



The Historical
Society of
Pennsylvania

Am .8996

**Caroline Katzenstein
Papers**

**ca. 1850-1965 (bulk 1909-1965)
3 boxes, 1 vol., 0.9 lin. feet**

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HSP:

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Abstract

Caroline Katzenstein (1888-1968) was a leader in the Pennsylvania suffrage movement. She served in official positions for the Equal Franchise Society of Philadelphia, the National American Woman Suffrage Association, and the National Woman's Party. After women won the vote in 1920, Katzenstein continued to fight for women's rights and lobbied tirelessly for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment for over twenty years. In 1919, Katzenstein used her expertise in publicity to aid the Women Teachers Organization of Philadelphia in their efforts to increase salary for women teachers. Additionally, Katzenstein was a successful insurance agent for the Equitable Life Insurance Society of New York, the Massachusetts Bonding and Insurance Company (Philadelphia Branch), and the Philadelphia Life Insurance Company.

The Caroline Katzenstein papers document Katzenstein's participation in the suffrage movement from 1909 to 1921, her efforts to help women obtain equal pay for equal work in the 1920s, her tireless promotion of the Equal Rights Amendment from 1923 to 1965, and her career as an insurance agent (1909-ca. 1930).

Background note

Caroline Katzenstein was born in 1888 to Mr. and Mrs. Emil Katzenstein, and spent her childhood in Warrenton, North Carolina. Following the death of their father, Katzenstein and her three sisters moved to Philadelphia in 1907. Katzenstein found herself amidst an impassioned women's suffrage movement, and she quickly committed herself to the cause. When the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association (the Pennsylvania branch of National American Woman Suffrage Association) and the Women Suffrage Society of Philadelphia jointly opened a headquarters in Philadelphia, she was named its secretary in 1910. A few months later, the Equal Franchise Society of Philadelphia also made its home at the joint headquarters. Katzenstein was adept at publicizing the suffrage organizations' many activities through her dogged perseverance in gaining newspaper coverage of their events. In 1911, after attending a meeting of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, Katzenstein was asked to join the association's national membership committee on which she served for two years. When the official headquarters of the state suffrage movement in Pennsylvania was moved to

Harrisburg in 1912, Katzenstein remained the executive secretary of the Philadelphia office, later renamed the Headquarters of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

In 1913, the famous suffragist, Alice Paul, came to Philadelphia to introduce the militant methods of the English suffragists to the more conservative Philadelphian suffragists. While in England, Alice Paul had taken part in radical protests for woman suffrage which often lead to civil disobedience, imprisonment, and hunger strikes. She brought back this sense of militancy to the U.S. and organized large protests which lead to her imprisonment three times. Given Philadelphia's historical significance as the nation's birthplace, Paul felt that protesting for women's rights in Philadelphia was an important symbolic gesture for the movement. Without a permit, she audaciously set up a soap box on Kensington Avenue in downtown Philadelphia and decried the disenfranchisement of women in 1913. While Paul gave her fiery speech, Katzenstein handed out pamphlets to the raucous crowds.

Alice Paul also posited that only through a national amendment would women win the vote. The National American Woman Suffrage Association, on the other hand, strongly believed that women's suffrage should be achieved at the state level by amending individual state constitutions; it also strongly objected to the use of militant tactics. To represent Alice Paul's new hard-line faction within the movement, Paul and like-minded suffragists, including Katzenstein, formed the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage in 1913. The organization was later renamed the National Women's Party.

Initially, Katzenstein was loyal to both factions within the women's suffrage movement. She had worked indefatigably to promote common ground between different Pennsylvania suffrage groups. As discord between the two national suffrage organizations intensified in 1914, disharmony at the local level became palpable. A combination of discord among staff at the suffrage Headquarters of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, long hours, and physical exhaustion led Katzenstein to resign from her post as executive secretary. Her respite was short-lived. A few months later, the Equal Franchise Society of Philadelphia, a suffrage organization committed to passing an amendment to the state constitution, opened a new headquarters in Philadelphia. The society asked Katzenstein to be its executive secretary; Katzenstein agreed, and from 1914 to 1916, she served as its publicist and secretary. The society fervently worked to pass this amendment, but to no avail: in 1913 and 1915, both the state senate and house passed suffrage bills, but when the suffrage referendum was given to Pennsylvania voters for approval in 1915, the nays won by less than 60,000 votes. While Katzenstein had supported a federal constitutional amendment for many years, it was this defeat in Pennsylvania that convinced her that a state-by-state suffrage strategy was futile. In 1916, Katzenstein left her position at the Equal Franchise Society of Philadelphia.

Later that year, Katzenstein became the executive secretary and chair of publicity for the Congressional Union of Pennsylvania (the Pennsylvania branch of the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage). In April and May 1916, Katzenstein and twenty-two other suffragists traveled to the western states as envoys for the Congressional Union. The envoys promoted the suffrage cause and convinced many enfranchised women from the western suffrage states to attend a conference in Chicago to form a new political party,

the National Woman's Party. The conference was successful, and the National Woman's Party was launched in June 1916. Katzenstein continued her work with the Woman's Party, promoting the suffrage cause in Pennsylvania for four more years. After years of persistence and dedication, women finally secured the vote: on August 26, 1920, the nineteenth amendment to the United States Constitution was ratified.

After the passage of the nineteenth amendment, Katzenstein turned her hand to the insurance business. She became a successful insurance agent for the Equitable Life Insurance Society of New York, the Philadelphia branch of the Massachusetts Bonding and Insurance Company, and the Philadelphia Life Insurance Company. Her hard work paid off at the Philadelphia Life Insurance Company, and in November 1922, she received the "Leader of Leaders" title for the "greatest amount of paid-for business" during October 1922. Katzenstein was the first woman to win this award at the Philadelphia Life Insurance Company.¹

While working in the insurance industry, Katzenstein continued to fight for women's economic rights in labor and marriage legislation. The Women Teachers Organization of Philadelphia asked the Pennsylvania branch of the National Woman's Party for assistance with their campaign for equal pay for female teachers. Katzenstein agreed to publicize their cause. Employing her many connections with the press, Katzenstein helped push the equal pay issue into the limelight. In the early 1920s, the Woodruff and Finegan bills were passed, which ensured pay increases for female teachers and pay parity with male teachers in Pennsylvania. Following this victory, Katzenstein took up the cause of the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and for more than forty years lobbied for the amendment. In 1943, representing the World Woman's Party, Katzenstein and Alice Paul served on the Women's Joint Legislative Committee, a committee formed to serve as a coalition group for equal rights.

In 1955, she wrote *Lifting the Curtain*, a history of the suffrage and women's labor rights movements in Pennsylvania. The book received considerable local attention, and Katzenstein hoped it would help their cause. In the 1950s and 1960s, Katzenstein wrote to many notable politicians, including Presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower, Harry S. Truman, and Richard M. Nixon, as well as Senators Robert Taft, John F. Kennedy, and Joseph Sill Clark, urging them to support the ERA. Despite their hard work, the efforts of Katzenstein and others to secure passage of the ERA were fruitless. Though the ERA was introduced in every session of Congress between 1923 and 1970, it was never ratified. In 1971, the ERA passed both the U.S. House and Senate, but an insufficient number of states passed the amendment in the allotted time.

Katzenstein died on January 31, 1968, leaving her undeniable mark on the women's rights movement.

¹ Philadelphia Life Insurance pamphlet, 1923. Katzenstein Papers, Box 1, Folder 1.

Scope & content

The Caroline Katzenstein papers document Katzenstein's participation in the women's suffrage movement from 1909 to 1921, her efforts to help women obtain equal pay for equal work in the 1920s, her tireless promotion of the Equal Rights Amendment from 1923 to 1965, and her early career as an insurance agent (1909-ca. 1930). The collection is contained in two manuscript boxes and one flat box. Katzenstein's book, *Lifting the Curtain*, is in HSP's library collections. Among the materials are her typed and handwritten correspondence; papers pertaining to her book, *Lifting the Curtain*; her published paper, "The Sporting Spirit;" tracts, broadsides, and convention programs from national and Pennsylvania suffrage groups; her executive secretary reports for the Pennsylvania Woman's Suffrage Association; correspondence pertaining to the National Woman's Party and the Equal Rights Amendment; ERA resolutions, hearings and congressional testimonies; a scrapbook with newspaper clippings; photographs of women suffragists; and a 1955 review of *Lifting the Curtain*, presented on WCAU-FM, Philadelphia. There is scant information on Katzenstein's personal life or her family.

The collection includes thirteen folders that are arranged by publication, organization, or topica. In addition, there are five folders of general correspondence arranged by date. Within the folders, the documents are arranged chronologically. There are also seven folders of photographs of suffragists and women's rights advocates, arranged alphabetically by name. One folder contains a reel-to-reel tape of a review of *Lifting the Curtain*; and a separate box houses her scrapbook.

Box One contains a small number of letters and flyers pertaining to Katzenstein's years as an insurance agent at the Equitable Life Insurance Society of New York, the Massachusetts Bonding and Insurance Company (Philadelphia Branch), and the Philadelphia Life Insurance Company (1920s). In addition, there are notes, correspondence, and reviews of her book, *Lifting the Curtain* (1955), and her 1939 article, "The Sporting Spirit" (written under the pseudonym Carol Stone). Her reports and correspondence pertaining to the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association are also in this box. Additionally, the box contains tracts, pamphlets, convention programs, and hearing testimonies of several suffrage groups, including the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage, the National Woman's Party, the National Council of Woman Voters, and the Pennsylvania League for Woman Suffrage. Two suffrage stickers designed by Katzenstein and a 1915 Pennsylvania state map indicating which counties supported suffrage are also included. Additional folders contain correspondence, testimonies, hearings, talking points, and resolutions related to the National Woman's Party and the Equal Rights Amendment, dating from 1917 to 1965. Newspaper clippings pertaining to suffrage and women's rights are contained in another folder.

Box Two contains five folders of Katzenstein's general correspondence from 1912 to 1965. Early correspondence includes a letter from a childhood teacher, Mrs. Lucy W. Hawkins of North Carolina; Katzenstein's letters while she was the corresponding secretary of the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association; correspondence with Alice Paul; correspondence with Mabel Vernon, a militant suffragist and officer in the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage; correspondence with Anne Martin, independent candidate for the U.S. Senate from Nevada; and correspondence with the

Women Teachers of Philadelphia. Later correspondence dates from 1945 to 1965, and pertains to Katzenstein's efforts to gain passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. Her letters to notable politicians, including Presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower, Harry S. Truman, and Richard M. Nixon, as well as Senators Robert Taft, John F. Kennedy, and Joseph Sill Clark, are in her 1950s and 1960s correspondence folders. National Woman's Party's congressional testimony and talking points about the ERA are intermingled with Katzenstein's correspondence. Box Two also contains photographs of suffragists, ranging from Lucretia Mott to Alice Paul, as well as photographs of suffrage protests and events. Additionally, a photograph of the ERA speakers who testified before the House Judiciary Subcommittee in 1948 is included. Lastly, Box Two also contains an audiotape of Charles Shaw's review of Katzenstein's book, *Lifting the Curtain*, on his WCAU-FM show "The World Around Us" from 1955. Charles Shaw was the news director for the WCAU radio and television stations.

Box Three houses Katzenstein's scrapbook of newspaper clippings from 1912 to 1963. The scrapbook largely contains articles about or written by Katzenstein from Philadelphia newspapers. A few newspaper articles about Alice Paul are included.

Separation report

A previous archivist removed eight pamphlets from the collection for cataloging and eventual placement in HSP library pamphlet collection. In 2008, only one of the eight pamphlets could be located:

Equal Rights Amendment: Questions and Answers. 87th Congress, Session 2, October 2, 1962. District of Columbia, United States Printing Office, 1963. (Call number Tn* .7391 v.2)

Related materials

At the Historical Society of Pennsylvania:

Katzenstein, Caroline. *Lifting the Curtain: the State and National Woman Suffrage Campaigns in Pennsylvania as I Saw Them*. Philadelphia, Dorrance and Company, 1955. (Call number Vb .9242). *Lifting the Curtain* is Katzenstein's personal account of "the state and national woman suffrage campaigns in Pennsylvania as [she] saw them."² Her book is a lively and detailed account of Pennsylvania suffragists' attempts to pass a state suffrage amendment, and later, the 19th amendment to the U.S. constitution. In her book, she elucidates her own suffrage work, while detailing suffrage activities conducted in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, and Washington, D.C.A.

Equal Rights Amendment: Questions and Answers. 87th Congress, Session 2, October 2, 1962. District of Columbia, United States Printing Office, 1963. (Tn* .7391 v.2)

American Negro Historical Society/Leon Gardiner Collection. Includes the 1881 notebook of Julia Buchanan, which contains materials related to women's issues, including suffrage. (Collection 0008B)

Civic Club of Philadelphia Records. (Collection 1813)

League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Records. (Collection 2095)

Dora Kelly Lewis Papers. (Collection 2137)

Woman Suffrage Party of Logan Records. (Collection Am .8894)

Woman Suffrage Society Records. Philadelphia. (Collection Am .3154)

At other institutions:

Alice Paul Papers, 1885-1977. Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Harvard University.

Mabel Vernon Papers, 1914-1920; correspondence with Caroline Katzenstein, 1914-1920. Bancroft Library, University of California - Berkeley.

² Caroline Katzenstein. *Lifting the Curtain: the State and National Woman Suffrage Campaigns in Pennsylvania as I Saw Them*. Dorrance and Company, Philadelphia, 1955.

Bibliography

Harper, Ida Husted. *History of Woman Suffrage*, Vol. VI. Rochester, New York, Charles Mann Printing Company, 1922.

Katzenstein, Caroline. *Lifting the Curtain: the State and National Woman Suffrage Campaigns in Pennsylvania as I Saw Them*. Dorrance and Company, Philadelphia, 1955. (Call number Vb.9242)

Klinek, Erica. "A Personal Glimpse of a Political Movement," *Pennsylvania Legacies* 8:2 (2008): 3-5.

Subjects

Equal rights amendments — United States — History — 20th century

Insurance companies — United States — History

Philadelphia (Pa.) — History — 20th century

Women's rights — United States — History — 19th century

Women — Legal status, laws, etca. — Pennsylvania

Women — Legal status, laws, etca. — United States — History — 20th century

Women's suffrage — 1880-1970

Women's suffrage — United States — 1900-1920

Women's suffrage — United States — 1910-1930

Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage (U.S.)

National American Woman Suffrage Association — History

National Woman's Party — History — 20th century

Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association

Clark, Joseph Sill

Eisenhower, Dwight D. (Dwight David), 1890-1969

Katzenstein, Caroline

Kennedy, John F.

Nixon, Richard M. (Richard Milhous), 1913-1994

Paul, Alice, 1885-1977

Taft, Robert Alphonso, 1889-1953

Truman, Harry S., Pres. U.S., 1884-1972

Administrative Information

Restrictions

The collection is open for research.

Acquisition information

Gift of Caroline Katzenstein, 1956-1957; and Mrs. Wilton W. Blancke (Katzenstein's sister), 1966.

Preferred citation

Cite as: [Indicate cited item or series here], Caroline Katzenstein Papers (Am .8996), The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Processing note

A previous archivist partially processed the collection; it is unknown whether the archivist kept the collection in its original order. During final processing, the collection was kept in the same order as left by previous archivist. Many folder names were expanded.

Box and folder listing

Box or folder title	Date	Extent	Box	Folder
Insurance business papers	1909-1925	10 items	1	1
Miscellaneous notes for publicity, interviews, and speeches; suffrage stickers	1913-1961	22 items	1	2
<i>Lifting the Curtain:</i> correspondence and reviews	1955-1964	46 items	1	3
The Sporting Spirit by Carol Stone (Katzenstein's pseudonym): published article and correspondence	1939-1965	47 items	1	4
Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association: corresponding secretary reports, hearing testimonies, pamphlets, convention correspondence, opinions of legislators	1910-1913	11 items	1	5
Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association: executive secretary reports	1913-1914	15 items	1	6
Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage, National American Woman Suffrage Association, National Woman's Party, National Council of Woman Voters, Pennsylvania Men's League for Woman Suffrage: articles, pamphlets, broadsides, hearing testimonies	1913-1917	27 items	1	7
National Woman's Party: press releases, correspondence, publications, convention programs, memo opinion in the legal case, National Women's Party vs. Anita Pollitzer	1917-1956	34 items	1	8
National Woman's Party: information bulletins about ERA and the Hayden rider, correspondence	1957-1965	38 items	1	9

Equal Rights Amendment: congressional resolutions, correspondence, hearing testimonies, publications, articles	1942-1965	69 items	1	10
Equal Rights Amendment, President's Commission on the Status of Women and the Woman's Joint Legislative Committee for Equal Rights: correspondence, talking points, resolutions, convention documents	1941-1965	39 items	1	11
Newspaper clippings	1912-1963	39 items	1	12
Pamphlets transferred to HSP Library (photocopies of title pages)	1939-1962	9 items	1	13
Correspondence	1912-1935	40 items	2	1
Correspondence (mostly pertaining to ERA and National Woman's Party)	1945-1949	37 items	2	2
Correspondence (mostly pertaining to ERA and National Woman's Party)	1955-1959	49 items	2	3
Correspondence (mostly pertaining to ERA)	1960-1961	47 items	2	4
Correspondence (mostly pertaining to ERA)	1962-1965	37 items	2	5
Miscellaneous photographs and photographs of suffragists, A-D	ca. 1900- ca. 1940	17 items	2	6
Photographs of suffragists, H-K	ca. 1910-ca. 1955	12 items	2	7
Photographs of suffragists, M-W	ca. 1900-ca. 1950	22 items	2	8
Photographs: officers of Pennsylvania Suffrage Association, leaders of Pennsylvania Branch of National Woman's Party, Pennsylvania pickets who served prison terms	ca. 1900 – ca. 1920s	5 items	2	9
Photographs of men who supported women's suffrage: Wilmen Atkinson, Judge Dimner Beeber, Abraham Lincoln, Dudley Field Malone	ca. 1850s – ca. 1918	4 items	2	10

Photographs of suffrage protests and office work, National Woman's Party	ca. 1900-ca. 1920	5 items	2	11
Photocopied photographs of women who served prison terms for the suffrage cause; photograph of ERA advocates who spoke before the House Judiciary Committee	ca. 1900-ca. 1918 and 1948	5 items	2	12
Audiotape of Charles Shaw's review of Katzenstein's book, <i>Lifting the Curtain</i> , for his show "The World Around Us" on WCAU-FM, Philadelphia	1955	1 item	2	13
Scrapbook of newspaper clippings	1915-1947	1 item	3	N/A