4-7
Articles, proposals, position papers, undated and 1965-1971, 1973, 1978-1979	box 7	folder 1-18
Book notes	box 7	folder 19
Book review of Burt Cochran's Labor and Communism, by Carl Shier	box 8	folder 1
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), District 37, survey and report, 1982	box 8	folder 2-5
Ford Willow Run, UAW Local 50	box 8	folder 6
Name and address lists	box 8	folder 7
National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), 1963-1964	box 8	folder 8-9
National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), Expansion Arts Program Evaluations, 1973-74, 1976-77, 1982-83	box 8	folder 10-18
Newspaper clippings, magazine articles, 1936, 1939, 1940s	box 9	folder 1
Newspaper clippings, magazine articles, The Bombardier, 1945 May-June	box 9	folder 2
Newspaper clippings, magazine articles, 1947, 1949	box 9	folder 3
Newspaper clippings, magazine articles, The Distributor, 1947	box 9	folder 4
Newspaper clippings, magazine articles, undated and 1950-1988	box 9	folder 5-14
Plant floor plan	box 10	folder 1
Sexton's resumes	box 10	folder 2
Speech notes	box 10	folder 3-6
Speeches and interviews, undated and 1951-1963, 1967, 1974, 1978-1979	box 10	folder 7-19

Thomas-Debs Award Dinner, 1972 April 16	box 11	folder 1
UAW Pictorial History, copy of final draft	box 11	folder 2
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Adult Education, 1951 November 5-9	box 11	folder 3-5

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Series 4: UAW Education Department

Scope and Contents

Teaching and training materials produced by the Education department and the UAW Leadership Studies Center. Background materials used to develop the curriculum and the teaching methods. Some material on the early functioning of the Black Lake Family Education Center.

Title/Description	Instances	
Actuarial Valuation of 1965 UAW Staff Pension Plans	box 11	folder 6
Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU), draft of orientation kit for new staff representatives	box 11	folder 7-11
ACTWU, J.P. Stevens' Company organizing project	box 11	folder 12-14
Black Lake, Intern's report paper	box 11	folder 15
Black Lake, newsletters, 1983 November, 1985 Summer	box 11	folder 16
Canadian labor education information	box 12	folder 1
European labor information	box 12	folder 2
Film scripts	box 12	folder 3-4
"The General Motors and Ford Images," Section 4 by Louis Harris and Associates	box 12	folder 5
Guide for Education Committee Chairmen, 1973	box 12	folder 6-8
Group Insurance Bargaining, Units I-IV	box 12	folder 9-16
Hospital Employer's Campaign	box 13	folder 1-6
Industrial Relations Curriculum Unit, Portland (Oregon) Public Schools, 1955	box 13	folder 7
Labor Economics Workshop, 1977	box 13	folder 8-9
Leadership Studies Center, handouts and notes	box 13	folder 10
Newark, New Jersey, Community Union Organizers, training classes	box 13	folder 11
Principles of Collective Bargaining, 1976	box 13	folder 12-15
Programmed instruction booklets	box 13	folder 16

Residential Study Institutes for Trade Union Staff, report, 1963	box 13	folder 17-19
Service Employees International Union (SEIU), The Organizing Campaign (incomplete copy)	box 14	folder 1-7
The Simulated Union, Local 100	box 14	folder 8-10
Statistical information and union public relations sheets	box 14	folder 11-12
Swedish labor information	box 14	folder 13
Tax clinic organizing kit	box 14	folder 14
UAW-International Executive Board (IEB) Committee on Education, report and notes	box 14	folder 15
UAW Organizing Department, Organizing Seminar, 1978 April 16-21	box 14	folder 16-20

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Series 5: University Classes

Scope and Contents

Mr. Sexton's lecture notes, teaching materials, and students' papers from labor studies classes. Lecture notes include critiques of literature from labor point of view and personal anecdotes of union experiences. Also the transcripts of speeches by nine guest speakers, from various unions, on the "Contemporary Trade Union Movement", with question and answer periods.

Title/Description	Instances	
Background papers, 1981	box 15	folder 1-3
Classroom lecture notes	box 15	folder 4-8
Contemporary Trade Union Movement, Cornell University, N.Y. State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, 1979	box 15	folder 9-16
Contemporary Trade Union Movement, 1979	box 16	folder 1-11
CWA Staff Trainee Program, Rutgers University, 1962	box 16	folder 12
Labor, Manpower and Urban Affairs	box 16	folder 13
Labor Workshop II, 1975	box 16	folder 14-15
Metropolitan Studies, New York University	box 17	folder 1
Surface Transportation, Metropolitan Studies Senior Seminar, New York University, 1974	box 17	folder 2-9
Working Class Experience, Cornell University, New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, 1979	box 17	folder 10-16

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