



Phyllis Schlafly Papers (S0224)

Collection Number: S0224

Collection Title: Phyllis Schlafly Papers

Dates: 1972-1986

Creator: Schlafly, Phyllis

Abstract: The Phyllis Schlafly Papers contain newsletters, brochures, flyers, and newspaper clippings documenting Schlafly's opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Collection Size: 0.3 cubic foot
(6 folders, 1 microfilm reel)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at stlouis@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: Materials in this collection may be protected by copyrights and other rights. See [Rights & Reproductions](#) on the Society's website for more information about reproductions and permission to publish.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Phyllis Schlafly Papers* (S0224); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-St. Louis].

Donor Information: The papers were donated to the University of Missouri by Phyllis Schlafly on October 28, 1974 (Accession No. SA0485). An addition was made on December 4, 1974 by Western Historical Manuscript Collection Staff (Accession No. SA0500).

Related Materials: Additional materials related to the Phyllis Schlafly Papers can be found in the following collections:

Missouri Equal Rights Amendment Coalition Records (S0437)

Processed by: Processed by Western Historical Manuscript Collection Staff, December 1974.
Revised by Zack Palitzsch, December 2020.

Historical Note:

Born in 1924, Phyllis Schlafly was a conservative activist who was known for successfully campaigning against the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution. She attended Washington University and Radcliffe College where she obtained her bachelor's and master's degrees, respectively. Following her collegiate studies, Schlafly began a career in politics, and in 1946 worked in the successful election campaign of Republican Claude I. Bakewell into the House of Representatives. She married John Fred Schlafly, Jr. in 1949.

Schlafly attended the 1952 Republican National Convention, where she endorsed Robert A. Taft to be the party nomination for the presidential election, which he lost to Dwight D. Eisenhower. In the same year, Schlafly ran for Congress in the 24th congressional district of Illinois. She lost to her opponent Charles Melvin Price by 53,630 votes. She ran against Price again in 1960, losing by an even wider margin than the 1952 race. During her campaigning in 1960, Schlafly helped lead a revolt against Richard Nixon, who supported desegregation and anti-discrimination.

In 1964, Schlafly published the book *A Choice Not an Echo*, which sold millions of copies and gained her national attention. In the book, she vehemently opposed Liberal Republicans and accused them of being corrupt. She was also a member of the John Birch Society, an advocacy group known for their nationalistic and far-right ideals. Following her book's publication, she denied ever being a member as she thought it would damage the reputation of her book. However, the John Birch Society endorsed her book and handed out 300,000 copies prior to the 1964 Republican primary. Following her multiple failed attempts to gain the seat for the 24th congressional district, in 1970, she ran for Illinois's 23rd congressional district. Despite being a nationally renowned conservative activist, she ended up narrowly losing to George E. Shipley.

In 1972, Schlafly began openly opposing the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). She organized the Stop Taking our Privileges (Stop) ERA campaign which defended traditional gender roles and fought for gender-specific privileges, such as social security dependent statuses for women, separated gendered restrooms, and exemption from the military draft. Stop ERA was renamed Eagle Forum in 1975, which expanded its focus to overall conservative issues. Schlafly's early opposition to ERA played an integral part in defeating the amendment in the 1970s. She would often appear on national television, providing opposing commentary on ERA rhetoric. Additionally, Schlafly utilized grassroots techniques to organize large groups of women in multiple states to put pressure on local politicians and organizations.

Throughout her lifetime, Schlafly continued to be a staunch supporter of traditional values and conservative politics, endorsing presidential and congressional candidates such as John McCain and Michele Bachmann. Additionally, Schlafly published more than 20 books, all focused around conservative and anti-feminist ideals. Her last book, *The Conservative Case for Trump*, endorsed Donald J. Trump as the presidential nominee. It was published September 6, 2016, one day after her death.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged chronologically into six folders and includes one roll of microfilm.

Scope and Content Note:

The Phyllis Schlafly Papers are an artificial collection that contains brochures, correspondence, flyers, newsletters, and newspaper clippings regarding Phyllis Schlafly's involvement in defeating the Equal Rights Amendment in the 1970s. Additionally, this collection includes issues from the *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, a monthly newsletter published by Schlafly discussing the ERA, conservative issues, and women's rights. The *Phyllis Schlafly Report* newsletters have also been copied onto a microfilm reel. Materials of note in this collection include Schlafly's first book, *A Choice Not an Echo*, as well as Eagle Forum's newsletters and correspondence. The materials in this collection date from 1964 to 1991 and are arranged chronologically.

Container List:

Box 001	f. 1	<i>A Choice Not an Echo</i> , 1964
	f. 2	Newspaper clippings and correspondence, 1972-1979
	f. 3-4	<i>Phyllis Schlafly Report</i> , 1972-1986
	f. 5	Eagle Forum, brochures, correspondence, flyers, and newsletters, 1975-1980
	f. 6	Stop ERA correspondence, 1978-1991
Microfilm	roll 1	<i>Phyllis Schlafly Report</i> , 1972-1986

Index:

Index Term	Folder
Anti-feminism	2-6, roll 1
Campaign literature, 1964--Republican	1
Conservatism--United States	1-6, roll 1
Eagle Forum	2-6
Equal rights amendments--United States	1-6, roll 1
Nuclear weapons	4-5
Presidents--United States--Election	1
Schlafly, Phyllis	1-6, roll 1
Sex discrimination against women--Law and legislation--United States	2-6, roll 1
United States--Politics and government	1-6, roll 1
Women--Legal status, laws, etc.--United States	2-6, roll 1
Women's rights--United States	2-6, roll 1