

Muriel Morisey

Senior Legislative Assistant, Representative Shirley Chisholm of New York

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

“Our Job Was Not Brooklyn”

Muriel Morisey discusses the difference between Capitol Hill staff and district staff.

Interview recorded April 19, 2017

But also, we were, we were Hill people, and our job was not Brooklyn. I never even set foot in her congressional district the whole time I worked for her. It, it was—that’s what—we were hired to do the DC-based policy stuff. And Thad Garrett, her, you know, point person in Brooklyn, her staff in Brooklyn were in charge of that. And I don’t think any of us on the, the Capitol Hill staff had any background in Brooklyn. I mean, I’d been to Brooklyn by that time in my life, I guess. But we were not—we did not come out of her constituency. We were all picked because we had savvy on the Hill and were strong policy people, and that’s what we did. I don’t remember anybody minding that. I don’t remember any tensions or anything. And her answer was, to the extent—and I do remember her stating the position, I can’t think of a specific moment—“I choose my Washington staff by their ability to be effective working on Capitol Hill on the policies I care about.” Period.