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THE RECORDS & PAPERS OF NEW YORK STATE WOMEN'S POLITICAL CAUCUS



Accession # 2009-003

- Dates** Inclusive dates: 1987-2004; Bulk dates: 1992-1994
- Extent** 7 boxes / 3.5 cubic feet
- Creator** Adele Cohen
- Access/Use** Collection is open for research.
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Materials can be accessed at the *Brooklyn College Archives & Special Collections*, Main floor, 2900 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y., 11210.
- Languages** English
- Finding Aid** The guide is available in-house and on line.
- Acquisition/Appraisal** Collection donated to Brooklyn College by Adele Cohen in 2008.
- Description Control** Finding aid content adheres to that prescribed by Describing Archives: Content Standard.

Finding Aid written by Alegria Barclay, 2009.
- Preferred Citation** Item, folder title, box number, The Records & Papers of the New York State Women's Political Caucus, Brooklyn College Archives & Special Collections, Brooklyn College Library.
- Subject Heading** Women in politics -- United States.
Feminism -- United States.

Historical Note

The National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) was established in 1971 as a multipartisan, multicultural, intergenerational grassroots organization dedicated to furthering women's political participation at all levels of government. To that end, NWPC actively recruits, trains, and financially supports pro-choice women candidates running for political office, regardless of their party affiliation. The overarching goal of the organization is to guarantee women a powerful voice in the political process thereby ensuring equality for all women.

From the start, NWPC focused on three fundamental issues: reproductive freedom, affordable childcare, and the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. To this day, all three issues are central to the concerns of the NWPC and candidates who wish to be endorsed by the organization must be pro-choice as well as support the ERA. In order to better address the varied concerns of individual communities, counties, and states, the NWPC has helped organize hundreds of county and state chapters across the United States. These local caucuses are crucial in recruiting potential candidates and in providing women with the training, mentorship, and support they need to run for political office. They also help in identifying the key issues facing their communities and provide factsheets and information on upcoming relevant legislation. Finally, the local caucuses help potential voters to make informed choices by publishing endorsement guides for local and state elections.

The New York State Women's Political Caucus is a thriving branch of the national organization. Adele Cohen, the creator of this collection, was highly involved with the organization on the state and national level and served as the president of the New York State caucus from 1992-1994. She began her association with NWPC in the 1980s and remained actively involved after her presidency. Given her staunch commitment to the principles of the NWPC, she ran for political office and won a seat on the New York State Assembly in 1998, eventually serving three terms.

Scope and Content

While Adele Cohen was president from 1992-1994, the New York State chapter of the NWPC was host to thirteen county chapters and an influential voice at the national level. Ms. Cohen kept numerous records, papers, and ephemera pertaining to the NWPC as well as to the general state of women in politics. With 1992 lauded as the “Year of the Women Candidates”, this collection provides insights into the political optimism of those years and the procedures, governance, and goals of the National Women’s Political Caucus. The material of the collection spans from the late 1980s through the early 2000s, with the bulk of the collection centered on the years of Ms. Cohen’s presidency.

Collection Arrangement

Series 1. NYWPC Governance /Activities / Logistics

Series 2. NYWPC Chapters

Series 3. Correspondence / Press / Newsletters

Series 4. Political Endorsements / Voting Guides / Relevant Legislation

Series 5. National and State Leadership / National Finances

Series 6. National Conferences & Conventions / Informational Literature

Series 7. Related Women's and Political Groups

Series Statements

Series 1. NYWPC Governance / Activities / Logistics. Bulk dates: 1987-1996. 1 box; 0.5 cu. ft. Arranged by subject.

This series focuses specifically on the governance and activities of the New York State chapter of the NWPC. Consisting of twelve folders, the series includes important information such as the NYWPC by-laws, member manual, leadership training, and the NY state newsletter, *Caucus Talk* (1994-2004). Also included in the series are member and officer lists, as well as literature pertaining to the NY State 1996 Biennial Convention. Finally, one folder is devoted to Adele Cohen's personal notes dating from 1992 to 1997.

Series 2. NYWPC Chapters. Bulk dates: 1990s. 1 box; 0.5 cu. ft. Arranged alphabetically by chapter.

This second series contains a wealth of information on the activities and correspondence of all thirteen of the NY State chapters. While some chapters have very little associated literature, there is considerable documentation of the meetings, correspondence and newsletters of numerous chapters. Of particular interest are the Capitol District chapter, the Chautauqua chapter, and the Suffolk County chapter, all of which issued newsletters and reports on a consistent basis, as well as hosting many events.

Series 3. Correspondence / Press / Newsletters. Bulk dates: 1998-2004. 1 box; 0.5 cu. ft. Arranged by subject.

This series documents NYWPC's correspondence both within the organization and with members of the political community. The bulk of the correspondence dates from 1992-1994, the years of Adele Cohen's presidency. Also included in the series is the national newsletter, *Women's Political Times*, dating from 1992-1993. Finally, there are four folders pertaining to media coverage of women in politics, to NWPC in the press, and to media training materials.

Series 4. Political Endorsements / Voting Guides / Relevant Legislation. Bulk dates: 1988-1997. 1 box; 0.5 cu. ft. Arranged by subject.

One of the major functions of the NWPC is to determine which politicians are eligible for endorsement. As such, this series documents various stages of the endorsement process including procedures and policies, recruitment strategies, and related correspondence. On a related note, the NWPC also provides its members with voting guides, a few of

which are found in this series. Lastly, a variety of updates, newsletters, and reports relating to legislation of interest to women voters are included.

Series 5. National and State Leadership / National Finances. Bulk dates: 1992-2000.
1 box; 0.5 cu. ft. Arranged by subject.

This series is largely devoted to the leadership of the NWPC both nationally and at the state level. The bulk of the series consists of seven folders containing the agendas, notes, and follow-up materials for the NY state steering committee meetings from 1992 to 2000. Also included is literature from the national steering committee meetings as well as information pertaining to the state chairs. Finally, information about the national finances of the NWPC can be found in folder 12.

Series 6. National Conferences & Conventions / Informational Literature. Bulk dates: 1992-1997. 1 box; 0.5 cu. ft. Arranged by subject.

The NWPC hosts a national convention every other year for its members and the political community. This series contains packets, handouts, and programs for the 1993, 1995, and 1997 national conventions. Additionally, folder one includes a wide range of materials relating to NWPC sponsored conferences and events dating from 1991-2001.

Series 7. Related Women's and Political Groups. Bulk dates: 1990s. 1 box; 0.5 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.

Adele Cohen collected an array of material—informational literature, conference materials, newsletters and notes—from other women's groups and related political organizations. Of particular note are the materials relating to the Coalition for Women's Appointments, a subgroup of the NWPC. In addition, the series includes information on the Center for the American Women and Politics, an organization operating out of Rutgers University that provides factsheets, training, and conferences.

Container List

Series 1. NYWPC Governance / Activities / Logistics

Box 1

- Folder 1. New York State Member Manual
- Folder 2. NYWPC By-Laws (1987-1996)
- Folder 3. Membership and Officer Lists
- Folder 4. NY State Newsletter-Caucus Talk (1994-2004)
- Folder 5. NY State 1996 Biennial Convention
- Folder 6. NYWPC Leadership Retreat (12/12/1993)
- Folder 7. Fundraising (1993-1994)
- Folder 8. Expenses / Finances 1992-1994
- Folder 9. Office Rental and Insurance Information
- Folder 10. NYWPC Official Stationary
- Folder 11. NY State Maps (by district)
- Folder 12. Adele Cohen's Notes (1992-1997)

Series 2. NYWPC Chapters

Box 2

- Folder 1. Bronx Chapter
- Folder 2. Buffalo Chapter
- Folder 3 and 4. Capital District Chapter
- Folder 5. Chautauqua Chapter
- Folder 6. Madison County Chapter
- Folder 7. Manhattan Chapter
- Folder 8. Nassau County Chapter
- Folder 9. Onondaga Chapter
- Folder 10. Queens Chapter
- Folder 11. Rochester Chapter

- Folder 12. Staten Island Chapter
- Folder 13 and 14. Suffolk County Chapter
- Folder 15. Westchester Chapter

Series 3. Correspondence / Newsletters / Press

Box 3

- Folder 1. NYWPC Internal Correspondence (1990-2004)
- Folder 2. Correspondence with the Community (1992-1994)
- Folder 3. Correspondence between NYWPC and elected officials (1992-1994)
- Folder 4. Adele Cohen's Personal Correspondence (1992-1996)
- Folder 5. Correspondence between the State Chair and Caucus Leaders
- Folder 6. NWPC- Women's Political Times Newsletter (1992-1993)
- Folder 7. NWPC Newsletters (1993-2000)
- Folder 8. Assorted Newsletters and Calendars from NWPC and Outside Organizations (1988-1993)
- Folder 9. Press-Women in Politics (1992-1993)
- Folder 10. Press-NWPC in the News (1992-1993)
- Folder 11. Press- School Boards and Term Limits (1993-1996)
- Folder 12. Press Releases and Media Training Materials
- Folder 13. Photos

Series 4. Political Endorsements / Voting Guides / Relevant Legislation

Box 4

- Folder 1. Endorsement Procedures and Policies- National and NY State (1988-1997)
- Folder 2. Candidate Endorsement Packet
- Folder 3. Candidate Resumes and Information (1992-1994)
- Folder 4. Endorsements- Correspondence between NY State and National Headquarters (1992-1993)
- Folder 5. Correspondence To and About Candidates (1992-1993)

- Folder 6. Endorsements- Miscellaneous Notes (1992-1994?)
- Folder 7. Candidate Recruitment Guide (1995)
- Folder 8. Election Guides (1992)
- Folder 9. Election Results
- Folder 10. Relevant Legislation (1992-1993)
- Folder 11. Factsheets/Reports on Women's Political Progress (1991-1996)

Series 5. National & State Leadership / National Finances

Box 5

- Folder 1. NWPC Leadership (1992-1995)
- Folder 2. National Leadership Training for Members (1992-1993)
- Folder 3. State Chairs Information and Correspondence (1992-1994)
- Folder 4. National Steering Committee Meetings (1993, 1996, 1997)
- Folder 5. State Steering Committee (5/30/1992 and 9/26/1992)
- Folder 6. State Steering Committee (1/9/1993 and 4/17/1993)
- Folder 7. State Steering Committee (6/19/1993 and 10/16/1993)
- Folder 8. State Steering Committee (1/22/1994, 4/9/1994, 7/9/1994, and 12/03/1994)
- Folder 9. State Steering Committee (3/25/1995, 7/8/1995, and 9/30/1995)
- Folder 10. State Steering Committee (1/25/1997 and 4/19/1997)
- Folder 11. State Steering Committee (1/24/1998, 10/17/1998, and 1/22/2000)
- Folder 12. NWPC Finances (1992-1997)

Series 6. National Conferences & Conventions / Informational Literature

Box 6

- Folder 1. NWPC Conferences and Events (1991-2001)
- Folder 2 and 3. NWPC National Convention (1993)
- Folder 4. NWPC National Convention (1995)
- Folder 5. NWPC National Convention (1997)
- Folder 6. NWPC- Democratic Task Force (1992-1993)

Series 7. Related Women's and Political Groups

Box 7

Folder 1 and 2. Center for the American Woman and Politics (1992)

Folder 3. Coalition for Women's Appointments- Purpose, Policies, and Background
(1988-1992)

Folder 4. Coalition for Women's Appointments- Membership Lists

Folder 5. Coalition for Women's Appointments- Literature Relating to Meetings and
Nominations (1992-1993)

Folder 6. Coalition for Women's Appointments- Notes

Folder 7. Ford Foundation- Women's Program Forum (1993)

Folder 8. Other Women's Groups- Information Literature

Folder 9. Other Women's Groups- Conferences and Events (1992-1994)

Folder 10. Other Women's Groups- Newsletters (1991-1994)

Folder 11. Other Women's Groups- Notes

Folder 12. Other Women's Groups- Networking and Contact Lists