

The Honorable Lynn C. Woolsey
U.S. Representative of California (1993–2013)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Harsh Reality

Representative Woolsey remembers learning why some Members did not prioritize creating friendships within Congress.

Interview recorded March 7, 2016

But Thursday, we always knew we'd be there Thursday night. And we'd either vote that night or not, but we'd—in between—we'd go out and have dinner. And we, I mean it was such good camaraderie. And when, when we broke for the first election in '94, I sort of stood on the House—I mean, women all hugged each other goodbye and stuff—and watched the Members just walk out and not say goodbye to each other and, "See ya." And I thought, "Wow. That's cold." Well, after that election, I got it. Because all, such a great group of their friends don't come back. So, they don't get close. I mean, it's a—you know why, why invest—this is a very male thing, and I'm being very sexist saying this, but a generalist—you go and you represent your island, your district, and you don't have to get close to other people. That, that I don't work that way. That, I could never do that. So, but I was, I got the lesson right away.