

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Pauline Kayes

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Illinois Statecraft - ERA Oral History project

Interview # ISE-A-L-2013-025

Pauline Kayes, a life-long feminist activist who actively demonstrated on behalf of the ERA Amendment in Springfield in 1982, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft – ERA Fight in Illinois Oral History project*.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Apr 29, 2013 Location: Kayes residence in Champaign, Illinois

Date: Aug 28, 2013 Location: Kayes residence in Champaign, Illinois

Date: Sep 24, 2013 Location: Kayes residence in Champaign, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Interview being
processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:45 + 2:29 + 2:12 / 1.75 + 2.48 + 2.2 = 6.43 hrs

Session 1: Early life, education and early years as activist in women's movement

Session 2: Kayes's involvement in feminism, and early fight for ERA Amendment

Session 3: ERA Amendment fight in Springfield in 1982, and Kayes's career post-82

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on January 31, 2014.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Pauline Kayes, *Illinois Statecraft*, ISE-A-L-2013-025

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Pauline Kayes was born in East Chicago, Indiana in June, 1951 and grew up in that area, the proud daughter of a working class family. Pauline excelled in school, and attended college at the Calumet, Illinois campus of St. Joseph's College, a Catholic school in Rensselaer, Indiana on a scholarship. She graduated as class valedictorian in 1973, delivering a scathing critique of her alma mater during her speech. Kayes attended graduate school at Purdue University-Calumet, where she majored in English, focusing her studies on progressive and radical women writers, while continuing to sharpen her views as a second-wave feminist. Upon completing her Masters Degree, she began a long teaching career at Parkland College, a community college in Champaign, Illinois.

While at Parkland, Kayes served as the second Director of the Office of Women's Program and Services until she was removed from that program by the college administration for being a feminist. She continued her involvement in feminist political activities and women's studies scholarship in the women's movement, often partnering with Mary Lee Sargent, who taught history at Parkland College. By the early 1980s Kayes had joined a group entitled the Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens. In protest to the reluctance of the Illinois State legislature to pass the Equal Rights Amendment, the group chained themselves to the railing outside the Illinois Senate chamber in early June, 1982. Kayes decided not to join the group when they wrote out names of their political foes in pig's blood on the marble floor outside the Senate chamber later that month. Kayes continued to be involved with feminist activities and women's studies at Parkland College following the defeat of ERA in 1982, and eventually regained her position as director of the Women's Program. She retired from teaching in 2012, and began her own consulting business on diversity education, intercultural competence and multicultural education.

Subject Headings/Key Words: ERA fight in Springfield, Illinois, 1972-1982; second-wave feminism; Grass Roots Group of Second Class Citizens; Parkland College, Champaign, Illinois; Women's Studies program at Parkland College; Mary Lee Sargent; St. Joseph's College, Rensselaer, Indiana; Jim Edgar; Phyllis Schlafly; National Organization for Women; women chaining incident in 1982; pigs blood incident in 1982;

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