

**Patricia (Tish) Speed Schwartz**  
Chief Clerk/Administrator, House Committee on the Judiciary

## **Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress**

### **Men in Clerical Positions: Part Two**

Patricia Schwartz remembers men and women competing for clerical positions on the Hill.  
*Interview recorded June 22, 2015*

It was great because then the guys had a better insight into what the women had been doing all along. But it also challenged the women to stretch their wings. They could stay put, and do whatever, or they could say, you know, "I can do what he's doing, I have the same background, I have the same degree. I can do this." But you have to work for it. You have to actually get involved in the issue, and go outside of yourself, and do a lot more research and it—the opportunities, I saw them in the '80s. You could really see the change taking place in women knowing that they didn't have to be stuck in a clerical support job. That it was part of the job, and this, the professional staff had as much clerical duties as they did because they were, computers were in then, you know. The transition from typewriters to fax machines to, I mean, it was a dramatic change in just the way this place ran. And to see it, when you look back on it, you see how it just kind of evolved. And the women now had, even to struggle to fight for their clerical support positions—that was pretty much a given back in the '60s and early '70s. And now that the guys were coming in, guys related to guys better, in a lot of cases. So they would pick out a guy and become a mentor to this particular staff assistant, and he would rise through the process. But, women saw that, and would challenge that, and rise right to it. It's a matter of who does what, and who's willing to pay their dues to get where they want to go.