

The Honorable Nancy Lee Johnson
U.S. Representative of Connecticut (1983–2007)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Campaign Literature

Representative Johnson recalls discussing designing campaign literature while keeping costs low, and which motifs were effective for her race.

Interview recorded December 3, 2015

Well, this was, this is early in my congressional campaign and this consultant that we were working with, it was not a political consultant, and he had the idea that we should use the star because I was seen as quite a star. I was a little uncomfortable with that, but it did make really quite fun and classy literature. And blue and yellow were my colors. In my first campaign, our buttons were, you know, more traditional and sort of pedestrian. But that, the issue about literature is a big one because it doesn't cost very much. And if you have a lot of volunteers, and you can afford the literature, and in, often in those days, people could do radio, but not—and cable, which was very cheap, but not necessarily the majors. So, you didn't do the majors until the very end. And we managed to scrape together \$30,000 or something at the beginning and did an introductory television ad, which nobody had ever done before. And that sort of kept others out of the field and cleared the way for me to be the candidate, although I did have a primary with a guy who had won before. But we stuck to, stuck to those colors and we got toward the end to where we used things like this from other campaigns. And we managed to keep our costs to no more than the first campaign for about five campaigns by all kinds of economies of both personnel and materials. So, we could, we would reuse things if they were still around.