

## Tina Tate

### The House Radio-TV Gallery

Overview of the responsibilities of the House Radio-TV Gallery during the 1970s and 1980s.

*Interview recorded June, 28, 2007*

So you would set aside committee seats. You would get witness lists. You would get committee testimony. And, you would stay around to be sure that if anything was shot, they got the shots they needed. We didn't have a lot of pool coverage at the time, so most of it was independent cameras coming in and setting up. Then, you'd be in the chamber for—during the whole time the House was in session. And, we stayed until special orders were over. We don't do that anymore because nobody carries that. It's a valuable part of the House, but it is not a part that television carries. So that was something we would always do. So your nights could be very late because they could go late on special orders, even after legislative business was over. And, we worked on Saturdays; we worked a half-day on Saturdays. We would only have one person in on the day, but every Saturday, somebody was in for a half a day. So, the pacing was much slower, with a more concentrated group of people that you knew needed to get access.

What you did have then, that you have not had for a long time, now, is both a producer and a reporter from the major networks. You have a producer and a reporter on the Hill, but not in both the House and the Senate gallery. Then, you had them both in the House and Senate gallery. And there was a bit of a hierarchy in terms of how a person made their career in the networks. They would start off being a House correspondent, then they would be a Senate correspondent, then they would be a White House correspondent, and if they got really lucky, they would be an anchor. So those—we knew a lot of the people who got to be in those positions because they had come through the House.