Introducing the New Director of the Walter P. Reuther Library

Dr. Beth Myers

This September the Reuther Library welcomed its new director, Beth Myers, PhD. Myers comes to the Reuther from Loyola University Chicago, where she served as the director of the Women and Leadership Archives for five years.

Myers received both her master’s degree and doctorate in history from Loyola University Chicago, in which she focused on 20th century American history, public history, and women’s history and gender studies. Having already held a “sampler plate” of positions at various Chicago area archives, Myers received two competing job offers following the completion of her program: a traditional academic position, and the opportunity to lead the Women and Leadership Archives at her alma mater. She has no doubt she made the correct career decision. With a “fleet of incredible assistants, students, and volunteers,” Myers worked to gain physical and intellectual control over the WLA collections, conducted extensive outreach to raise the archives’ profile, and enjoyed the privilege of establishing relationships with donors.

Myers’ research interests include women’s archives, the relevancy of archives in the digital age, and exploring issues of power, access and ethics in archives and archival collections. In addition to participating in the 2010 Archives Leadership Institute, Myers is an active member of the Society of American Archivists, the Midwest Archives Conference, and the Chicago Area Archivists.

When asked why she wanted to come to the Reuther, Myers responded, “Why wouldn’t I? It’s the dream job. It’s so well known and respected, such a venerable institution.” In the near term, Myers will be looking inward at the Reuther to better understand its staff, systems, and ongoing projects and relationships. In addition to working with the Reuther’s existing donors and partners, she hopes to further its community outreach activities, raising the profile of the Reuther both on campus and off. She also is looking forward to engaging with the Reuther staff in inclusive and open strategic planning. “We know what the Reuther is and what it’s done,” Myers notes. The strategic planning process will allow the staff to explore “what we can be and where we want to be in the future.”

During her short time at the Reuther, Myers has enjoyed getting to know the staff, learning the layout and quirks of the building, and embracing Detroit. “I like Detroit,” Myers muses. “It is urban, but it’s a different kind of urban. It has all the benefits of an urban city without the density.” An avid gardener, Myers is happy to have more space to spread out with her husband, Ryan, and young daughter, Quinn.

Reuther Microfilms Rare Publications

**Emancipator and American Pressman**


The *American Pressman* is the official journal of the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants’ Union of North America (IPPAU). IPPAU was organized in 1889 when disgruntled pressmen left the International Typographical Union (ITU) to form a new pressmen’s union, and was at one point the largest printing trades union in the world. In 1973, IPPAU merged with the International Stereotypers’, Electrotypers’, and Platemakers’ Union of North America (ISE&PU) to form the International Printing and Graphic Communications Union (IPGCU). The IPGCU ultimately became part of the Graphic Communications Conference (GCC) under the International continued on page 3
Mildred Jeffrey worked as an organizer for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, as a consultant to the War Labor Board, as Director of the United Auto Workers (UAW) Women’s Bureau, and as Director for UAW Community Relations and Consumer Affairs Departments. Ms. Jeffrey was also active in the Democratic Party and was a founding member and chair of the National Organization of Women’s (NOW) political arm, the National Women’s Political Caucus. Part 2 of the Mildred Jeffrey Papers primarily addresses the last 30 years of her life, from the 1970s until 2004. During those years, Jeffrey became an activist in the many social and political movements of the time, including women’s rights, civil rights, reproductive rights, and peace. Her papers include documents and correspondence from the many national and Michigan-based organizations in which she was involved, as well as wide ranging correspondence with family, friends, colleagues, politicians, several presidents, and members of the Kennedy family.

David Bonior Papers, Part 1
1976-2002, bulk 1990-2002 [44.5 linear feet]
https://www.reuther.wayne.edu/node/8185

David Bonior was a Michigan State Representative from 1973 to 1976, and a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1976 to 2002, where he served as Democratic Whip from 1991 until his retirement. Bonior was born in Detroit and raised in Hamtramck. He received his BA at the University of Iowa and his MA at Chapman University. After college, he worked as a probation officer in Detroit before serving in the Air Force from 1968 to 1972. Upon returning, he was elected to the Michigan legislature, and in 1976 he was elected to the U.S. House. He was well known for his advocacy on behalf of minorities, the environment, working people, and Vietnam veterans. He left Congress in an unsuccessful bid for Governor of Michigan in 2001 and 2002. Following his gubernatorial campaign, Bonior taught Labor Studies at Wayne State University and chaired the American Rights at Work organization. Part 1 of the David Bonior Papers includes documents relating to his activities in the 10th and 12th Congressional districts of Michigan during his years in Congress, as well as his run for Governor. The collection focuses mainly on social, labor, and environmental issues in Michigan.

ALPA Steward and Stewardess Division Records
1949-1977 [22 linear feet]
https://www.reuther.wayne.edu/node/8612

Formed in 1960, the Steward and Stewardess (S&S) Division of ALPA represented flight attendants in a number of legal battles based on age and sex discrimination, and also fought for stewardesses to have a more active and involved role in air safety. Highlights of the collection include the S&S Division successfully assisting stewardesses in combating company policies that forced retirement at age 32-35, at marriage, or when flight attendants had children. Also of interest is the large amount of correspondence between local councils and the vice-president of the division documenting the day-to-day issues of stewardesses including grievances, problems with airline management, uniform and appearance issues, safety, and organizing efforts. The collection includes governing minutes at both the local and national levels, negotiation records and agreements, publications, and correspondence.

AFSCME Communications Department Records
1967-2002 [100 linear feet; 34 posters; 37 videos]
https://www.reuther.wayne.edu/node/8730

The 1954 AFSCME Convention passed Resolution 14, establishing a Publications and Public Relations Department. This new department would continue to publish the AFSCME magazine and other materials, take on new media public relations duties, and would, importantly, provide skilled public relations professionals in the field. The new department was created in 1956. The name was changed to the Public Affairs Department in 1971 and again to the Communications Department in 2011. The AFSCME Communications Department Records document public activities of the Department, AFSCME International, and AFSCME officials. Records include speech transcripts, press releases, surveys and polls, documents related to AFSCME biennial conventions, publications, meeting minutes, and clippings. Most notably, over half of the collection is comprised of audiovisual material, with over 45 linear feet of photographs, slides, and negatives, and approximately 10 linear feet of audio and video recordings and posters.

More Newly Opened Collections

Labor:
ALPA Governing Bodies: Executive Board
ALPA Governing Bodies: Executive Council
ALPA Governing Bodies: Executive Committee
ALPA President’s Department Records, Part 1
Milton Tambor Papers
Herman Rehbn Papers
Herman Wolf Papers, Part 2
National Policy Association Records
UFW Montreal Boycott Records
Newspaper Guild Local 22: Detroit Records
Dearborn Federation of Teachers: AFT Local 681 Records
UAW President’s Office: Howard Young Records
Hy Fish Papers
Irving Richter Papers, Part 2
Mike Hamlin and Joan Castle Papers

Urban:
Rachel Boone Keith Papers
National Council of Jewish Women Records, Part 3
Al Fishman Papers, Part 2
International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit Records

University Archives

The University Archives collection of Wayne State University yearbooks spans 105 years, from the 1900 Detroit College of Medicine Souvenir Annual to the 2005 Wayne State University Warrior. This collection includes more than 140 volumes, including the yearbooks of the Law School, the School of Medicine, the College of Pharmacy, the Department of Mortuary Science, and Wayne State’s predecessor schools. These books are open for viewing in the Reuther Library Reading Room. A project to scan these yearbooks and make them available on the Reuther’s website is now underway. The scanned yearbooks can be found at https://reuther.wayne.edu/taxonomy/term/1441. A complete list of the Wayne State University Yearbook Collection can be found at https://reuther.wayne.edu/node/7446.

University Archives

Collections Now Open for Research

AFSCME Communications Department Records
Another test case was required to hammer out these policies, for working with the DLI to create more such projects utilizing the Reuther Library. The AFT’s narrative in the media that teachers’ unions existed solely as obstinate impediments to education reform. AFT’s history tells a very different story, as for years its members and leaders have initiated reforms in the areas of peer review, career development, wages, and shared decision-making and management. With its archivist, Dan Golodner, AFT decided to create a Web site to host historic, primary documents from its vast archives at the Reuther Library that illustrate AFT-led efforts at education reform. This site would provide documentary evidence in the debate over education reform.

In March 2010, Golodner reached out to the Wayne State University Library System’s Digital Library Initiatives (DLI) team for help. He described the project’s goals to the DLI’s Jon McGlone. Together, they felt this was a good project to test two things: collaboration between the Reuther and the Library System; and Omeka, a new open source platform for displaying Web exhibits and digital collections in which the Library System was interested.

Golodner selected documents dating back to the early 1980s from the national headquarters’ records and from the collections of AFT affiliates, as well as from various AFT-related personal collections. He then hired Archivist Technician Jen Dawson to scan the documents. Dawson worked with the DLI to add metadata to the documents, and McGlone implemented Omeka for displaying them. The result, the digital collection American Federation of Teachers: Antecedents to Education Reform Historical Collection, went live in July 2011 and the collection continues to grow. The result can be viewed at http://dlxs.lib.wayne.edu/aft/

The collaboration with the Library System proved successful, and the Reuther Library formed an ad hoc Digital Projects Committee to standardize and streamline procedures for working with the DLI to create more such projects utilizing the Reuther’s collections. The Committee decided that another test case was required to hammer out these policies, and chose to create a Web exhibit about the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike led by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), another of the Reuther Library’s major donor unions. It was at this strike that Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated.

This topic was chosen not only because of its general interest and the supporting documentation available in the AFSCME collection, but also because the Reuther Library had created a physical and Web exhibit on this topic in 2003. Much of the material was already digitized, and much of the text was already written. Significant work was required to attach appropriate metadata to the documents, add information to update the narrative, and address copyright issues, but the committee had a nice head start from the work done in 2003.

Golodner, who had curated the 2003 exhibit, and Johanna Russ, AFSCME Archivist, worked together to select images and documents, describe them with metadata, and enhance the exhibit with a resources list, an introductory essay, and video clips from a 2003 symposium hosted by the Reuther. Golodner and Russ then worked with the Library System’s Meghan Finch and Joshua Neds-Fox on metadata issues and site design. The Web-exhibit I AM A Man went live in April 2012 on the 44th anniversary of King’s assassination. It can be accessed at http://dlxs.lib.wayne.edu/iamaaman/.

More Wayne State University Newly Opened Collections:

The Robert L. Millendar Sr. Memorial Fund Inc. Records
WSU Salary Reports
WSU Student Organization Rosters
Katherine Chamberlain Papers
Helen T. Suchara Papers
Bernice Kaplan Papers
Faculty and staff directories, 1928-2011
Wayne State University Press. Editorial Board. Minutes and reports
Alexander Rose III. Letters
Alton Robert Taylor Professional Papers
WSU. President’s Reports, 1939-2007
WSU. Financial Reports
WSU. Annual Reports
WSU. Wayne State Magazine
WSU. Law School. Student directories, 1956-1993
WSU. Faculty and Staff Handbooks, 1950-1978
WSU. School of Medicine. StudentDirectories
WSU. WDET. Program guides and publications

Meet The New SEIU Archivist
Alexandra Orchard

Alexandra Orchard joined the staff of the Reuther Library in October 2012 as the new SEIU archivist. Being a long-time member of the Wayne State University community and having a family history in the labor movement, Orchard is looking forward to supporting the missions of the Reuther and SEIU. She hopes to build on the work of SEIU’s previous archivist, Louis Jones. In addition to ensuring that the SEIU archival collections are well maintained, well known, and accessible to researchers, Orchard also plans to work with SEIU and the Reuther to implement new archival projects and initiatives. Orchard is no stranger to Wayne State University. In addition to completing significant coursework in computer science, she also received her Bachelor of Arts in English, Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting, and her Master of Library and Information Science from the university. While pursuing her MLS, Orchard successfully completed archives practicums and internships at the University of Michigan Special Collections Library and Allied Vaughn, where she helped to process the records of the Livonia Youth Symphony Orchestra before being hired as an indexer. She also served as the first president of the WSU Student Chapter of the National Digital Stewardship Alliance, reflecting her interests in digital preservation, particularly permanent metadata attachment, archival standards, and integrating traditional formats with electronic/digital media. Prior to pursuing a career in archives, Orchard was a user interface designer and user experience designer for TiVo and JSTOR.
Field Archivist at Work
Louis Jones

In February, Louis Jones became the Reuther Library’s Field Archivist, after having served as the SEIU Archivist for almost 19 years. The role of a field archivist is to identify collections that could be valuable to researchers and to negotiate with donors to place those records in the archives. The tools of Jones’ trade as field archivist include: tracking down leads provided by colleagues, interacting with researchers who might know of collections in need of an archival home; attending events or meetings of prospective collection donors; meeting donors at their homes or over dinner; and giving them tours of our facilities. Consistent with the Reuther’s mission, Jones focuses on collecting organizational records and personal papers documenting the American labor movement, related reform movements, social welfare, health care, politics, civil rights, women’s rights, and metropolitan Detroit social communities.

Since starting his position as field archivist, Jones has been working with donors to secure many exciting new collections at the Reuther. Among them are the records of the Economic Development Corporation of Greater Detroit, an organization that provided support to Detroit-based minority owned businesses. The collection was donated by Mike Weston, who served on the Reuther’s Board of Directors from 2010-2011, as President-Elect 2011-2012, and finally, this year, as President-Elect 2011-2012, and finally, this year, she began her first term as MAA President, which will last until 2014. Her goal is to build on existing partnerships and develop additional collaborative opportunities to expand educational programming for the membership. To that end, MAA partnered with the Historical Society of Michigan in the fall of 2012 to produce a workshop on budget-friendly exhibits. Kristen has also been very involved with AAUP-AFT Local 6075. Since 2009, she has been the AAUP-AFT Council Representative for the Reuther Library. In this capacity, she assists Reuther staff with questions or concerns about the Union or the contract, advocating for Reuther staff to understand and utilize their contractual rights. She also reviews the unit factors and bylaws to ensure they are current, verifies that contractual committees are in place, and coordinates the procedures for staff applying for Employment Security Status and promotion.

In 2011, her work for the Union extended beyond the walls of the Reuther when she was elected as chair of the AAUP-AFT Council. Under her leadership in the past year, the Council has done a tremendous amount of work preparing for the 2012 contract negotiations with Wayne State University administration.

Kristen Chinery is Librarian of the Reuther Library. The Library collection is comprised of an estimated 3,000-5,000 linear feet of records, including 12,000 periodical and publication titles, a substantial vertical file system, and tens of thousands of union contracts, pamphlets, booklets, and theses—the secondary sources related to our primary source archival collections. As if that weren’t a big enough job, Kristen has long been involved in archival and union work outside of her job at the Reuther, and this year, that work culminated in high-level positions in the Michigan Archival Association (MAA) and in the union that represents Reuther staff and other professors and academic staff at Wayne State, AAUP-AFT Local 6075.

In addition to presenting at MAAs annual conference, Kristen began working for MAAs committees back in 2005. She served on the Auditing Committee 2005-2007, on the Program Committee 2007-2008, on the Local Arrangements Committee in 2010, and on the Nominating Committee in 2012. She has gone even farther by also being elected to serve on the MAA Executive Board as Treasurer 2007-2011, as Area Vice-President 2010-2011, as President-Elect 2011-2012, and finally, this year, she began her first term as MAA President, which will last until 2014. Her goal is to build on existing partnerships and develop additional collaborative opportunities to expand educational programming for the membership. To that end, MAA partnered with the Historical Society of Michigan in the fall of 2012 to produce a workshop on budget-friendly exhibits. Kristen has also been very involved with AAUP-AFT Local 6075. Since 2009, she has been the AAUP-AFT Council Representative for the Reuther Library. In this capacity, she assists Reuther staff with questions or concerns about the Union or the contract, advocating for Reuther staff to understand and utilize their contractual rights. She also reviews the unit factors and bylaws to ensure they are current, verifies that contractual committees are in place, and coordinates the procedures for staff applying for Employment Security Status and promotion.

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Please visit our Blog for collection spotlights: http://www.reuther.wayne.edu/blogarchive

For more Reuther updates, like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/reutherlib

Follow our AFSCME Archivist on Twitter: http://twitter.com/@AFSCMEArchivist

Please note: Our Reading Room hours have changed.

Wayne State University
Walter P. Reuther Library
5401 Cass Avenue
Detroit, MI 48202

GENERAL INFORMATION

Reading Room hours:
Monday-Friday
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
2:00 - 4:00 PM By Appointment Only

Audiovisual:
By Appointment Only

Phone: 313.577.4024
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