

**RALPH BERTON COLLECTION, ca. 1933 -2004**  
**(Approximately 15 cubic feet)**

**Biography**

Ralph Berton was born Berton Cohen December 24, 1910 in Danville, Illinois, to a family of vaudevillians. His father, Maurice, was a violinist and his mother Ida (nee Glueck) occasionally ran a boarding house for traveling vaudevillians. Berton was the youngest of three brothers. His middle brother Eugene, born in 1903, was a classical singer, concert pianist and musical theatre composer with whom Ralph collaborated on numerous musical theatre projects over the course of their lives. According to family lore it was Eugene who insisted on changing the family name to improve his show business career prospects and so young Berton Cohen was asked to give up his first name at the age of seven or so for the good of the family and then chose his own first name. While accounts of their exact age difference vary, Ralph's eldest brother Vic was considerably older than Ralph, probably somewhere between twelve to fourteen years Ralph's senior. Vic Berton was a drummer of considerable renown among jazz musicians in the early years of jazz, and, according to Berton's account in his memoir Remembering Bix, something of a surrogate father for Ralph.

Berton usually professed to have little formal education acquired haphazardly and unsystematically through voracious private reading and insatiable curiosity about the world around him. During this period, the bohemian and politically progressive Berton family moved frequently, spending a considerable amount of time touring vaudeville theatres of the Midwestern "4gas light" circuit and the precocious young Ralph could often be found backstage either with his nose buried in a book or absorbing the show business culture around him. However, conflicting accounts as to the exact extent of Berton's formal education have emerged. According to some biographies, Berton attended school in Chicago and New York City. One of his own resumes states that he attended Lane High School in Chicago, graduating in 1933 and Central Junior College in Peoria, Illinois. It remains unclear whether Berton's claims to having no formal education were a matter of personal braggadocio or his enhancements about higher education were padding on his résumé to increase his marketability. Although Berton eventually became a man of letters, a devotee of the arts, knowledgeable on many subjects and multilingual he rarely earned a meaningful living at any of these pursuits. Berton held diversified jobs throughout his life including: French tutor; artist and art teacher; tennis teacher; boxer; singing waiter; bootlegger; truck driver; salesman; actor; musician; free-lance advertising copy writer; disc jockey; playwright; radio, television and film script writer; concert and jam session producer; promoter; editor; free-lance writer; teacher; and jazz critic and educator. Nevertheless, for most of his working life, his primary income derived from his work as a freelance advertising copywriter and technical writer.

According to Berton, when he was twelve years old he had a bit part in Annie Dear, a Broadway show produced by Florence Ziegfeld. In 1924, Vic Berton became the manager of Bix Beiderbecke's first professional band, the Wolverines and as a young teenager Ralph tagged along with Vic, Bix and the Wolverines. That experience became the basis of Berton's widely praised October 1958 Harper's magazine article, "Bix and His Lost Music." Berton is perhaps best remembered for the 1974 full-length book, Remembering Bix: A Memoir of the Jazz Age, also based on these earlier experiences. After his sojourn with the Wolverines in the mid-1920s, Berton fell away from the jazz community for over a decade, pursuing, at various points, a career as an artist, a prizefighter, a screenwriter and a radio scriptwriter. Berton attested to ghosting the book Modern Dance & Legitimate Drumming published under his brother Vic's name in 1927.

In the late 1920s, Berton pursued a serious study of art, moving to Woodstock, New York where he became a student and life long friend of artist Wilhelm DeKooning. Berton's unpublished novel Le Côté de Woodstock fictionalized this association. Berton's artwork featured in one-man shows

in New York and Los Angeles, and in other exhibits as well. In the early 1930s, he sojourned briefly in Hollywood as a screenwriter. Berton's most significant script in that period was the RKO production of Dangerous Corner (although the fact that he did not receive screen credits is the subject of several letters between Gene and Berton and the studio). Berton's unpublished novel Jewel City Inn drew on his experiences in Hollywood during that period.

In the late 1930s, Berton relocated to New York City where he made his living primarily as a radio scriptwriter. During this period, Berton was also active in writing scripts for the legitimate theatre, writing lyrics for popular songs and occasionally appearing on stage. In 1937, he wrote and directed the three-act comedy Cassandra Kelly, produced in summer stock. In 1938, St. John Terrell produced Berton's play The Happy Marriage at the Bucks County Playhouse. In 1939, Berton and his brother Gene appeared in Two for Tonight, a revue at the Cherry Lane Theatre in New York City, performing their co-written musical numbers. In his capacity as a writer and playwright, Berton was a member of both the Author's Guild and the Dramatists Guild of the Author's League.

Like many American intellectuals in the 1930s, Berton joined the Communist Party. Berton referred frequently to this association in conversations much later in his life, and it is the subject of occasional correspondence, essays and oral interviews many decades after he left the Party. In earlier years, Berton never referred directly to this affiliation. From the late 1930s and through the early years of World War II (the heyday of American Communism) many of Berton's essays and his private correspondence contain rhetorical formulations associated with American Communism, such as glib references to the class struggle, self determination for the Black Belt and American imperialism. Sometime towards the end of World War II, nearly all such references disappear from Ralph's writing for several decades. Through the 1950s and 1960s, encompassing the rise of the modern civil rights movement, baby boomer youth culture and the protests against the Vietnam war, no political commentary of any kind is found in Berton's public writing or in his private correspondence, nor any reference to his association with the Communist Party a couple of decades earlier. Based on both written evidence and private conversation, the exact circumstances of Berton joining and leaving the Party are unclear. From the 1970s on, Berton alleged disillusionment with Stalinism or his frustration with "old-fashioned" marketing techniques as reasons for his break with the Communist Party.

Tens of thousands of Berton's contemporaries passed through the Communist Party. Most of them "broke" with the Party, not over disillusionment with Stalinism but because of the rigorous discipline and high level of activity required of Party members. Since Berton remained utter silence about the Communist Party, Communism or virtually any political subject for decades after his disaffiliation with the movement, the likelihood is that Berton's own experiences in this regard were quite similar to his contemporaries. He, most likely, became bored with the confines of the Communist intellectual discourse and frustrated with the marginal political accomplishments of the Party. Or perhaps, his bohemian personality was ill-suited to the discipline that the Party demanded of its hard-core members, and it seems probable that his subsequent disillusionment with Stalinism, though it became quite real, was essentially an ex post facto revelation.

As Berton put it, he re-entered the world of jazz in 1938. Alone, lonely, unemployed and virtually homeless, for some time during the latter part of the Great Depression Berton was largely too preoccupied with finding a place to lie down and enough to eat to think about jazz or anything to do with creative arts. Berton later referred to feeling that jazz was a pleasure he did not deserve until he "got his life together." One summer night in 1938, he wandered by the Savoy Ballroom and chanced to hear Teddy Hill's band. Berton wrote of the experience:

"had literally managed to forget, in the years between, the shock and overwhelming impact of certain jazz musicians, the impact of my brother Vic's drumming, the sweet soaring buoyancy of Louis Armstrong, the drowning in Bix Beiderbecke's swinging imagery. I found myself on my feet, next to the bandstand, and knew I had never heard a trumpet speak like this – the odd, insistent pushing on the beat, the completely unpredictable intervals as he found new harmonies in every bar, the enormous swinging of his piercing tone and low caressing register. It was that way when he played and I was beside myself. I had forgotten, but his trumpet brought it all back, overwhelmingly. And when the set ended, I jumped up on the sand and stood in front of him. 'Jesus,' I said, 'who are you?' He looked me over, and smiled. 'They call me Little Jazz,' he said. 'My name is Roy. Roy Eldridge.'"

This encounter was an epiphany for Berton and a turning point in his life. The next day he bought the four Eldridge discs then available: Farewell Blues, Swingin' at the Famous Door, Where the Lazy River Goes By, After You've Gone, Wabash Stomp, Florida Stomp, That Thing, and Heckler's Hop, depending on the friendly bartenders willing to put them temporarily on their juke boxes and record players of friends to listen to them.

This experience motivated Berton to actively promote jazz music from then on and for the rest of his life. Within a year, he became one of the first, if not the first, jazz disc jockeys in New York City. Beginning this career on WNYC, he subsequently presented jazz programs on numerous stations including WMCA, WINS, WBNK, WNCN, and KJAZ. As a guest artist, he appeared on WNEW, WBAI, WSOU, WKCR, WOR, WFMU and network shows on NBC and the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation). Quoting from one of his many young listeners at the time:

"His radio program was not the usual disk jockey show—a little patter, then spin the platter. He did more than list the musicians, where and when recorded, and that sort of thing. He did this, of course, but his program was more than the obvious love and enthusiasm for the music. It was the vignettes and stories that fleshed out the recordings, creating a sense that you were there in the midst of the music and the musicians. And there was a didactic side to the programs. Often he would dissect a performance, pointing out what he heard and saw in a particular solo or how the ensemble was put together. Sometimes he would play cuts of the same song recorded by different musicians to show different approaches to the same material. He would disassemble the song, show you the pieces, put it back again and then play it. You learned to listen in a new way and with greater understanding. It was as if a forensic surgeon dissected a body and then was able to reassemble the parts into a live, vibrant person. The surgeon can't do it, but Ralph Berton could with his music."

During this period Berton, also began to write and lecture about jazz and he continued to proselytize for jazz in various ways for the rest of his life, even incorporating his views on the subject into his fiction writing in later years. He wrote extensively about Bix Beiderbecke, beginning with his radio play about Beiderbecke, produced on WNYC in 1940. Beginning in the early 1940's, in conjunction with his jazz radio program, Berton taught what might have been the first courses ever in jazz appreciation at the Metropolitan Music School in New York. In 1941, Modern Age Publishers contracted Berton to write an introductory book on jazz, variously titled Listening to Jazz, Understanding Jazz or 1023 Jazz Records. This book apparently remained unpublished, however, pages of galley proofs from the manuscript are available in the Collection. His ruminations on his WNYC jazz disc jockey show and his lecture notes from the early jazz appreciation course he taught formed the book's basis. Many of the ideas first expressed in that manuscript reappeared, developed and expanded, in Berton's later writing. In conjunction with

his early radio program, between 1941 and 1943, Berton published and edited a mimeograph periodical, Jazz Information, distributed largely to members of his listening audience.

In addition to writing and lecturing about jazz, Berton used his position as a jazz disc jockey on WNYC to broaden his activity in the world of jazz in yet another way -- as a concert and jam session promoter and producer. Between 1939 and 1942, Berton organized the jazz section of Wynn's annual American Music Festival. Several audio examples are extant of the live jazz performances and jam sessions that aired on his WNYC program.

From the end of World War II through the 1960s, Berton's critical writing, with few exceptions, was cultural, not political. For example, he did comment on matters such as the rise of "beat" and latter "hippy" culture and the conflict, in the late 1950s, between folk music and jazz devotees. Berton's public essays, fiction, and his private correspondence contain little political commentary despite the arrival of avant guard jazz influenced particularly by a rising black nationalism in the 1960s. During this time Berton worked as a staff writer for the 1958 Wagner for Mayor campaign putting more emphasis on his skills as a copywriter and ad man than on his affinity with the incumbent mayor's various political positions.

Meanwhile, during and immediately after World War II, Berton turned to producing, directing, and writing military and industrial instructional and advertising films to earn a living. He was eventually responsible for over thirty-five productions in that genre ranging in subject matter from medical and social issues to life insurance.

With his jazz-related activities in the post-war years, Berton continued to try to make money writing radio scripts and also began writing for the then-emerging television market. However, his income as a jazz critic, promoter and disc jockey, or even as a dramatic writer for radio or television was marginal at best, and for the rest of his life, his work as a free-lance advertising copy writer, technical writer and screen writer for industrial films formed the bulk of his income.

In the post-war period during the late 40s and 1950s, Berton became involved in the Reichian psychological movement and, for a time, was a patient of Wilhelm Reich himself. However, aside from the soft-core porn script If You Really Loved Me, set in a Reichian summer camp, evidence of Berton's involvement in the Reichian movement is scant in the Collection itself.

Berton was a contributor to Here Me Talkin' to Ya, the oral history of jazz compiled by Nat Shapiro and Nat Hentoff, in 1955. As a critic, book, record, concert, film and theatre reviewer, essayist and short story writer in this period Berton contributed to American periodicals: Harper's, Cosmopolitan, Town & Country, High Fidelity, Metronome, Down Beat, FM, American Jazz, Jazz, The Jazz Record, Jazz Review, Jazz Quarterly, Jazz Times, Overlook, Record Changer, Swing, World, Village Voice, Akron Beacon-Journal, Saint Louis Post-Dispatch, Goldmine and Music Box. His contributions to international publications include Bulletin du Jazz-Hot (Paris), Melody Maker (London), and Jazz Journal (London). In 1965, Berton became music editor of Status magazine and in 1965-1966, Berton functioned as the executive editor of Sounds & Fury magazine.

In 1961, Berton published "Conversations on a Bridge" in Metronome. This short story fictionalized Sonny Rollins' wood shedding period when he had disappeared from public view. Berton carefully attempted to hide Rollins' identity, changing his name and the location from the Williamsburg Bridge to the Brooklyn Bridge, although in retrospect these changes seem a thinly disguised effort and jazz initiates must have caught on immediately. Nevertheless, this piece was the first to reveal the lost Rollins' whereabouts and activities to the jazz public; it is considered one of Berton's most significant pieces on jazz.

In 1962 or 1963, Berton staged and wrote the libretto for La Bohème in Greenwich Village, an update of Puccini's opera which ran for twelve showcase performances at the Jan Hus Theatre, and which prefigured similar efforts such as Rent by four decades. Berton's brother Gene adapted Puccini's score and served as musical director for the production. The exact dating of these events are unclear as data from the Collection and family recollections differ. In 1963, Berton wrote and directed an industrial film starring Buster Keaton, The Triumph of Lester Snapwell, which received the Film Guild Institute award for the year's best short comedy. Produced for the Kodak Corporation; this film introduced the Instamatic camera. In that same period, Berton wrote the libretto for the opera Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania. Berton's brother Gene wrote the music for an earlier production of the opera and Ralph was brought in as a "script doctor" for a new production, eventually making such extensive revisions that he became the show's primary author. The opera showcased in California and Teddy Gaston Getty still holds an option for re-production.

In the late 1960s, Berton concentrated on his activities as a jazz educator, teaching courses in sociology and jazz appreciation at Bloomfield College and Middlesex Community College. Because of his resumed teaching career, Berton wrote one of his most significant essays, "Berton's Brabble", published in the 1971 down beat annual. Berton continued to use his life experiences, this time as a jazz educator, for source material and the article contains remarkable insights on problems of pedagogy.

In the early 1970s, Berton wrote and published two pornographic novels, The Cruise and Full Circle, under the pseudonyms Richard Stander and Richard Bennett. He concentrated most of his early 1970s writing on his most widely known opus, Remembering Bix: A Memoir of the Jazz Age, published in 1974.

In the late 1970s, Berton completed the novel, The Ad, a fictionalized treatment of the real life experiences of one of his former partners' in placing a personal ad in the Village Voice. Despite efforts to market this piece, it remains unpublished. Editors at that time judged the novel as "unrealistic" and "dated," despite its basis in fact. Far from being dated, it may well have been ahead of its time, anticipating television series such as Sex in the City by decades. In the early 1980s, Berton put a considerable amount of work in on a musical comedy variously titled The Big Score or The Brooklyn Bridge. Berton both scripted the play and wrote the song lyrics. Ultimately not produced, a rudimentary budget developed with choices for a director, choreographer (Fred Kelly, Gene's brother), set designer and actors for principal roles.

During the 1980s, Berton's public political writing increased considerably, and he published several op-ed pieces, including several spirited and well-argued defenses of the Second Amendment. At the time of his death on November 17, 1993, Berton was working on a collection of memoirs of his encounters with notable jazz musicians, titled All Those Great Cats. Berton actively, though not successfully, sought a publisher for his memoirs until his death.

Besides Berton's life long obsession with jazz, his writing for the theatre, his fictional writing and his technical writing, one of his great passions was chess, often with such luminaries as Grand Master Larry Evans and Dizzy Gillespie. Berton was a militant atheist and occasionally wrote on the subject. Berton described himself as being "married" ten times, though he used the term loosely for all of his live-in lovers; three of these unions were legally sanctioned. His "wives," in chronological order were: Shirley Maxwell, Ann Aston Reynolds, Sylvia Kingsley, Joan March Eleanor Pekarski, Mary-Claire Parrish (legal), Natalie Bowen, Phyllis Hochhauser (legal), Audrey Marcus and Kate René (legal). Berton died at the age of 82 after living for many years with congestive heart failure. He is survived by his widow Kate René Berton, and three children, Barbara, daughter of Eleanor, and John and Thomas, sons of Phyllis. Berton spent the last twenty years of his life living in North Bergen, New Jersey.

### **Scope and Content Note**

The Entire Ralph Berton Collection consists of approximately 14 cubic feet of material housed in approximately 39 document boxes (\*\*NB: Annie, these are very approximate figures and should be corrected once the collection is completely organized – gabe). The Collection is organized into the following sections:

- 1) Correspondence, 2 Document Boxes, approximately .6 cubic feet**
- 2) Biographical Information and Related Ephemera, 1 Document Box, .3 cubic feet**
- 3) Reviews by Berton, 1 document box, .3 cubic feet**
- 4) Musical Essays by Berton, 1 document box, .3 cubic feet**
- 5) Short works by Berton (Miscellaneous essays, liner notes, record reviews, poetry, short stories, advertising copy, course notes, interoffice memos, press releases, transcribed speeches, technical papers, etc.), 2 document boxes, .6 cubic feet**
- 6) Film Scripts, 1 document box, and .3 cubic feet**
- 7) Musical Theatre Scripts, 4 document boxes, 1.2 cubic feet**
- 8) Radio Scripts, 1 document box, and .3 cubic feet**
- 9) Television and Legitimate Theatre Scripts, 1 document box, .3 cubic feet**
- 10) Books, Novels and Longer Works, 8 Document boxes, 2.6 cubic feet**
- 11) Music, two document boxes, .6 cubic feet**
- 12) Oversized Documents, two document boxes, .6 cubic feet (to be organized)**
- 13) Photos, 1 document box, .3 cubic feet (to be organized)**
- 14) Scrap Books, 2 document boxes, and .6 cubic feet (to be organized)**
- 15) Original Art, 3 document boxes, 1 cubic foot (to be organized)**
- 16) Audio Tapes, three document boxes, 1 cubic foot (to be organized)**

More specific information regarding each section will be found in the Scope and Content Note preceding that section.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

### **Scope and Content Note**

Correspondence is organized chronologically from the earliest note (10/15/33) to the last (04/13/94). The last three folders in Box #2 include undated correspondence to and from Berton and letterhead stationery from various bodies in which Berton served as an officer. Contains all correspondence and related envelopes, including letters to Ralph Berton, copies of letters from

Ralph Berton, letters to and from Gene Berton, both typed and hand written, as well as telegrams and copies of telegrams and hand delivered notes.

Of special note are correspondence related to **Dangerous Corner**, Berton's most notable screen play, in Box #1 Folder #1, a telegram from Pee Wee Russell in Box #1 Folder #2, correspondence from Berton to Dizzy Gillespie with a transcription of a chess match they had, correspondence from S. I. Hayakawa regarding Berton's **Harper's** magazine essay on Bix Beiderbecke's, both in Box #1 Folder #3; Correspondence regarding Berton's award winning industrial film, **Lester Snapwell's Revenge** and correspondence regarding Berton's musical theatre piece **Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania** in Box #1 Folder 4; correspondence with Steve Allen in Box #1 Folder #7 regarding a possible option for a screen play based on **Lady Sings the Blues**; letters from Leonard Feather and Hoagy Carmichael in Box #1 Folder #11; several letters from chess Grand Master Larry Evans throughout boxes #1 and #2; letter from Whitney, Box #2, Folder #2; letter from Soviet TV personality, Box #2, Folder #9.

### Container List

#### Correspondence (Boxes #1 and #2, 0.6 cubic feet; 2 DB)

<u>ox</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
1**	1 10/15/33- 08/09/39	Earliest available correspondence. Contains letters, telegrams and related envelopes to and from Ralph Berton and his brother Eugene Berton. Early correspondence with Schubert brothers regarding mounting a new musical production. Correspondence with RKO Studios regarding screen credits for writing on the production of <b>Dangerous Corner</b> .
**	2 04/05/41- 09/20/44	0/05/41 telegram from Pee Wee Russell re jam session Berton was organizing and Pee Wee's horn in hock. 07/27/41 letter from Ralph to brother Vic regarding the death of their mother. Correspondence regarding birth of Ralph's daughter Barbara. <b>Nb: several pages in this folder are in extremely delicate condition and should be recopied to acid free paper ASAP (gabe)</b>
**	3 09/22/50- 09/19/59	Includes 01/21/59 correspondence from Berton to Dizzy Gillespie in which Berton transcribed and analyzed once of their chess matches. Post card from S. I. Hayakawa dated 07/15/59 regarding Berton's <b>Harper's</b> magazine essay on Bix Beiderbecke. <b>Nb: one page in Mylar extremely delicate and should be recopied to acid free paper (gabe).</b>
**	4 06/03/60- 12/26/64	11/18/62 correspondence on Berton's award winning industrial film <b>Lester Snapwell's Revenge</b> , which featured Buster Keaton. Correspondence with Teddy Gaston (Getty) regarding production of Ralph and Eugene Berton's opera, <b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> .
	5 01/06/65- 11/17/65	Correspondence regarding brother Eugene's illness. Correspondence on <b>Sounds &amp; Fury</b> letterhead. <b>Nb: some pages in Mylar and should be recopied to acid free paper.</b>
	6 01/04/66- 10/18/66	Correspondence regarding brother Eugene's illness. Correspondence with Teddy Gaston (Getty) regarding production of <b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> .

**	7 01/31/67- 12/29/67	Correspondence with Teddy Gaston (Getty) regarding <b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> . Letter to Steve Allen (11/21/67) regarding adapting <b>Lady Sings the Blues</b> (on which Allen then had an option) for the screen. Letter includes Berton's significant stage, screen, radio and TV writing credits. 12/29/67 letter <i>from</i> Steve Allen regarding Billie Holiday script.
**	8 01/21/68- 12/18/69	04/01/68 letter to Harper & Row regarding proposed James Brown bio. 08/21/68 letter from Rutgers/Newark regarding proposed course on jazz appreciation to be taught by Berton. 05/28/69 initial correspondence with Harper & Row regarding proposed Beiderbecke bio.
	9 01/30/70- 11/07/72	Critical note from editor re early draft of Beiderbecke bio (12/10/71).
1	10 04/09/73- 12/25/73	Letters from several institutions of higher learning regarding Berton's queries to them to teach a course in jazz appreciation.
	11 01/11/74- 12/27/74	Correspondence regarding promotion of Beiderbecke bio. 04/01/74 letter to Rudi Blesh. 04/22/74 letter <i>from</i> Leonard Feather. 07/01/74 letter from Hoagy Carmichael. 07/17/74 letter from Hoagy Carmichael misdated 1964.
	12 01/01/75- 12/05/75	Fan correspondence regarding Beiderbecke bio. Correspondence from Berton regarding efforts to market sexploitation film scripts.
	13 01/09/76- 12/25/76	Correspondence from Teddy Gaston re <b>Marie Antoinette</b> script. Efforts to market soft-core porn film scripts. Unsuccessful effort to market the novel, <b>The Ad</b> , to Harper & Row. Correspondence with chess Grand Master Larry Evans. Effort to obtain legal birth certificate (08/20/76).
	14 03/26/77- 12/25/77	Unsuccessful efforts to market <b>The Ad</b> to various publishers. Correspondence from Larry Evans. Personal correspondence.
	15 01/05/78- 12/25/78	Efforts to launch radio program. Correspondence regarding Beiderbecke bio. Correspondence with Larry Evans.
	16 02/12/79- 12/25/79	02/22/79 letter includes bio and resume. Correspondence from Marilyn Moore. Correspondence from Larry Evans.
	17 01/06/80- 12/03/81	Political correspondence. Correspondence with Williams College re Whiteman Collection. Correspondence regarding technical writing. Correspondence on health and aging. Correspondence on <b>La Boheme in Greenwich Village</b> . Correspondence from Bloomfield College regarding course taught there.
**	18 02/06/82- 12/22/82	06/22/82 letter contains resume. Last Will and Testament.
	19 02/18/83- 12/30/83	Political correspondence. Critical theory. Correspondence from Larry Evans. 12/16/83 letter to Billy Taylor.
2	1 01/01/84- 12/10/84	Erotic letters (fictional?). Political correspondence. Letter to Elliot Horne regarding RCA back catalogue. Fan letters. Correspondence regarding script for <b>The Big Score</b> . Queries to various journals

		regarding free lancing as a critic. Correspondence regarding film script of Beiderbecke bio.
**	2 01/10/85- 09/02/85	01/10 letter includes resume of credentials in technical writing. 02/25/85 letter from Whitney Balliett. 04/10 letter regarding Lionel Hampton's visit to Berton's adult education class. Political correspondence. Rejection letters.
	3 01/07/86- 12/17/86	Correspondence regarding personal relationships and health. Efforts to market <b>The Ad</b> . Critical letter to <b>New York Review of Books</b> . Correspondence from Larry Evans. Political correspondence.
	4 4 01/01/87- 10/27/87	01/01 letter from <b>New York Times</b> writer A.M. Rosenthal. Letter from U.S. Senator William Proxmire. Letter from U.S. Senator Frank Lautenberg. Letter from U.S. Senator Albert Gore, Jr. Thank you letter acknowledging receipt of hardship grant from the Authors League. 10/24 letter applying for directorship of Armstrong Collection at Queens College. 10/26 letter to Al Cohn.
	5 01/26/88- 09/05/88	Political correspondence. Application for hardship loan or grant from Carnegie Fund for Authors.
	6 01/06/89- 12/25/89	Letters to Steve Allen, including script ideas for <b>Meeting of the Minds</b> . Correspondence <i>from</i> Steve Allen. Political correspondence. Efforts to remarket and republish <b>Remembering Bix</b> . Acknowledgement of loan from Authors League.
	7 01/10/90- 12/17/90	Political correspondence. Acknowledgement of loan from Authors League. Acknowledgement of loan from PEN.
	8 02/24/91- 12/24/91	Political correspondence. Acknowledgement of loan from Authors League. Resume (04/17). Letter from Fred Tillis (Director of University of Massachusetts Fine Arts Center). Acknowledgement of PEN grant.
	9 01/17/92- 12/24/92	Letter from Soviet TV personality Vladimir Pozner. Letter from Steve Stroff. Acknowledgement of loan from Authors League. Letter from U.S. Senator Frank Lautenberg. Letter from U.S. Senator Paul Simon. Form letter from Bill Clinton. Letter from Congressional Representative Robert Torricelli. Acknowledgement of grant from PEN.
	10 01/10/93- 04/13/94	Political correspondence. Efforts to market his book of vignettes about jazz musicians, <b>All Those Great Cats</b> . Correspondence from Hillary Clinton. Acknowledgement of loan from Authors League. Letter from Congressional Representative Robert Torricelli. Letter from U.S. Senator John Glenn. Letter from U.S. Senator Charles Robb. Letter from U.S. Senator Frank Lautenberg.
	11	Undated Correspondence. Letters to Berton. Alphabetical by author.
	12	Undated Correspondence. Letters from Berton. Alphabetical by recipient.
	13	Letter heads. Jazz Critics' and Writers' Symposium (of which Berton was Secretary. Marshall Stearns was the chair and the Executive Committee included Rudi Blesh, Nat Hentoff, Father Norman O'Connor, Bill Russo and John Wilson. The Music Box (Berton was a contributing columnist). Sounds and Fury (Berton was Executive Editor).

## Musical Essays by Ralph Berton

(Box #5, 0.3 cubic feet; 1 DB)

### Scope and Content Note

Contains virtually all of Berton's shorter essays on music and related subjects, written throughout his career dating from the 1940's through the 1980's. Folder #1 contains Berton's early ruminations on jazz as an art form, **Art and Jazz**. Folder #2 contains a fragment of an early manuscript for his 1958 **Harper's** magazine article on Bix Beiderbecke, which became the basis of his book-length published memoir, **Remembering Bix**. Folder #2 also contains **Berton's Brabble**, Berton's ruminations on teaching a course in jazz appreciation at the college level, which contains several important pedagogical insights quite useful to jazz educators and others teaching introductory humanities courses at the university level. Folder #3 contains manuscripts for **Berton's Corner**, Berton's regular column for the collector's magazine **Goldmine**, to which he was a regular contributor in the 1980's. Folder #5 contains an article from the late 1950's on the relationship between jazz and the emerging popularity of folk music. That same folder contains an article about Joe Springer and the relationship between talent and fame. Folders #6 and #7 contain articles from the 1940's that were written in conjunction with his activity as a jazz disc jockey in that period. Folder #17 contains a list of **Records Everyone Should Have**, a list of 78 rpm recordings compiled in conjunction with his radio program during the 1940's. Folder #18 contains the manuscript of a Berton essay entitled **The Snob Itch and the Jazzman**, which address the issue of the urge of jazz musicians to be taken seriously and on the same plane as classical musicians, a theme to which Berton would return again and again. Folders #19 and #20 contain the manuscripts of editorials that Berton wrote for **Sounds & Fury**, slick music magazine of which Berton was executive editor during the early 1960's.

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
5	1	<b>Biography of Louis Armstrong, Art and Jazz.</b>
**	2	<b>Bix Beiderbecke; Blesh, Jazz and Metronome; Berton's Brabble (manuscript, published in Down Beat 1971 Annual); Ruby Braff Interview.</b>
	3	<b>Berton's Corner essays (Goldmine column).</b>
	4	Fragment of essay on <b>Ornette Coleman</b> ; Conference Lecture (in Spanish, followed by English translation); <b>Conversation with Darius Milaud; The Day Bix Really Died</b> (Outline for article).
**	5	<b>The Dream; Memo from Berton to the Folk Music Audience; Elliot Horne: An Interview; How To Be Obscure Though Brilliant, or, WHATEVER BECAME OF JOE SPRINGER?</b>
	6	<b>Fan Mail Department (**NB: copy to acid free paper ASAP).</b>
	7	<b>Jazz for Our Betters (**NB: copy to acid free paper ASAP).</b>
	8	<b>Jazz in Europe; Jazz: The Peculiar Art</b> (fragment); <b>"Just tell 'em Pee Wee's been here and gone."</b>
	9	<b>Keepers of the Records: 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference on Discographical Research</b>
	10	<b>The Last Time I Saw Paris, And Mezzrow; Little Jazz</b> (fragment); <b>The Live Jazz Dept.</b> (review of Half-Note).
	11	<b>Malicorne; At Last...Marilyn's Back</b> (review of Marilyn Moore); <b>Melody Maker</b> article (**NB: copy to acid free paper ASAP); <b>New Music A-Comin'</b> ; <b>Charles Mingus</b> article (by Hentoff); <b>Newport Not Revisited, or, Why I Didn't Go To The Jazz Festival This Year.</b>
**	12	<b>Marilyn Moore</b> (promotional material regarding Marilyn Moore's comeback, copy mostly by people other than Berton).
	13	<b>On Music: Ralph Berton's Minority Report, Is Classical Music Dead?; Only the Greatest.</b>
	14	<b>Opera in English.</b>
5	15	<b>Art Pepper</b> (fragment).
	16	<b>Recording-A Brief History of Its Early Days; The Road to Jazz.</b>
**	17	<b>Records Everyone Should Have.</b>
**	18	<b>The Snob Itch and the Jazzman (**NB: copy to acid free paper ASAP).</b>
	19	<b>Sounds &amp; Fury</b> editorial manuscripts.
	20	<b>Sounds &amp; Scenes</b> editorial manuscripts.
	21	<b>Status Reports: Longhair Music, Opera in English; The Strange Case of July 18<sup>th</sup>.</b>
	22	<b>Tania Maria Interview.</b>
	23	<b>We've Got to Have Music; Why Write About Jazz?</b>
	24	Miscellaneous and Loose Pages.

**Short Works**  
(Boxes #6 and #7, 0.6 cubic feet; 2 DB)

**Scope and Content Note**

All available shorter works by Berton other than the musical essays in the previous section. Includes some very early essays, as, for example, **Art in a Classless Society**, written sometime in the 1930's, in Box #6, Folder #1. Box #6, Folder #2 contains the manuscripts of the liner

notes for over 20 different albums that Berton wrote, arranged alphabetically by artist. Box #6, Folder #3 and #4 contain record reviews by Berton, arranged alphabetically, by artist. Box #6, Folder #5 contains poetry and verse by Berton mostly in typewritten manuscript, though occasionally handwritten or with hand written revisions, arranged alphabetically either by title or in the absence of a title, by first line. Box #6, Folders #6 and #7 contain the manuscripts of short stories by Berton, dating from the 1930's. Of special note is the manuscript of **Conversations on a Bridge**, a fictionalization of Sonny Rollins wood shedding period. Published in **Down Beat**, this article was the first to reveal Rollin's whereabouts during his hiatus from public appearances in the late 1950's.

Box #7, Folders #2 and #3 contain manuscripts of political essays by Berton, written mostly the 1980's a period during which Berton was becoming increasingly interested in matters of public policy, or at least when he was making a somewhat successful effort to have his views on these matters published in the mainstream press. **Where Angels Fear** in Box #7 Folder #3 is Berton's impassioned defense of the Second Amendment, somewhat controversial given his liberal views on most other issues (though he also favored capitol punishment and an aggressive posture towards terrorism which prefigures the Patriot Act, both of which views are articulated in articles in these folders). Box #7, Folder #4 contains material that he developed for the 1957 Wagner for Mayor campaign, for which he was a major publicist. Box #7 Folders #5 through #16 contains advertising copy, technical manuals and other business writing by Berton dating from the 1950's through the 1980's, which was apparently his major source of income in that period.

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
6**	1	Miscellaneous essays (**NB: many pages need to be copied to acid free paper ASAP); includes <b>Notes on Art in Classless Society</b> and an outline for a suggested article on nudism.
**	2	Manuscript Liner Notes for the following LPs: <b>Dave Brubeck, Summit Sessions; John Coltrane, Traneing In; Neal Creque, Creque!; Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, In the Kitchen, The Rev, Very Saxy; Eric Dolphy, Out There; Red Garland, Blues for Paul; Byrdie Green, Sister Byrdie; Billy Hawks, Heavy Soul; Richard "Groove" Holmes, The Groover; Willis Jackson, Please Mr. Jackson, Star Bag; Bill Jennings, Enough Said!; Eric Kloss, Life Force; Living Strings, Airport Love Theme and Other Motion Picture Themes; Jack McDuff, Brother Jack, How High the Moon; Oscar Peterson, The First and Only Oscar Peterson Solo Album; Johnny "Hammond" Smith, Stimulation; Sonny Stitt, Night Letter.</b>
	3	Record Reviews. Alphabetical by Artist.
	4	Collective Record Reviews.
**	5	Poetry and Verse, alphabetical by title or first line. <b>**NB: damaged pages in Mylar, but should be copied to acid free paper ASAP.</b>
**	6	Short Stories. From <b>Baby's Footsteps</b> through <b>Curiosity Killed the Cat</b> . Includes <b>Conversations on a Bridge</b> (fictionalization of Sonny Rollin's wood shedding period, published in Down Beat, which revealed the reclusive Rollins' whereabouts to the jazz world). <b>NB: damaged material in Mylar but should be copied to acid free paper ASAP (gabe).</b>
	7	Short Stories, continued. From <b>The Day the Earth Stood Still</b> to <b>With Keys to the Scriptures</b> . <b>**NB: Damaged pages in Mylar but should be copied to acid free paper ASAP (gabe).</b>
7	1	Erotic Letters.

	2	Political Essays. <b>An Answer to Terrorism</b> through <b>The Complete Atheist.</b>
	3	Political Essays continued. <b>The Happy Ending</b> through <b>Where Angels Fear?</b> <b>**NB: Damaged pages in Mylar, but should be copied to acid free paper ASAP (gabe).</b>
	4	Advertising Copy for 1957 <b>Wagner for Mayor</b> campaign.
	5	Miscellaneous Advertising Copy and Displays.
7	6	Brochures and Pamphlets.
	7	Business Essays.
	8	Catalogue Copy.
	9	Classified Ads.
	10	Interoffice Memos.
	11	Jazz Appreciation Course Material. <b>**NB Damaged pages in Mylar, but should be copied to acid free paper ASAP (gabe).</b>
	12	Press Releases.
	13	Sociological Essays.
	14	Ghosted Speeches.
	15	Style Sheet.
	16	Technical and Engineering Books, Papers and Manuals.
	17	Shorter Works by other Author's found in Berton's Papers.

**Film Scripts by Ralph Berton  
(Box #8, 0.3 cubic feet; 1 DB)**

**Scope and Content Note**

Fragments, outlines, synopses and full manuscripts of film scripts by Berton. The earliest are serials that date from the 1940's. Most of the full scripts are of industrial films developed by Berton. Box #8 Folder #26 includes the manuscript for **The Triumph of Lester Snapwell**, an award winning 1963 industrial film which featured Buster Keaton and which Berton wrote for the Kodak Corporation. Folder #29 includes the manuscript of a film that Berton scripted for the 1957 **Wagner for Mayor** campaign. Folders #31 and #32 include educational film script treatments that Berton developed for McGraw-Hill.

<b><u>Box</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Contents</u></b>
8	1	<b>Brazilian Adventure</b> (travelogue).
	2	<b>Captain Marvel and the Amazing Clock</b> (serial, 1943).
	3	<b>Case of the Disappointed Customer; Case of the Flaming Torch</b> (synopses).
	4	<b>Dynamite!</b>
	5	<b>Foxglove.</b>
	6	French Film (untitled).
	7	<b>Georgette.</b>
	8	<b>Herman and the Bandit King.</b>
	9	<b>If You Really Loved Me.</b>
	10	Industrial Films and Commercials (for Kodak).
	11	<b>It Happened in Port Said.</b>
	12	<b>Jewel City Inn.</b>
	13	Johnny Nash film (untitled).
	14	<b>Le Cote de Woodstock.</b>

	15	<b>Leonardo '84.</b>
	16	<b>Love on the Rebound. **NB should be copied to acid free paper ASAP (gabe).</b>
	17	<b>The Magic Touch</b> (1961 Industrial film featuring Buster Keaton).
	18	<b>Pell Street Bells.</b>
**	19	<b>Remembering Bix.</b>
	20	<b>A Rum to Go.</b>
	21	<b>The Story of Synthetic Rubber.</b>
	22	<b>The Story of Tom Anderson. **NB: Damaged. Copy to acid free paper and place in Mylar ASAP (gabe).</b>
	23	<b>Summer on the Beach.</b>
	24	<b>Supervisory Personnel Orientation Film.</b>
	25	<b>This is Epilepsy.</b>
**	26	<b>The Triumph of Lester Snapwell</b> (award-winning industrial film for Kodak featuring Buster Keaton, 1963).
	27	<b>The Way Things Are.</b>
8	28	<b>Wink.</b>
	29	Wagner 1957 Mayoralty Campaign film.
	30	<b>The Womanly Art.</b>
	31	Film Strip: <b>Henry Ford.</b>
	32	Film Strip: <b>Andrew Jackson.</b>

### Musical Theatre Scripts by Ralph Berton

(Boxes #9 through #12, 1.2 cubic feet; 4 DB)

#### Scope and Content Note

Berton grew up in a family of vaudevillians and in fact first came to an appreciation of early jazz, as a child, largely as an aspect of vaudeville or show business and the performing arts in general. His self-image was that of a writer, and while most of the time he earned his living as a technical writer, he was always endeavoring to earn a living as a jazz critic. However, in terms of sheer volume, much of his effort at artistic creation seems to have gone especially into musical theatre and the writing of longer works of fiction, apparently without much success. Leaving aside his industrial films, apparently only two or three of his commercial screenplays were ever actually produced, released and distributed. About five of his theatrical scripts, including three musical scripts, were produced, either Off Broadway, in regional theatre or in summer stock.

All of Box #9 and Folders #1 through #5 are various drafts, manuscripts, outlines, revisions and synopses of **The Big Score** aka **The Brooklyn Bridge** a major musical for which Berton wrote the script and lyrics. Berton put a major effort into this project all through the late 1970's and early 80's. The working scripts of 1980 suggest that it was a project that very was very nearly produced as the director, choreographer, set designer and principles were all chosen and a rudimentary budget developed.

Box #10 Folders #5 and #6 include an incomplete script, libretto, synopsis and reviews of **La Bohémé '61**, aka **La Bohème in Greenwich Village**, an updated version of Puccini's opera, which anticipated similar efforts such as **Rent** by more than four decades. This effort, co-written by Ralph and Gene Berton opened as a showcase to very good reviews at the Jan Hus theatre, but was unable to attract sufficient backers for a more extended run.

Also of note is **Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania** the various scripts and revisions for which take up all of Boxes #11 and #12. This musical, for which Berton was called in as script doctor and also to write most of the lyrics, was produced in a limited run in California in the early 1960's and the rights to its production are still held by Teddy Gaston Getty. Audio versions of this opus are contained in the audio section of this collection.

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
9	1	<b>The Big Score</b> aka <b>The Brooklyn Bridge</b> , Tentative Synopsis.
	2	<b>The Big Score</b> , draft script, 12/17/76.
	3	<b>The Big Score</b> , synopsis, 1/77.
	4	<b>The Big Score</b> , synopsis, 02/01/77.
	5	<b>The Big Score</b> , revisions, 09/11/77.
	6	<b>The Big Score</b> , revisions, 04/01/78.
	7	<b>The Big Score</b> , script changes, 05/09/78.
	8	<b>The Big Score</b> , complete script, 11/01/78.
	9	<b>The Big Score</b> , loose pages, 02/06/79.
	10	<b>The Big Score</b> , musical numbers, 05/15/79.
	11	<b>The Big Score</b> , complete script, 05/30/80.
	12	<b>The Big Score</b> , complete revised script, 05/30/80.
	13	<b>The Big Score</b> , complete revised working script, 08/22/80.
	14	<b>The Big Score</b> , 1981 revision, incomplete.
	15	<b>The Big Score</b> , 02/81 revision, incomplete.
	16	<b>The Big Score</b> , miscellaneous pages.
	17	<b>The Big Score</b> , May 6 Treatment, no year.
10	1	<b>The Big Score</b> , Loose pages, no date.
	2	<b>The Big Score</b> , songs.
	3	<b>The Big Score</b> , synopsis.
	4	<b>The Big Score</b> , title pages.
	5	<b>La Boheme '61</b> , Incomplete Script, Reviews, Synopsis.
	6	<b>La Boheme</b> , Ralph Berton Libretto revised on Original Score.
	7	<b>St. Cuthman and the Devil's Dyke</b> , synopsis.
	8	<b>Two for Tonight</b> , program.
11	1	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> , cast.
	2	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> , script, complete with author mark up and revisions.
	3	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> , script, complete with author mark up and revisions, no date.
	4	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> , complete script, short version, unmarked, undated.
	5	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> , complete script, long version, unmarked, undated.
	6	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> , complete script, long version, unmarked, undated, second copy.
	7	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania, Act I, Complete</b> , unmarked.
	8	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania, Outline and Synopsis</b> .
	9	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> , press release.
12	1	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania-songs</b> .
	2	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> , synopsis of songs.
	3	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania-Synopsis</b> .

	4	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> , loose pages of <b>Act I, Scene I</b> , with author's mark up and corrections, no dates.
	5	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> , loose pages of <b>Act I, Scenes 2 through 5</b> , with author's mark up and corrections. No date.
	6	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> , loose pages of <b>Act II, Scenes 1 &amp; 2</b> , with author's mark up and corrections. No date.
	7	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> , loose pages of <b>Act II, Scenes 3 through 5</b> with author's mark up and corrections. No date.
	8	<b>Marie Antoinette in Pennsylvania</b> , loose pages, unpaginated, with author's mark up and corrections. No dates.

### Radio Scripts by Ralph Berton

(Box #13, .3 cubic feet; 1 DB)

#### Scope and Content Note

Organized alphabetically by title, this section of the collection contains radio scripts dating from the 1940's and '50's and in one instance scripts for a revived **Dick Tracy** series from the late 1960's. Scripts are arranged alphabetically by title. Included are several scripts and transcriptions from Berton's various jazz disc jockey shows from the 1940's. In addition, Box #13 Folder #6 includes a dramatic script about the life of **Bix Beiderbecke** written by Berton that was produced at WNYC. Box #13 Folder #10 includes the outline of for a disc jockey show conceived by Berton which would mix jazz and classical music selections with talk and guest appearances. Other folders include commercials, scripts, skits, jokes and script fragments written by Berton for various commercial radio dramatic and variety shows in the 1940's and early 1950's.

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
13**	1	List of Berton Authored Radio Scripts.
**	2	<b>American Jazz Institute</b> , WNYC 05/03/40.
	3	<b>The Ballantine Show</b> , 07/09/44.
	4	<b>The Ballantine Show</b> , 07/16/44.
	5	<b>The Ballantine Show</b> , 07/17/44.
**	6	<b>Bix Beiderbecke</b> radio script.
	7	<b>Café Istanbul</b> . **NB copy on acid free paper and file in Mylar ASAP (gabe).
	8	<b>Captain Midnight and the Greek Water Guerillas (06/01/43)</b> .
	9	<b>Captain Midnight and the Man Eating Trees (02/25/44)</b> .
**	10	" <b>The Compleat Music Lover</b> " – An outline for a new kind of

		<b>musical program.</b>
	11	<b>Crime Doctor (08/10/47).</b>
**	12	<b>Dick Tracy – The Case of the Flaming City adapted for radio by Jack Anson Finke (Berton pseudonym).</b>
	13	<b>Dick Tracy – The Case of the Hippy Hijackers.</b>
	14	<b>Dick Tracy – The Case of the Motel Murders.</b>
**	15	<b>Equal Time.</b>
	16	<b>Happy Island with Ed Wynn (09/15/44).</b>
	17	<b>The History of Jazz (07/25/40).</b>
	18	<b>The Jazz Institute of the Air (WNYC – 05/10/40).</b>
	19	<b>The King of Swing.</b>
	20	<b>Mary Marvel and the Girl Haters (06/23/43).</b>
**	21	<b>The Metropolitan Review (07/29/40).</b>
	22	Various Radio Commercials.
	23	Radio Skit featuring <b>Bert Lahr</b> . <b>**NB: copy to acid free paper and place in Mylar ASAP (gabe).</b>
13	24	<b>Red Skelton</b> fragment.
	25	<b>Rick O'Shay.</b>
	26	<b>Top Guy - The Case of the Disappointed Customer (04/30/52).</b>
	27	<b>Top Guy - The Case of the Flaming Torch.</b>
	28	<b>Top Guy - The Case of the Nineteenth Victim.</b>
	29	<b>Top Guy - The Case of the Vanishing Attorney.</b>
	30	Untitled Script Fragment.

### Television, Legitimate Theatre Scripts and Jokes by Ralph Berton

(Box #14, 0.3 cubic feet; 1 DB)

#### Scope and Content Note

TV scripts, legitimate theatre scripts and published jokes by Berton. Folders #1 through #20 are TV script fragments and outlines. Most of these appear to be script ideas and outlines that Berton was trying to market but which were not for the most part produced or even developed beyond the outline stage. They are organized alphabetically by title. Some, such as **Big Brother** and **How Big is Your Family?** apparently were produced as segments of early television series. One outline, **The Hip Ambassador**, was intended as the basis of a musical spectacular to feature Duke Ellington.

Folders #21 through #29 are fragments, outlines and manuscripts of legitimate theatre scripts, none of which were developed or produced. It should be noted that Berton frequently revisited the same theme in virtually every conceivable format. For example covered the same material regarding Bix Beiderbecke as a factual essay, a short story, a full length biography, a radio play, a stage play, a film script and a TV script. Likewise with **The Ad**, below which he developed as a full length novel but also conceived as a television series. The theme of **The Ad** is the adventures of someone who places a personal ad in the **Village Voice**, based on the true accounts of one of Berton's former mates. When Berton submitted various treatments of **The Ad** to editors and TV producers, it was variously criticized as "dated" and "unrealistic," this despite the fact that it was based on true life accounts. Given the recent success of a series like **Sex in the City**, this may have been an instance where Berton was two decades ahead of his time in terms of thematic material.

Box #14, Folder #30 contains published jokes by Berton.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Contents</b>
14 TV Scripts	1	<b>The Ad</b> (suggestion for series based on the novel).
	2	<b>Big Brother</b> (for <b>NBC Theatre of the Mind</b> ).
	3	<b>Curiosity Killed the Cat</b> (for <b>The Clock</b> series).
	4	<b>Egon Calling!</b> (a skit for <b>Flip Wilson's "Geraldine"</b> character).
	5	<b>Furnace Number Four.</b>
	6	<b>Hermann and the Bandit King.</b>
	7	Fragment of a script idea for <b>Hill Street Blues</b> series.
	8	<b>The Hip Ambassador</b> – Outline for a musical spectacular starring <b>Duke Ellington.</b>
	9	<b>How Big is Your Family?</b> - Outline script for the <b>Defenders</b> series.
	10	<b>I Just Found Joy</b> – aka <b>The Right Ginger.</b>
	11	<b>Leonardo 1993.</b>
	12	<b>Love and Music Around the World</b> (proposal for a series of spectacles to feature <b>Mickey Rooney</b> and <b>Connie Francis</b> ).
	13	<b>Man on a Ledge.</b>
	14	<b>Queen of Spades.</b>
	15	<b>The Right Kind of Boy</b> aka <b>Knife, Fork and Spoon (**NB: copy to acid free paper and place in Mylar ASAP—gabe).</b>
	16	<b>St. George in Hoboken.</b>
	17	<b>What's in a Name?</b>
	18	<b>The White Mouse</b> aka <b>Nancy.</b>
	19	Various Program Concepts for Home TV.
	20	TV Script Fragments.
<b>Begins Legitimate Theatre Scripts</b>	21	<b>Club Rainbow. (**NB: copy to acid free paper and place in Mylar ASAP – gabe).</b>
	22	<b>The Fifth Freedom</b> (fragment).
	23	<b>Full Circle.</b>
	24	<b>Georgette.</b>
	25	<b>Love Among the Squares.</b>
	26	<b>The Right Kind of Boy</b> (fragment).
14	27	<b>The Way of the Transgressor</b> aka <b>The Modernists, Mixed Doubles. (**NB: copy to acid free paper and place in Mylar ASAP – gabe).</b>
14 continued	28	Untitled Script fragment. ( <b>Copy to acid free paper and place in Mylar ASAP – gabe).</b>
	29	Unidentified Script fragments.
<b>Jokes</b>	30	Jokes.

### **Books, Novels and Longer Works by Ralph Berton**

**(Box #15 through #22, 2.6 cubic feet; 8 DB)**

#### **Scope and Content Note**

All longer works by Berton arranged alphabetically, by title. Box #15 contains various manuscripts for the novel, **The Ad**, based on the true life adventures of one of Berton's former partners as a consequence of placing a personal ad in the **Village Voice**. This novel was completed in the early 1980's, though never published, having been criticized by several publishers as "dated" and "unrealistic" despite the fact that it was based, almost verbatim according to Berton, on true life situations.

Boxes #16 and #17 should be of special interest to jazz researchers and aficionados. These boxes contain the manuscript for an unpublished memoir of Berton's personal encounters with more than 30 classic jazz musicians. The manuscript appeared very nearly ready for publication at the time of Berton's death in 1993 and is arranged in the document boxes as nearly as possible in the order that Berton apparently intended for publication based on his own pagination, though there were several revisions and Berton was apparently still working on the organization of the sections at the time of his death. For the most part these are not biographies, though Berton does in several instances rely on secondary sources for brief biographical asides. What they largely amount to are accounts of Berton's encounters or alleged encounters with various jazz musicians. Sometimes these encounters were so fleeting that they seem barely worth putting into print for public consumption as for example Berton's recollections of Sid Catlett, whom Berton recalls as a nice person who once agreed to sit in at a session that Berton had organized on very short notice, but that is about all the substance involved in that particular vignette.

On the other hand Berton waxes long and eloquently in his discussion of Armstrong, Eldridge, Beiderbecke, Pee Wee Russell, Frankie Newton, Lionel Hampton, Benny Goodman, Ruby Braff, Dizzy Gillespie, Monk and especially Marilyn Moore and Al Cohn. Something of a ringer is Berton's discussion of classical pianist Sylvia Marlowe, who Berton claims hired him to teach her (unsuccessfully) what it meant to "swing" and how to do it.

Box #18 contains both manuscripts and finished products of technical catalogues and other technical material authored by Berton in Box #18 Folder #1. Box #18 Folders #3 through #5 contain the manuscript of **The Cruise**, a pornographic novel authored by Berton and published under the pen name Richard Stander. Box #18 Folder #6 contains an outline and fragmentary manuscript for **Duffer's Chess**, co-authored with chess Grand Master Larry Evans. Box #18 Folders #7 through #12 house various outlines, synopses and incomplete manuscripts for a novel entitled **Dynamite**, yet another project which Berton gave every conceivable treatment: as a technical paper, a short story, a novel, a screen play, and a TV script.

Again, for jazz fans in particular, Box #18 Folder #13 contains an outline for a proposed monograph entitled **From Swing to Rock: A Primer for Squares**. This theme (comparing jazz to rock) too recurs in several places throughout the collection as an essay under various titles, as the underlying theme of a short story, a play, a screen play, a teleplay and a musical, as the theme to a scripted radio show, and in outline form as a book length monograph.

The entirety of Box #19 is taken up with two complete manuscripts of the pornographic novel **Full Circle**, published under the pen name Richard Stander or Richard Bennett.

Box #20 contains titles H through J and includes all sorts of material from a ghosted biography of Ian Fleming to technical manuals. Of special note to scholars of jazz is the outline of a monograph to be entitled **Jazz: A Primer for Longhairs** in Box #20 Folder #5, apparently written in the 1950's and **Jazz +Richie Rivers + Murder: The Jazz Murder**, an unpublished murder mystery with an underlying setting among jazz musicians. Box #20 Folder #7 contains a fragment of an untitled book on jazz with very good autobiographical material on Berton. The balance of Box #20, Folders #8 through #13 is made up of various complete and incomplete

drafts for **Jewel City Inn**, an unpublished autobiographical novel about Berton's experiences as a young Hollywood screen writer in the early 1930's. Like many other conceptions of Berton's, **Jewel City Inn** too was given every conceivable treatment: as an essay, a short story, a radio script, a novel, a screen play and the basis of a TV series. These other treatments can be found in the appropriate sections of this collection.

Box #21 Folder #1 contains **Le Coté de Woodstock**, an autobiographical novel of Berton's years studying art in Woodstock, NY in the late 1920's. Box #21 Folder #2 through #5 contain various treatments of the notion of Leonardo Da Vinci coming back to Earth in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Berton also considered developing this idea as the basis for a TV series and had some correspondence with Steve Allen about this, urging him to produce it, without success. Box #21 Folders #6 through #13 contain the manuscript with author's penciled revisions of a book variously titled **Listen to Jazz, Understanding Jazz or, 1023 Jazz Records**. Written in the early 1940's, the book was based largely on Berton's experiences as one of the first jazz disc jockey's and became the basis of the courses he would teach on jazz many years later. Berton was contracted to write the book by Modern Age Publishers and while galley proofs of some pages exist in Box #21 Folder #13, and evidence of a contract for the book exists in the correspondence section of the Collection, there is no other evidence that this was ever published.

Box #21 Folder #15 contains an autobiographical fragment entitled **My Story**.

Box #22 Folders #1 through #14 contain all the author's material on his major published work, **Remembering Bix: A Memoir of the Jazz Age**. These include an incomplete manuscript of all chapters with penciled author's notes and revisions, expense vouchers, galley proofs, press and public relations material and background research material for the book.

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
15 <b>The Ad – A Novel</b>	1	<b>The Ad</b> – (Complete Manuscript - Chapters 1 – 9).
	2	<b>The Ad</b> – (Complete Manuscript – Chapters 10 – 22).
	3	<b>The Ad</b> – (Complete Manuscript – Second Copy - Chapters 1 – 9).
	4	<b>The Ad</b> – (Complete Manuscript – Second Copy – Chapters 10 – 22).
	5	<b>The Ad</b> – (Incomplete, with author's notes and revisions – Chapters 1 – 4).
	6	<b>The Ad</b> – (Incomplete, with author's notes and revisions – Chapters 5 – 10).
	7	<b>The Ad</b> – (Incomplete, with author's notes and revisions – Chapters 11 – 22).
	8	<b>The Ad</b> – Notes to Editors and Readers.
	9	<b>The Ad</b> – Outline.

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
16 <b>All Those Great Cats</b> (Unpublished Vignettes of Encounters)	1	Author's Note

Between Berton and Various Great Jazz Musicians – arranged as Berton organized them)		
	2	<b>Louis Armstrong.</b>
	3	<b>Roy Eldridge.</b>
	4	<b>Bix Beiderbecke.</b>
	5	<b>Pee Wee Russell.</b>
	6	<b>Mezz Mezzrow.</b>
	7	<b>Stan Getz.</b>
	8	<b>Joe Marsalla.</b>
<b>16 All Those Great Cats</b>	9	<b>Art Tatum.</b>
	10	<b>Frankie Newton.</b>
	11	<b>Coleman Hawkins.</b>
<b>17 All Those Great Cats – continued</b>	1	<b>Duke Ellington.</b>
	2	<b>Max Kaminsky.</b>
	3	<b>Big Sid Catlett.</b>
	4	<b>Lionel Hampton.</b>
	5	<b>Benny Goodman.</b>
	6	<b>Ruby Braff.</b>
	7	<b>Lester Young.</b>
	8	<b>Errol Garner.</b>
	9	<b>Dizzy Gillespie.</b>
	10	<b>Henry “Red” Allen.</b>
	11	<b>Thelonius Monk.</b>
	12	<b>Ed Hall.</b>
	13	<b>J. C. Higginbotham.</b>
	14	<b>Billie Holiday.</b>
	15	<b>Marilyn Moore.</b>
	16	<b>Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson.</b>
	17	<b>Tommy Dorsey.</b>
	18	<b>Sylvia Marlowe.</b>
	19	<b>John Lewis.</b>
	20	<b>Bobby Hackett.</b>
	21	<b>Buck Clayton, Al Cohn, Miles Davis, Paul Desmond, John Kirby, King Oliver.</b>

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Contents</b>
18 <b>Catalogues, Monographs and Novels by Berton</b> (C through F)	1	Catalogues and Technical material authored by Berton.
**	2	<b>Chemistry At Your Service</b> (Text, 1959).
**	3	<b>The Cruise</b> (Chapters 1 – 4, pen name Richard Stander) (published).
	4	<b>The Cruise</b> (Chapters 5 – 12).
	5	<b>The Cruise</b> (Contract).
	6	<b>Duffer's Chess</b> (with <b>Larry Evans</b> ).
18	7	<b>Dynamite – The Novel</b> (Outline).
	8	<b>Dynamite – The Novel</b> (Outline – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Copy).
	9	<b>Dynamite</b> (Working Outline with Author's notes and corrections).
	10	<b>Dynamite</b> (Synopsis).
	11	<b>Dynamite</b> (Incomplete).
	12	<b>Dynamite</b> (Technical Monograph).
	13	<b>From Swing to Rock: A Primer for Squares</b> (Outline).

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Contents</b>
19 (Entire Box: <b>Full Circle</b> )	1	<b>Full Circle – Outline</b> (pen name Richard Stander).
	2	<b>Full Circle</b> (Chapters 1 – 6). (Pen name Richard Bennett)
	3	<b>Full Circle</b> (Chapters 7 –12).
	4	<b>Full Circle – Second Copy</b> (Chapters 1 – 6).
	5	<b>Full Circle – Second Copy</b> (Chapters 7 – 12).

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Contents</b>
20 (Books, Novels and Monographs by Ralph Berton; H – J)	1	<b>Hemlock</b> (Incomplete fragment of longer work).
	2	<b>Ian Fleming: The War Years</b> (Ghosted for Alan Schneider, Cmdr. U.S.N.R.).
	3	<b>Inconsistencies, Ambiguities and Other Curiosities of the English Language.</b> (Sample).

	4	<b>Instructions for Installing, Operating and Maintaining the Cavitron.</b> (Technical Manual).
	5	<b>Jazz: A Primer for Longhairs</b> (Outline, with author's notes and corrections, 1954).
	6	<b>Jazz + Richie Rivers + Murder: The Jazz Murder, A Novel by Ralph Berton</b>
**	7	Untitled Jazz Book fragment (untitled). Good biographical background on Berton.
	8	<b>Jewel City Inn</b> – Outline – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Draft. Autobiographical Novel of Author's life in Hollywood in the early 1930's.
	9	<b>Jewel City Inn</b> – Manuscript, Chapters 1 – 11.
	10	<b>Jewel City Inn</b> – Manuscript, Chapters 12 – 15.
	11	<b>Jewel City Inn</b> – (Incomplete Draft).
	12	<b>Jewel City Inn</b> – Draft Outlines.
	13	<b>Jewel City Inn</b> – Early Drafts with author's mark ups and corrections.

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
21 ( <b>Books, Novels and Monographs; L – N</b> ).	1	<b>Le Coté de Woodstock.</b> Autobiographical novel of Berton's years studying art in Woodstock, NY in the late 1920's.
	2	<b>Leonardo '84.</b> With author's notes.
	3	<b>Leonardo 1985 – Outline for a Novel.</b>
	4	<b>Leonardo 1986 – Synopsis.</b>
	5	<b>Leonardo 1993 – Synopsis.</b>
	6	<b>Listen to Jazz</b> (aka <b>Understanding Jazz</b> or <b>1023 Jazz Records</b> ). Outline.
	7	<b>Listen to Jazz</b> (Author's hand written notes).
	8	<b>Listen to Jazz (Understanding Jazz Music) – Preface.</b> (**NB: copy to acid free paper and place in Mylar ASAP – gabe).
	9	<b>Listen to Jazz – Chapter I, Terminology and Definitions – Incomplete.</b> Loose Pages. (**NB: copy to acid free paper and place in Mylar ASAP – gabe).
	10	<b>Listen to Jazz – Chapter I, The Quick and the Dead.</b> Incomplete, with handwritten revisions.
	11	<b>Listen to Jazz – Chapter II, Advice to Longhairs.</b>
	12	<b>Listen to Jazz – Part II, 1023 Jazz Records.</b> Incomplete, with author's handwritten markups and corrections.
	13	<b>Listen to Jazz – Galley Proofs of Part II: 1023 Jazz Records.</b>
	14	Fragment of untitled music book.
**	15	<b>My Story</b> (autobiographical fragment).
	16	<b>Natural Birth and Natural Nursing: A Practical</b>

		<b>Handbook.</b> Chapter Outline and author's handwritten notes.
	17	<b>Never to Young</b> (under the pen name Richard Stander).
<b>23 (Books, Novels, Technical Manuals and Monographs; Remembering Bix – Miscellaneous Notes for Novels and other longer works).</b>	1	<b>Remembering Bix</b> – Editor's chapter notes.
<b>**</b>	2	<b>Remembering Bix – Author's Note.</b>
	3	<b>Remembering Bix – Foreword.</b>
	4	<b>Remembering Bix – Chapters 1 – 3</b> (Loose manuscript pages with author's notes and revisions).
	5	<b>Remembering Bix – Chapters 4 – 15</b> (Incomplete, corrected loose manuscript pages with author's notes and revisions).
	6	<b>Remembering Bix – Chapters 16 - 22</b> (Incomplete, corrected loose manuscript pages with author's notes and revisions).
	7	<b>Remembering Bix – Chapters 23 - 29</b> (Incomplete, corrected loose manuscript pages with author's notes and revisions).
	8	<b>Remembering Bix Loose</b> , numbered manuscript pages (no chapter headings).
	9	<b>Remembering Bix Loose</b> , unnumbered manuscript pages.
	10	<b>Remembering Bix Expense</b> voucher.
	11	<b>Remembering Bix Galley</b> proofs with author's mark ups and corrections.
	12	<b>Remembering Bix Press</b> and Public Relations Material.
	13	<b>Remembering Bix Background</b> research material: Beiderbecke Musician's Union Dues assessments.
	14	<b>Remembering Bix - Reviews.</b>
	15	<b>The Richard Stander Papers, Book I: Georgia Visited.</b>
	16	<b>Swing Era, Rock Era: Two Kinds of Music, Two Kinds of Kids</b> (Outline).
	17	<b>The Thinking Girl's Problem</b> (Chapter Outline).
	18	<b>Total Access Control Operator's Guide</b> (Technical Manual).
	19	<b>Wall Street Rhapsody</b> (with <b>Jacques Thery</b> ).
	20	Fragmentary notes for novels and other larger works. (**NB: copy to acid free paper and place in Mylar ASAP).

**Sheet and Transcribed Music**  
**(Box #23, 0.3 cubic feet; 1 DB)**

**Scope and Content Note**

Contains sheet music by Ralph, Gene and Vic Berton and transcriptions by Ralph Berton in pen and ink including a transcription of an untitled blues by Bessie Smith, transcriptions of **Good Bait** and **Oop-Pop-A-Da** by Dizzy Gillespie, a transcription of Buck Clayton's solo on **Rockin' Steve** and Frankie Newton's trumpet solo on **Rompin'**.

<b><u>Box</u></b>	<b><u>Folder</u></b>	<b><u>Contents</u></b>
23	1	<b>Caribbean Love Song (Sheet Music, Words and Music by Eugene Berton.</b>
	2	<b>Blue Evening Blues (Music by Art Kahn and Vic Berton)</b> photocopy of sheet music.
	3	<b>Could You Use a New Friend (By Eugene and Ralph Berton and Neil Flynn).</b> Sheet music and sheet music orchestrations.
	4	Musical Transcriptions by Ralph Berton. Includes transcription of a blues by Bessie Smith, a standard blues pattern, transcriptions of <b>Good Bait</b> , <b>Oop-Pop-A-Da</b> by Dizzy Gillespie, transcription of Buck Clayton's <b>Rockin' Steve</b> solo, transcription of Frankie Newton's trumpet solo on <b>Rompin'</b> .
	5	Untitled and unidentified musical transcriptions.
	6	Music by other composers.

**Yet to Be Organized:**

**Boxes #24 & #25) Oversized Documents (Probably about 1 cu. ft.)**

**Box #26) Photos (misplaced).**

**Box #27) Scrap Books (will be organized by Annie)**

**Box #28) Music (will be organized by Annie)**

**Boxes #29 & #30) Art (Will be organized by Annie)**

**Boxes #31 and #32) Audio Tapes (will be reviewed by Vince and organized by Annie).**

- Buna-S Chemistry
- Lubricant Molecular Structure
- Lubricant Systems for Mark I Tanks

- The Navy Flight Surgeon
- Facts on Fits: The Epilepsy Syndrome
- Paints & Pigments
- Organic Research
- Safe Flatyard Switching
- Safe Medical Fluoroscopy
- Memprobamate in General Medical Practice
- Turret Gunnery Systems
- Jet Instrument Flight
- Low Approach Patterns
- Cruise Control
- Psychology I: Six Classroom Films
- Small Town Clergyman USA
- Color Your Bathroom
- Life Insurance: The Unmentionable Subject (slide film)
- Dollars for Destiny (UJA fundraising film)
- The Other Guy (highway safety film)
- What Is Happening To Our Farm Families (ABC)
- Getting Along in France
- Getting Along in Brazil
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