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for Special Collections
The University of Toledo

Finding Aid

➤ Jan Waggoner Suter Papers, 1954-1985◀
MSS-059

Size: 7 linear feet

Provenance: Marianne G. Nierling

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Completed by: Paul M. Gifford, August 1987, and Emily M. Carter, April 1990. Updated by Tamara Jones and Arjun Sabharwal, September 2009

Introduction

This collection consists largely of newsletters and circulars issued by pacifist, anti-war, and homosexual rights organization, as well as correspondence and miscellany relating to Jan W. Suter's activity involving those issues. Most material dates from 1969 to 1980, although some material from 1959 to 1961, including his early pacifist activity in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and from other years in the general time span is contained in the collection. The collection would be especially useful for those studying the history of the anti-war movement, draft counseling, the gay rights movement, and the "counterculture," in general, in Toledo and in Ohio during the 1960's and 1970's.

The entire collection is now open to researchers. The only original exception was a single folder containing Suter's "Gay Hotline" telephone counseling notebook. Due to the sensitive and personal nature of the material in that folder, it was closed to researchers until 1997.

Biographical Outline

- 1938, March 14. Born in Toledo, son of Walter L. and Genevieve Suter.
1955. Graduated from Maumee High School.
- 1955-1962. Student at Harvard College.
- 1960, Mar. Married Patsy.
- 1962-1963. Took education classes at Bowling Green State University.
1963. A.B. (Mathematics), Harvard College.
- 1963-1964. Taught high school English.
- 1965-1967. Mathematics instructor, Eisenhower Junior High School, Oregon, Ohio.
- 1967-1968. Student at Notre Dame University.
1968. M.S. (Mathematics), Notre Dame University.
- 1968-1985. Instructor, Community and Technical College, University of Toledo.
- 1969-1973. Counselor, Toledo Area Draft Information and Counseling Service, Toledo Area Council of Churches.
1971. Joined Society of Friends.
- 1974-1975. On policy Committee, Friends Committee on National Legislation.
- 1976, Feb. His marriage dissolved.
1983. Resigned from Dayton Regional Personnel Committee, American Friends service Committee. Had been Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Representative since 1981.
- 1986, May 7. Died in Toledo, Ohio.

Scope and Content Note

Jan Waggoner Suter thought of himself as a “radical libertarian” and a “socialist anarchist.” Although he earned a living for sixteen years as a mathematics instructor at the Community and Technical College of the University of Toledo, his real interest lay in pacifism and nonviolent change and, after 1975, in gay rights. He had associated himself with Quakers and with pacifist activities in his student days at Harvard and increased his participation in Quaker religious, social, and political affairs after he formally became a member in 1971. Suter belonged to a large number of national and local pacifist, anti-Vietnam War, and anti-draft organizations. For the most part, he played the role of a passive, dues-paying member, but he did take part in policy-making activities in some cases.

Much of this collection contains newsletters, memoranda, circulars, and flyers issued by these organizations. A fair proportion consists of literature in broadside form published by such organizations as the War Resisters League, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the American Friends Service Committee, and the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, which Suter distributed to those he counseled in his capacity as draft counselor and to the public. He was something of a pamphleteer himself; although he rarely wrote the words he had printed on flyers, he frequently reprinted them from such sources as *Win* magazine. The bulk of the collection, then, consists of such secondary material, though it does have primary evidentiary value as examples of weaponry for the local anti-war and anti-draft movement in Toledo.

Material reflecting local activity probably holds the greatest value for researchers. Suter took an active role in the Draft Information and Counseling Service of the Toledo Area Council of Churches. Minutes of the meetings of the service date from 1969 to 1972 and provide a good record of the Service’s activities. Other files consist of the Service’s publicity and Suter’s notes made in counseling individuals. This service, although ostensibly not political, pacifist, or anti-war, was staffed mainly by anti-war clergymen. Besides the files labeled “Toledo Area Draft Information and Counseling Service,” the correspondence files contain much material generated by this activity.

Toledo anti-war materials include those files pertaining to the Toledo Committee for a Reasonable Settlement in Vietnam, 1966-1967; Peace Action Council of Toledo, 1968-1970; Toledo Coalition; Interfaith Justice and Peace Center, Sylvania, Ohio; Northwest Ohio Nuclear Freeze Campaign; and Fellowship of Reconciliation, Toledo Chapter. Other local materials can be found in files of Fellowship of Reconciliation; Indochina Peace Campaign; Ohio Council of Churches; Ohio Draft Counseling Association; Ohio Military Project; Ohio Peace Action Council; Ohioans for a Reasonable Settlement in Vietnam; and Vietnam Summer in Ohio. The files of the American Friends Service committee also relate to local activities.

An interest related to his anti-draft feelings was in prisoner support and visitation. Suter maintained a correspondence with several Federal prisoners in the early 1970s, and these letters are in the correspondence files. Other files concerned with this activity include Prisoner Visitation and Support and Federal Correctional Institution, Milan, Michigan.

Suter's Quaker activities can be found in the Society of Friends series. This includes files pertaining to the American Friends Service Committee; Toledo Friends Meeting; Friends Committee for National Legislation; and Friends for Gay and Lesbian Concerns. The content of the files tends to be of a political, rather than purely religious, nature. Suter served on the Policy Committee of the Friends Committee of National Legislation, and its minutes from the years 1974 and 1975 are included. Much of the material in this series consists of notices of local meetings, of regional and national conferences, and "testimony" of other Friends prepared for general distribution.

From 1975 until his death, Suter, now an avowed homosexual, concerned himself primarily with gay and gay rights activities. The gay rights series includes files pertaining to gay organizations and activities, most of them in Toledo. The major organization in Toledo was the Personal Rights Organization. Its files contain notices of the group's activities, such as dances, religious services, visiting speakers; a newsletter, 1974 to 1983; and files pertaining to its telephone counseling service, of which Suter was a prime mover. One folder containing certain counseling material has been deemed too sensitive for public use. It is closed to researchers until 1997. Other Toledo gay material includes files pertaining to Dignity Toledo, a Catholic organization; Toledo Gay Community Center; Ohio Gay Rights Coalition; and the Gay Student Association at the University of Toledo. Suter was instrumental in organizing the last-named group; its file is contained in the University of Toledo series. Significant material can also be found in the Friends for Gay and Lesbian Concerns files; the views on homosexuality which Suter and other gay Quakers shared did not meet the approval of the Society of Friends in general.

Finally, the collection contains other material on the history of the "counterculture" in Toledo. Although not as developed as in other larger, or academic, American communities, local versions of national trends can be seen in the files of the Earth Food Co-op, Free University of Greater Toledo, and Students for a Democratic Society, Toledo Chapter.

Box and Folder Inventory

Box	Folder	Arrangement
		Correspondence
1	1	1959-1971
	2	1972-1973
	3	1974-1976
	4	1977-1985
	5	<i>The Collegian</i>
	6	Society of Friends
	7	<i>Win</i>
	8	Personal – miscellaneous
		Anti-war/peace activity
	9	Ad Hoc Coalition for a New Foreign Policy
	10	Ad Hoc Toledo Committee for the International Days of Protest
	11	Amnesty (topical)
	12	Another Mother for Peace
	13	<i>Anti-Brass</i>
	14	Anti-Vietnam War – miscellaneous
	15	Archdiocese of Detroit – Commission for World Justice and Peace
	16	<i>Camp News</i> , 2:1 (Feb. 13, 1971) – 3:3 (Mar. 15, 1972)
	17	Campaign for a Democratic Foreign Policy
		Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors
	18	General
	19	Memoranda
	20	Draft Counselor's Manual
	21	Military Counselor's Manual
	22	Military Counselor's Directory
	23	Western Region – General
	24	<i>News Notes</i> , 21: 3,4 (May-Aug. 1969) – 28:1 (Winter 1976) <i>Newsletter on Military Law and Counseling</i>
	25	2:1 (Apr. 1970) – 3:10 (Mar. 1972)
	26	4:1 (Apr. 1972) – 5:8 (Jan. 1974)
	27	1975 – 1977
	28	Chicago Area Draft Resisters (CADRE)
		Clergy and Laity Concerned
	29	Folder 1
	30	Folder 2
2	1	Coalition to Stop Funding the War
	2	Committee for Nonviolent Action
	3	<i>Counterdraft</i> , 1:1 (Jan. 1968) – 3:5 (Mar. – May 1970)

		Draft
	4	Compulsory Work Program (I-W) 1968-1969
	5	Conscientious Objector Program (I-A-O) 1969
	6	Emigration to Canada
	7	Miscellaneous I
	8	Miscellaneous II
	9	Prison
	10	Religious pamphlets
	11	Religious miscellaneous (Religious II)
	12	Episcopal Peace Fellowship
	13	<i>Equity</i> (newsletter)
		Fellowship of Reconciliation
		General
	14	Folder 1
	15	Folder 2
	16	Boston, Massachusetts, 1954-1957
	17	Junior ROTC material
	18	Ohio
	19	Toledo
	20	Help Unsell the War
		Indochina Peace Campaign
	21	General
	22	National Planning Conference on Indochina, Oct. 26-28, 1973, Dayton, Ohio
	23	Ohio Newsletter, 1974
	24	Interfaith Justice and Peace Center (Sylvania, Ohio)
	25	Michigan Council to Repeal the draft
	26	Michigan Draft Information Exchange
		Midwest Committee for Conscientious Objectors
	27	General
	28	Draft Counseling Memos
		Midwest Committee for Draft Counseling Newsletter
	29	1969 – 1970
	30	1971 – 1974
	31	Midwest Committee for Military Counseling
	32	National Committee to defend the Rights of South Vietnamese Students
	33	National Council Against Conscription
	34	National Council for Universal and Unconditional Amnesty
		National Council to Repeal the Draft
	35	General
	36	Newsletter
		National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors
	37	General
3	1	Conscientious Objector Service

	2	National Mobilization Committee to End the war in Vietnam
	3	National Service Board for Religious Objectors
	4	New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam
	5	Northwest Ohio Nuclear Freeze Campaign
	6	Ohio Council of churches General
	7	Task Force on Improving Draft Counseling
	8	Ohio Draft Counseling Association – Newsletter
	9	Ohio Military Project - <i>OMP Reporter</i>
	10	Ohio Peace Action Council General
	11	<i>Ohio Peace Action News</i> , 1:1 (Nov. 1967) – 1:8 (Aug. – Sept. 1968)
	12	<i>OPAC Newsletter</i> , 1 (Apr., 12, 1969) – 12 (Apr. 10, 1970)
	13	Ohioans for a Reasonable Settlement in Vietnam
	14	Peace Action Council of Toledo (1968 – 1970)
	15	Peacemakers General <i>The Peacemaker</i>
	16	11:5 (Mar. 31, 1958) – 13:11 (Aug. 13, 1960)
	17	23:11 (Sept. 12, 1970) – 25:15 (Dec. 9, 1972)
	18	26:1 (Jan. 13, 1973) – 27:15 (Dec. 14, 1974)
	19	28:1 (Jan. 18, 1975) – 31:8 (Sept. 2, 1977)
	20	Pendle Hill Midwinter Institute
	21	Promoting Enduring Peace, Inc. <i>The Reporter for Conscience's Sake</i>
	22	27:7 (July 1971) – 30:12 (Dec. 1973)
	23	31:1 (Jan. 1974) – 34:9 (Sept. 1977)
	24	Reservists Committee to Stop the War
	25	Resist
	26	<i>SOS News</i> (Support Our Soldiers)
	27	Safe Return Amnesty Committee
	28	Showdown
	29	Southern Conference Educational Fund
	30	Student Peace Union General, 1960-1961
	31	<i>Bulletin</i> , 1959-1961
	32	Students United for Freedom and Peace (Heidelberg College)
	33	Tax resistance (topical)
	34	Toledo Area Draft Information and Counseling Service Agenda and minutes, 1969-1972
	35	General Counselor's notes
	36	Folder 1
	37	Folder 2
	38	Folder 3

	39	Toledo Coalition
	40	Toledo committee for a Reasonable Settlement in Vietnam (1966-1967)
	41	Vietnam Moratorium Committee
	42	Vietnam Summer in Ohio
	43	Vietnam Veterans Against the War
4	44	War Resisters League
	1	General Conferences
	2	<i>WRL News</i>
	3	Washington Area Military and Draft Law Panel Newsletter 1:1 (July 1970) – 3:1
	4	Addenda
	5	Women Speak Out for Peace and Justice
	6	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom General
	7	Ohio and Toledo branches <i>Peace and Freedom</i>
	8	1971-1974
	9	1975-1977
	10	1978-1985
	11	World Peace Broadcasting Foundation
		Society of Friends
	12	Conferences General
	13	General Conference, Richmond, Ind., June 23-30, 1973
	14	General Conference, 1978
	15	General Conference, Ithaca, N.Y., June 28-July 5, 1980
	16	Toledo Meeting
	17	American Friends Service Committee General
	18	Memoranda on the draft
	19	Dayton Regional Office – Memoranda and newsletters
	20	Lesbian and Gay Rights Task Force
	21	National Action/Research on the Military Industrial Complex
	22	Ann Arbor Friends
	23	Friends Lake Community
	24	Friends Committee on National Legislation Policy Committee – Minutes and memoranda, 1974
	25	General
	26	<i>Washington Newsletter</i>
	27	Friends for Lesbian and Gay Concerns General
	28	Newsletter, 1978-1984
	29	Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

	30	Young Friends of North America
		Gay rights activity
5	1	Dignity Toledo
	2	Free People's Alliance -- <i>Alliance Advisor</i> , 1983
	3	Gay businesses – Toledo
	4	Gay organizations – Ohio
	5	Gay organizations – Other states
	6	Illinois Gay and Lesbian Task Force
	7	Lesbian and Gay Pride Week, Boston, 1983
	8	<i>Mach 7</i> story
	9	Metropolitan Community Church (Toledo)
		Michigan Organization for Human Rights
	10	General
	11	<i>MOHR Information</i> 2:4 (Apr. 1979) – 6:5
		National Gay Task Force
	12	General
	13	Newsletter
		Ohio Gay Rights Coalition
	14	General
	15	Communications workshop, Mar. 15, 1980
	16	Newsletter
		Personal Rights Organization of Toledo
		General
	17	1978-1979
	18	1980-1984
		Telephone counseling
		Manual and referral information
	19	Folder 1
	20	Folder 2
	21	Schedules
		Newsletter
	22	1974-1978
	23	1979-1983
	24	Sexuality – handouts
	25	<i>TAGALA</i> (Toledo Area Gay and Lesbian Affiliation)
	26	Toledo Gay Community Center
		University of Toledo
	27	General
	28	Ad hoc groups
	29	Gay Student Organization
	30	Military Affairs Committee
	31	Student-Faculty Peace Council, 1969

		Other issues
	32	American Civil Liberties Union
	33	1971-1975
	34	1976
	34	Black Panther Party – Toledo Chapter
	35	Common Cause
	36	General, 1975-1976
	37	Ohio and Toledo
	37	Earth Food Co-op – Newsletter
	38	Environmental Defense Fund
	39	Federal Correctional Institution, Milan, Mich.
	40	Free University of Greater Toledo
	41	Greater Toledo Council of Teachers of Mathematics
	42	Ohioans for Utility Reform
	43	Prisoner Visitation and Support
	44	Right to Life of Greater Toledo
	45	Students for a Democratic Society – Toledo Chapter
	46	Toledo Coalition for Safe Energy
	47	Washington Office on Africa
	48	“Where It’s At: Guide for Community Organizing” 1970
	49	World Council of Churches. U.S. Conference 1972 meeting, Toledo
6		Miscellaneous
		Flyers and handouts – Miscellaneous organizations
	1	Folder 1
	2	Folder 2
	3	Miscellaneous
	4	1959-1961
	5	1969-1985
	5	Petitions
	6	Photographs
	7	New clippings
	8	Newspaper and magazine clippings
	9	Newspaper and magazine clippings
7	1*	Artifacts and Oversize materials
	2	Posters
	3	Bumper Stickers
	4	Oversize Magazines
	5	Miscellaneous Magazines
		Script, “To Whom It May Concern,” with two trays of slides and one audio tape
		Rubber Stamp, “Toledo Area Draft and Military Counseling.”
		Painted Jar, “Peace Action Council of Toledo.”

		* = oversize cabinet, drawer 1 ^ = oversize area ** = locked cabinet R-1 = range four
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