

Robert A. Sedler Papers
0.75 linear feet
(1.5 manuscript boxes)
1985-1990 (bulk 1985-1986)

Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

Finding aid written by Byron S. Collier on August 23, 2010.

Accession Number: 1833

Creator: Robert A. Sedler

Acquisition: The first installment of the papers of Robert A. Sedler was placed in the Walter P. Reuther Library in June 2004 by Mr. Sedler as part of the Damon J. Keith Law Collection of African American Legal History. The papers were opened for research in August 2010.

Language: Material entirely in English.

Access: Papers are open for research.

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

Notes: Citation style: "Robert A. Sedler Papers, Box [#], Folder [#], Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University"

Related Material: Reuther Library Collections: NAACP Detroit Branch Records, ACLU of Michigan: Metropolitan Detroit Branch Records

History

Robert A. Sedler is a Professor of Law at Wayne State University where he teaches courses in constitutional law and conflict of laws. Mr. Sedler received his undergraduate degree from the University of Pittsburgh in 1956 and his law degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law in 1959. Prior to coming to Wayne State in 1977, Mr. Sedler taught at the University of Kentucky College of Law while also serving as General Counsel of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Kentucky from 1971-1976 and he has held other permanent or visiting appointments as a professor of law. Mr. Sedler has litigated a large number of civil rights and civil liberties cases, has published extensively on constitutional law, and has received several awards for his work in these areas.

In 1985, the voters of the City of Dearborn passed an ordinance to close most of Dearborn's parks to non-residents. This ordinance was widely perceived to be directed at African-American residents of the neighboring City of Detroit (Dearborn residents were almost exclusively white). In response to the ordinance, a citizens' group urged a boycott of Dearborn businesses by residents of Detroit. Also, in December 1985, the Detroit Chapter of the NAACP and the ACLU filed a lawsuit against the City of Dearborn in the Wayne County Michigan Circuit Court seeking to have the Dearborn park ordinance declared to violate the laws and the constitution of the State of Michigan and the United States. Mr. Sedler acted as counsel for the ACLU in this matter. The trial court found that several sections of the ordinance violated the constitution of both Michigan and the United States. The Michigan Court of Appeals upheld the trial court's decision and the Michigan Supreme Court declined to hear the case, allowing the Court of Appeals decision to stand and resulting in several sections of the Dearborn ordinance being struck down as unconstitutional.

Scope and Content

Collection materials consist of documents related to the City of Dearborn ordinance restricting use of its parks to city residents and the resulting lawsuit, *Detroit Branch, NAACP, et al. v. City of Dearborn*, on the constitutionality of that ordinance. The documents consist of correspondence, motions, briefs, orders, other court pleadings, court transcripts, articles and newspaper clippings, depositions, and other evidence.

The full case name with the abbreviation used in this guide:

Detroit Branch, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, The Reverend Charles Adams, Joseph Madison, Gellert Seel, Robert Kind, and Deborah Tereshinski v. City of Dearborn (short cited as: *Detroit Branch, NAACP, et al. v. City of Dearborn*)

Important Subjects:

American Civil Liberties Union.

Dearborn (Mich.)

Dearborn (Mich.) – Ethnic Relations

Dearborn (Mich.) – History

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Important Names

Adams, Charles Gilchrist

Series I, Detroit Branch, NAACP, et al. v. City of Dearborn, 1985-1990

Correspondence, motions, briefs, orders, and other court pleadings, court transcripts, newspaper clippings, depositions, and other materials relating to *Detroit Branch, NAACP, et al. v. City of Dearborn*.

Arrangement

Part 1 of the Robert A. Sedler Papers is arranged alphabetically by subject into one series: Series I (Boxes 1-2).

Series I

Box 1

1. Attorney Fees; Correspondence, Draft Motion, and Research, 1989-1990
2. Case Notes, 1986
3. Clippings, 1985-1991
4. Correspondence, 1985-1989
5. Evidence, Research, and Witness Statement, 1986
6. Memoranda, 1986
7. Michigan Circuit Court, Wayne County; Pleadings, 1985-1986
- 8-9. Michigan Circuit Court, Wayne County; Transcripts, 1986
10. Michigan Court of Appeals; Briefs, Correspondence, Notes, and Opinion, 1987-1988

Box 2

1. Michigan Supreme Court; Application to Appeal, Briefs, and Order, 1989
2. NAACP, Detroit Branch, Presidential Award; Correspondence, Newsletter, and Program, 1986
3. Newby, Robert G.; Deposition and Notes, 1986
4. Robinson, Richard D.; Deposition and Notes, 1986
5. Tillery, Tyrone; Deposition and Notes, 1986