Patricia (Tish) Speed Schwartz

Administrative Assistant, Committee on Science, House of Representatives, 1969–1994
Chief Clerk Administrator, Committee on Science, House of Representatives, 1995–2001
Chief Clerk Administrator, Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, 2001–2007

Oral History Interviews
Final Edited Transcripts

April 19, 2007
May 10, 2007

Office of the Historian
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

"Like most people, you really don't know what committees do. And once I got on the committee, I was wide-eyed. I was so typical of what you see when you see interns, and I was just like, 'Wow, is this great? Thank you.' And I just fell into it. It was the one thing that kept me on the Hill, because pretty much every job I had prior to that was two years. You get bored, you get in a rut. You got the routine down. The fascination with the Hill was it was never a routine. And as soon as you thought you had it down, there was an election, there was a change. The policies changed, the world changed, everything changed. And your direction changed, and you were just going along for the ride. So, it was fascinating."

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Abstract

Looking for a new challenge, Tish Schwartz stumbled upon a job opening for a secretary in the House Science Committee. Hired in 1969, in the midst of the space race between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, Schwartz described the thrill and excitement of working in a collaborative environment with a patriotic mission and sense of destiny. During her time on the committee, she experienced history-in-the-making, attending an early space shuttle launch and routinely meeting astronauts and leading scientists. In her series of interviews, she explained how the scope of the committee expanded beyond space once the honeymoon period subsided and led to an increased scrutiny of the space program.

Originally interested in working in a Member's office, Schwartz quickly found her niche, thriving in the fast-paced and unpredictable environment of a House committee. Throughout her career, she focused on the administrative side of committee work. Schwartz' detailed recollections of the behind-the-scenes work of committees, provides a unique look at the relationship between legislative and support staff. When she switched from the Science Committee to Judiciary in 2000, Schwartz used her previous expertise to develop procedures to increase efficiency and organization.

Initially hired during a time when women typically occupied clerical positions, Schwartz revealed a gradual shift in an institution steeped in tradition that allowed for increased opportunities for females. She took advantage of the changing atmosphere, taking on more responsibility and becoming an indispensable asset to both committees. Schwartz' interviews also reflect what she termed, "a simpler way of life," where local farmers routinely stopped by the House to sell produce and special treats for the holidays, and congressional staff gathered on the Capitol grounds for a picnic.

Biography

Patricia (Tish) Speed Schwartz was born on January 31, 1946, in Abington, Pennsylvania, a suburb of Philadelphia. The middle child of William Goodwin Speed, an electrical engineer and World War II veteran, and Jane Hoskinson, a homemaker and office manager, Tish attended nearby Catholic schools, St. Luke's and Bishop McDevitt High School. Urged by her father to leave the confines of Philadelphia to explore the wider world and apply for a job as a flight attendant, Tish accepted the challenge and worked for Northwest Airlines for two-and-a-half years.

Tish left behind the uncertainty of a career in which female employees who married or were considered too old to work as flight attendants, were dismissed by airlines. She moved to Northern Virginia where she found employment as a security officer for a software firm. In 1969, she visited Pennsylvania Representative Edward Beister's U.S. Capitol office looking for a new job. "I thought if I'm going to live in the Washington, D.C., area, then this is what's happening and this is where everything is," Tish later recollected. Although the office

did not have any openings, the administrative assistant, Mary Ellen Ducander, encouraged her husband Charles Ducander, a Science Committee staffer, to interview Tish for a secretarial job. Tish accepted a position with the committee, paving the way for her nearly four-decade career on the Hill.

In 1970, Tish married Stephen Schwartz. The couple welcomed a son, William Norman Schwartz, in 1975. While employed by the House, Tish Schwartz attended Northern Virginia Community School for two years, and earned a secretarial certificate from the Washington School for Secretaries.

Initially hired as a secretary for the Science Committee, Schwartz quickly branched out working as a publications clerk, transcript coordinator, and hearings clerk for several Science subcommittees. In 1976 she joined the newly created minority staff for the Science Committee. Here, she performed an array of administrative tasks in her role as administrative assistant on the Science Committee for Republican Members, Larry Winn of Kansas, Manuel Luján of New Mexico, and Robert Walker of Pennsylvania.

When Republicans took control of the House in 1995 for the first time in four decades, Schwartz was appointed Chief Clerk Administrator for the Science Committee. In her new position, she oversaw the hiring and training of the new majority staff, contributed to the development of policies for committee websites, and spearheaded the modernization and technological renovation of the Science Committee's hearing room.

Schwartz left the Science Committee in 2000, to work as the Chief Clerk Administrator for the House Committee on the Judiciary. During her six years with Judiciary she implemented many of the administrative policies and procedures that she established on the Science Committee. She also took the lead in the archiving the records of the impeachment proceedings against President William J. "Bill" Clinton.

On January 2, 2007, Tish Schwartz retired after 37 years of service in the House. Schwartz currently resides in Chantilly, Virginia.

Editing Practices

In preparing interview transcripts for publication, the editors sought to balance several priorities:

- As a primary rule, the editors aimed for fidelity to the spoken word and the conversational style in accord with generally accepted oral history practices.
- The editors made minor editorial changes to the transcripts in instances where they believed such changes would make interviews more accessible to readers. For instance, excessive false starts and filler words were removed when they did not materially affect the meaning of the ideas expressed by the interviewee.
- In accord with standard oral history practices, interviewees were allowed to review their transcripts, although they were encouraged to avoid making substantial editorial revisions and deletions that would change the conversational style of the transcripts or the ideas expressed therein.
- The editors welcomed additional notes, comments, or written observations that the interviewees wished to insert into the record and noted any substantial changes or redactions to the transcript.
- Copy-editing of the transcripts was based on the standards set forth in *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

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Citation Information

When citing this oral history interview, please use the format below:

"Patricia (Tish) Speed Schwartz Oral History Interview," Office of the Historian, U.S. House of Representatives, [date of interview].

Interviewer Biography

Kathleen Johnson is the Manager of Oral History for the Office of the Historian, U.S. House of Representatives. She earned a B.A. in history from Columbia University and holds two master's degrees from North Carolina State University in education and public history. In 2004, she helped to create the House's first oral history program, focusing on collecting the institutional memory of Members and staff. She co-authored two books: *Women in Congress: 1917–2006* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2006) and *Black Americans in Congress: 1870–2007* (GPO, 2008).

— PATRICIA (TISH) SPEED SCHWARTZ—

INTERVIEW ONE

JOHNSON: This is Kathleen Johnson, interviewing Patricia Schwartz, longtime staff with the House Committee on Science. The date is April 19, 2007, and the interview is taking place in the Legislative Resource Center conference room, Cannon House Office Building.

Today I'd like to start with some biographical questions. So first, if you could talk about when and where you were born.

SCHWARTZ: I was born in 1946 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

JOHNSON: And what were the names and occupations of your parents?

SCHWARTZ: My father was William Goodman Speed, and he was an electrical engineer, who's also a colonel in the United States Marine Corps, served in World War II and the Korean War. He was at Guadalcanal, and, sadly, he died at the age of 53. And my mother was a secretary and homemaker. My dad was born on May 1, 1917, in Kentucky. And my mother was Jane Hoskinson Speed. She was born in Philadelphia—German family, in an area called Germantown, actually, in Philadelphia. She was born on May 29, 1920. And they met and married in Philadelphia where my dad was attending Drexel and mom was working at Philadelphia Electric.

JOHNSON: What schools did you attend?

SCHWARTZ: I went to Catholic school for my primary school, St. Luke's, and my high school, Bishop McDevitt, all 12 years in Pennsylvania. And I went to two years in Northern Virginia Community College, here, when I moved down here. And also, one year at the Washington School for Secretaries, which no longer exists. But I was a

stewardess when I first came down here, so I wanted to hone up on my secretarial skills—then, people took stenography and shorthand and typing. They were the primary things.

JOHNSON: I'm going to pause for a minute.

BRIEF INTERRUPTION

JOHNSON: Okay, I'm back talking to Patricia Schwartz, and if you could, continue on with your educational background.

SCHWARTZ: Actually, after I graduated from high school, I had taken a course in commercial art because that was my underlying passion, that's what I wanted to do, but then I realized, at that particular time, I can't make a living at it. So I took it on more of a hobby, but I took two years of commercial art.

Then I worked in Philadelphia at a cable antenna company. Then I went to airline school—I joined Northwest Airlines as a flight attendant—and it was my opportunity to get out of a small town in Pennsylvania. I was with them, (Northwest Airlines) for two years, and then transferred from Minneapolis-St. Paul to Washington, D.C., and landed here because that was one of the three bases that they had—Spokane, Washington; Minneapolis-St. Paul; and D.C. And that's what prompted me to get what I called a "real" job because this was not going anywhere. I couldn't see doing it [flight attendant] more than two years. It was mind-numbing actually. But it was exciting, but it was not challenging me. That's when I started going to the Washington School for Secretaries, so I could find another job in D.C. And, eventually, I wound up on the Hill.

JOHNSON: Were you specifically looking for jobs at Congress?

SCHWARTZ: When I first started out, I worked for a trade association—I think the Institute on Shortening and Edible Oils was the name of it. That didn't hold my interest at all. I wound up quitting that and taking a job with a software contractor, Gulton Systems, a government contractor in Rosslyn, Virginia. And that's kind of what piqued my interest because they were working for the government and, there, I was their security officer and executive assistant to the vice president. I thought, "If I'm in Washington D.C., and this is the government, this is the business of this town, I want to be involved."

I'd always been . . . my family was always very strongly political and had definite opinions, and we always discussed them. But I never really found my identity until after I was out on my own, as far as what I really was, Democrat, Republican, liberal, conservative. You don't really test that water until you're out, making your own money. Then it becomes relevant. Now, I know kids today are much more adamant in college, but, again, they're not really in the world yet and don't really know how it affects them. And their idealism is wonderful, but it doesn't translate yet. So in any event, I decided to come to the Hill and look for a job. If I was going to live here, I was going to work on the Hill. And I walked into my Congressman's office from Pennsylvania.

JOHNSON: Who was that at the time? Do you remember?

SCHWARTZ: I think it was Congressman Edward George Biester, Jr., was his name, I believe. And the AA [administrative assistant] in that office, a woman at that time, interviewed me. They had no jobs open, but she took the time, and we sat and talked for about an hour. She was intrigued. And I had good strong secretarial skills, and I wanted to work on the Hill, and I just wanted to be part of this. It turns out her husband was the chief of staff for the House Science Committee—Charles Ducander was his name—and that was Mrs. [Mary Ellen] Ducander who had interviewed me. So she obviously went home and told him that she had interviewed me. And lo and behold, they (the Science Committee) were looking for somebody. And I got a call the next

day from Mr. Ducander, saying come on over and interview. I walked in and got the job. And I'm thinking, "I wanted to work for a Member. I didn't want to work for a committee."

I didn't know—like most people, you really don't know what committees do. And once I got on the committee, I was wide-eyed. I was so typical of what you see when you see interns, and I was just like, "Wow, is this great? Thank you." And I just fell into it. It was the one thing that kept me on the Hill because pretty much every job I had prior to that was two years. You get bored, you get in a rut. You got the routine down. The fascination with the Hill was it was never a routine. And as soon as you thought you had it down, there was an election, there was a change. The policies changed, the world changed, everything changed. And your direction changed, and you were just going along for the ride. So, it was fascinating.

So little did I think I would be here as long as I was. I had no idea. I had no idea. In fact, I remember when I first started, I didn't take out, I didn't sign up for any retirement because it was optional then. And one of the ladies I worked with, there was at least a 25-year gap in age between us. I was probably the youngest person on the committee at the time. They said, "You've got to take this out." And I said, "I'm not going to be here that long." Push, push, push. "Okay, okay." So I took it out. Thank God. But it was just more money out of your paycheck, and then you weren't . . . I think I was making $7, 000 or $8,000 a year. And it was like, "Wow, I'm in the money."

JOHNSON: This was in 1969?

SCHWARTZ: 1969.

JOHNSON: How old were you when you first started?

SCHWARTZ: I think I was 21, just turned 21. Yes. It was in March, so yes, just turned 21.

JOHNSON: And as a woman staffer during the 1970s, did you face any obstacles because of your gender?

SCHWARTZ: Well, I think back then we didn't know any better. But mainly, women that were hired on the Hill, especially on the committee where I was, it was very proper. Everybody was Mr. So-and-so. I was Miss—my maiden name was Speed—so I was Miss Speed, and our nameplates reflected that. Miss Speed, and that's what they called me. But that was under, I think it was George [Paul] Miller of California, who was the first chairman [of the Committee on Science and Astronautics] I served under. And the women sat in the front office, and there were maybe six or seven of us. And it was a typing pool, because there were no . . . there was a mimeograph that you would run things off. And when you did letters, you did letters and carbon sets. You'd have the yellow, the pink, or the blue, and that's how you made copies of things. So everybody worked as a pool. Tons of letters would go out. Everybody would get us.

So we were truly involved just in the administrative function: the filing, the typing, dictation. I actually took dictation and transcribed it back then. And the men sat in the back, and the women weren't allowed back there. They never sat back there. Not until later on, when they divided up into subcommittees, did that occur.

JOHNSON: Were there any women that weren't secretaries at the time?

SCHWARTZ: No, not on the Science Committee. When I first started, no. Except now . . . that's why in Members' offices usually the right hand for the Member, and that's what I found in most cases—not really then either—but I was fascinated that Mrs. Ducander was the AA, which is the person that ran the office. And that kind of intrigued me.

Then when I went to the committee, it was like back to status quo. Guys get all the important stuff; women get all this. I worked through that transition. It was also

interesting too then—young men did not apply for any of those support positions, which they do now, in an effort to get on the Hill. You know, you have as many young men out of college applying as you do women—in fact, in some cases, more, because they want to get their foot in.

JOHNSON: Some of the women staffers have referenced inadequate conditions on the Hill as far as bathroom facilities.

SCHWARTZ: Yes.

JOHNSON: Did you experience that?

SCHWARTZ: Yes. Actually, on the committee—and committees are set up that—I was in the Rayburn Building, which is the newer, at that time, of the buildings. I think it was built in 1965, the early '60s. So when I started in 1969, they had the outside bathrooms located in the common hallways of the building. And the committees had bathrooms in its suite, but they were just for the men. The women had to go out in the hall because they converted the women's bathroom into a storage room, which I thought was kind of interesting, but didn't even question it. Most offices, if you go in the corporate world, don't have facilities in the suite. You have to go out in the hall. But, yes. But I didn't question that. That was just kind of the way it was then.

JOHNSON: Did you find it difficult to advance, or to get greater responsibilities as time went on, because you were a woman?

SCHWARTZ: Actually, I was surprised. And maybe it was the changes that happened in the committee. I sat in the front office for a while. Then they gave me duties in publications and transcripts, and setting up meetings, so I got to talk to Members' offices. And then I was assigned to work on the Aviation, Research and Technology Subcommittee.[1] At that point was when I really realized that I was part of a team—

because my boss at the time was Bill Wells—and it was himself and myself. And then the minority counterpart at the time, the Republican counterpart, was Joe Del Riego. And the three of us were on that subcommittee. So we put on the hearings, and I did all the organization for it. They gave me—I was at the helm. So you were kind of a mini-office manager, so you kind of felt like you really were an important part of this team to make everything work. And that's when I got even more motivation.

It was challenging for me to fix things, to make things work better, to make sure we had this, anticipating what was going to happen. And what I found, and these are the things that I learned, that the more you can anticipate, the better you were going to be at your job, especially in the support category. The people that I worked with on the committee were actually very supportive.

What I found—and I thought this was interesting in this timeframe, in the '70s—the men were more supportive than the women. I got married in 1970, and I had a baby in 1975. And when my son was born, like most people nowadays, I had to keep my job. My husband was just starting out in his business, and I was working. And the criticism I got from the women that I worked with was just incredible. "Why aren't you home with your baby?" "Money! Could be rent, things like that." And I said truly, I was truly hurt.

But the guys that I worked with who were fathers were very, very supportive. In other words, if I had to leave because my son was sick or something, I was more likely to go to my direct boss, and he'd say, "Fine, don't worry about it." If I went to a woman that I worked with to help cover, the age difference was so great. There was a 20-year age difference. In fact, when I had my son in 1975, there was no policy on the committee. There was no maternity leave policy. There was none of that. And when I was pregnant, they actually developed one because . . .

JOHNSON: It was the first time they had encountered it?

SCHWARTZ: They had never had anybody who had a baby and came back. It was the first time. At that particular time, we also had the prior chief clerk of the committee had been a man. Up until the—I can't remember who was under Mr. [Olin Earl] Teague. I think it was Colonel Harold Gould. I don't know if it was Mr. Teague or Mr. [Don] Fuqua. They hired a woman who worked over at the Pentagon. Her name was Regina Davis. And I think they figured that since she had a military background, it would work; she could run this shop. She had no real Hill experience, but she had managed an office over there, so they brought her over here. And she was the one that worked with me to put in a policy. And it was extremely generous. I got three months off with pay.

JOHNSON: That's fantastic.

SCHWARTZ: It was wonderful. I wish they did that today. And even then, at the end of those three months, it was so hard. I mean, the baby was fine. I wasn't. But the baby was fine. But I came back to work. That's when you really find the weight of being a mom. It was really tough because when the baby would get sick, it became a challenge for me and my husband, whose job was more important. And usually mine wasn't as important as my husband's. {laughter}

JOHNSON: Did you initiate the effort to get more responsibility, or was that something that your bosses asked you if you wanted to do?

SCHWARTZ: No, I did. And that's what I found. I don't think, in a lot of cases, they knew what they needed. So you would watch them. And at that particular time, the subcommittees sat together. In other words, my boss sat in an office, I sat outside his office. So the calls would come in. I'd see him running around doing . . . "Well, could I look that up for you? Could I do that up for you?" So you've found out, and then they started things later down the line, like the legislative procedures course through the Clerk of the House, which was fantastic because most people learned the process of the Hill by osmosis. You just kind of watched. "Oh, that's how you

do this." There was no real formal training. And once they developed the little training sessions, it was fantastic. You could role play and actually take a bill from committee to the floor.

So I remember when I became in a position where I was still in the Republican minority at the time, when I switched—I moved from Democratic staff to the Republican minority—when we developed a minority, and I was the AA for the Republican staff. Every new person that came in, I insisted—whether they were professional staff, counsel, whatever—they take this course, because most of the people that we hired, the professional people for the Science Committee, brought to the committee an expertise. They were either an engineer, they worked in weather, they worked at NASA [National Aeronautics and Space Administration], they worked at the labs across the country. But they really weren't familiar with the Hill, how it worked, what the policies were, other than what they might have learned in civics in high school, maybe. But that stuck with them—how a bill is made type thing. So we insisted they went. And my boss supported me in that.

So I encouraged all of the staff assistants to go too. They didn't understand what role it would play, but once they took the course, they became an asset because they then knew, and they could do research. They could sit in on hearings in other committees, and come back and report, and understand what the process was that just happened, how that amendment made it in, and how it affected that particular bill, and they could follow up on that.

I knew that if you weren't proactive, it wasn't going to get handed to you. You had to be involved, or you were just going to sit there. And there were people that did that too; they just waited for something to be given to them. But if you were going to do anything, and learn anything, you had to be proactive.

JOHNSON: Can you describe the hierarchy of the Science Committee? You started in 1969, so in the early '70s, the structure of the subcommittees—and you've referenced a little bit with the divide between the committee and the subcommittee.

SCHWARTZ: Well, the committee, we were told . . . I remember there was a woman named Carol Rogers when I first started here. She was the most senior lady, a really wonderful woman. And she said, "One thing you have to remember is, you're here to serve the Members. That's our only function. That's the reason they need committee staff. Committee staff are here to serve the Members of the committee, both Republicans and Democrats. That's why we're here. That's our job! Simple!" And she said, "It's customer service." Now, I came from a background, having worked with the airlines in customer service, so I understood completely, exactly what she was talking about. You're there to serve.

When I first came, it was a typing-pool setup. We really didn't interact with the Members at all, unless they came through the front office and took a hard right back to the Members' lounge or chief counsel's and counsels' offices. It was actually a pretty sterile environment because we really didn't know a lot about what was going on on the committee—legislatively, politically—because we were just typists, clerical people.

But when we would get involved in certain hearings, that's when the questions would start. "Well, why are we having this hearing?" And then you would be assigned to work with this particular gentleman because he was putting on the hearing, so you would start asking, "Well, okay. Well, we're having the hearing on this particular bill, so what does this bill do? Why are we upset about it, or why are we for it?" And that was me asking, or someone else asking, and that's exactly how you would find out.

In a lot of cases, most of the people that worked on the Science Committee were in some way, shape, or form, educators. So they liked sharing that. They liked telling

you. If you asked the question, you would just get, "Wow!" It was like the floodgates opened. So it was wonderful. And when I said it was like a collegiate atmosphere, very much so. It was like getting my complete college degree.

JOHNSON: Do you know if the other committees at the time, the other standing committees, had a similar setup?

SCHWARTZ: No, that's the thing. We were so closeted in our—or I was so closeted in my own environment, I really didn't know anybody else on the Hill at that time. Not until I was here, probably until the 1970s, '74, '75, when people that I lived over in Virginia also worked on the Hill, and we would develop relationships. And they would work in a Member's office, and I was the only one at the time who was working on a committee. And I was just fascinated with what they did, and they were really fascinated with what I did. And frankly, once I weighed the two, I liked what I did better because it gave me a lot more flexibility. I wasn't driven by the incoming constituent mail. We had mail, but it was different. It was usually from an agency or the White House. And so we were actually dealing with policies, and not just—not that the constituents aren't important people, it's just that we were dealing—the Members were the constituents. It's the way I looked at it, and they were the people we were there to support.

The changes started occurring around 1975, '76, '77. The [Science] Committee, internally, was going through a struggle because I think the House was. The Republican minority was demanding to have support, their own support on the committee, to be able to provide legislation that actually reflected the Democratic point of view and the Republican point of view combined. In other words, if we had this staff on the committee, it would be worked out in committee, so that the product that came out was a true committee product, and not just the leadership product, which is what it had been prior to that. I know that back then, I think even the Rules Committee had established a one-third ratio, and so this was way early on, but committee chairs weren't forced or cajoled to do it.

The Republican minority, they got a lot of new, fresh, young faces. Freshmen came in, and they were here to change things. And I know at the time, I think, Mr. [Charles Adams] Mosher was the Ranking Member for the Republicans. And he was like a father figure, in a sense, but he wasn't that old. He just had that calming influence about him. He was very bipartisan. He was one to go, "Okay, let's see how we can work this out." He didn't want to argue over everything. He wanted to talk about it, come up with a solution, and make things work.

But the freshman Members, Mr. Jack [John Waldemar] Wydler, Mr. Larry [Edward Lawrence] Winn, [Jr.], they came in, and they said, "We want our people. We want to be able to say we don't have anybody; we don't have any input into this process. We're constantly voted down in committee; we're constantly voted down on the floor. So our purpose, we're elected, we need to do this." The discussions were held sometimes in front of staff because the minority office was a little tiny anteroom, and it was also the minority lounge and the Members' lounge. So the Members would come in, and they would sit there having their meetings, and you're sitting there, not really listening. But you're listening, and you're going, "Oh, so that's what's going on." The struggle was to get the clerical support staff to work on these issues.

Now, the Science Committee was probably the least partisan of all the committees. I think Armed Services has always been bipartisan—they just don't reflect Democrats or Republicans at all. But I think when you get into the bigger committees like Commerce and Judiciary, for instance, it's a little bit more difficult. The science issue was like "apple pie and America" and space, and everybody loves space, the next frontier. Well, not everybody, but most people at that time did because it was the frontier. So the battle was interesting because there were not a lot of battles at that time.

JOHNSON: And was the end result of this in 1976, when you said there was the newly created Republican minority committee staff?

SCHWARTZ: Right. There was a committee staff, but there wasn't really more than—I think originally there was one staffer for the Republican minority, and then they increased it to two staff and one secretary. They sat over in a library on the other side of the hearing room—not until we actually got space in 2320 Rayburn Building—and I was sitting in there then.

The reason I actually left [the majority], I had to make a choice. I was kind of in an interesting position. I was the secretary; there weren't staff assistants then. I was the secretary for the Aviation, Research and Technology Subcommittee, working for the Democratic staff. And they were doing this struggle with the minority. That's when you start thinking, "What am I? What am I fighting?" It's just like, "What am I? What do I believe?" They had an opening on the minority, Republican staff. Again, I'd had a baby, and I wanted kind of a combination of the Republican background, which is what I had determined I was. That's what my parents were. But I found my true values there, and they were looking for people, and I thought—I took a pay cut, they didn't pay the minority the same, and I went to work for the Republican minority. I also took a kind of a job cut, in a sense, because when I first started with them, the minority Republicans, they had an AA, and I was sitting upstairs in a backup position, kind of as reception. So I was right back to where I started.

Then they moved me down to the Energy Subcommittee, but I was a "Republican staff person" on the Energy Subcommittee. They had a Democratic secretary and a Republican secretary on each of the subcommittees at the time, and that's when I really started to grow. Because there were so few of us, that everybody was called on to produce and went to hearings and did summaries of the markups. And nobody had done that before, so I wanted to know what went on. I would get calls from our Republican Members' offices saying, "What happened in markup?" "Well, why don't I just create a sheet for you?" So I did the sheet, ran it by my boss, and now we did a summary of every markup. Every time we had one, we'd send it out to our Republican counterparts. It built itself into a little newsletter, monthly newsletter that went out to the Republicans.

As the leadership on the committee changed on the Republican side, the handbook was developed under Paul Vander Myde, the Republican chief of staff, and, again, Mr. Wydler, the Ranking Republican Member, to keep the new Members informed. Most of the Members on the Science Committee at the time, especially the Republican Members, were brand new. And I'm not sure of the logic that got them assigned there because not all of them were science people. So basically, it's break it down to the common denominator; take the mystery out of it; keep it flat, straight talk, not the science; explain the issue to them; explain what the conservative angle is, the Democratic angle is, what the ultimate goal is. And try and keep it to one page with a point of contact on it.

And that's when I found that I got more involved in the substance of what was going on in the committee. And I really thoroughly enjoyed it. It was a chance. It was kind of like a whole new generation coming in. People my age, well closer to my age anyway, and the people they were hiring were all fresh out of college. So it was like, "Wow, this is all young people." Most of the people that had been on the committee before were my folks' age. So it was just a whole breath of fresh air. And they happened to be Republicans. So I was kind of carried along with that.

JOHNSON: You brought up a lot of interesting points that I want to ask you to elaborate on.

SCHWARTZ: Sure.

JOHNSON: One thing, just backing up a little bit, you talked about the committee markups, and how you were giving information to Members, so they could see what was going on in the subcommittees. At the time, in the post-Watergate era, there was pressure from the outside and the inside of the House to have a more open feel to Congress, so that people knew what was going on in the House, and also in the committee. Did you, in your committee, did you feel that they fell along with this, and they agreed that people should know more about what was happening as far as their committee work went?

SCHWARTZ: We were never discouraged from telling people. When people would call in and ask what the results of markups were, in most cases, they were lobbyists because I don't think the public—because they weren't televising the floor yet. The public wasn't as tuned in to what was happening. It was usually somebody had a vested interest in that particular issue. But we were encouraged. There was nothing secret about it. The only thing was if people wanted to see a transcript, they literally had to come into the office, sit in the office, and read the transcript. It could not leave the office. I think at the time, they didn't even publish markups. I think they just took the transcript, put it in the file, and archived it.

JOHNSON: You talked about some of the age disparity—you were very young—and you said that there were older members of the staff. Was there a lot of staff turnover at the time, or did people view this as a career?

SCHWARTZ: No, as a career. Right. A lot of the women, when I first started here, had already been here four years, five years. [The Science] Committee actually started in, I think, '58 or something like '59. But I think it wasn't a full-blown committee. It was a very small staff.

They said they actually had—they were telling me at the time, they had rooms over at the Holiday Inn over in Arlington, Virginia, and that's where they set up operations until this building (Rayburn Building) was built, and then they moved in here. But it was very small. I think there were maybe 20, 25 people at the time on the committee. And it's funny because all the rooms that the Science Committee had, I keep thinking, "Where did this room come from? I didn't know we had this room?" They had four hearing rooms. Today they have two! They had a lot of hearing rooms. That's one thing I noticed, that the Science Committee had at that time four hearing rooms. They had a hearing room, the main hearing room, 2318; they had 2325; and they had two in the basement, which are now staff offices, for their subcommittees. But they still have the two hearing rooms, and I was like, "Wow."

JOHNSON: So as far as you know, was that unusual for a committee to have that many hearing rooms at the time?

SCHWARTZ: No, I don't think it was at all.

JOHNSON: You mentioned a little bit about the committee starting. So it was a Select Committee in 1958, and then it was an established, standing committee in 1960. And I came across a really interesting quote from Representative [Kenneth William] Hechler, talking about the sense that people had when the committee first started. I wanted to read this quote, and then get your take on it. He said that, "There was a sense of destiny, a tingle of realization that every Member was embarking on a voyage of discovery, to learn about the unknown, to point powerful telescopes towards the cosmos, and unlock secrets of the universe, and to take part in a great experiment." As a staffer at the time, starting in 1969 and into the '70s, did the staff also have that sense of excitement?

SCHWARTZ: Very much so. It was also like we were bound together by that. When I started here, the space program was in its infancy. I remember watching the landing on the moon, and taking pictures of the TV when they landed. And to actually think that I was part of this; this committee authorized funding for this. Then they actually let staff go down to the launches. And I'd just started, and then there was a part-time lady. They never let secretaries go before, so they decided to let two go down to a launch. They put everybody's name in a hat, and they drew out mine—the new kid and the part-time person. And you should've heard the groan. But it was unbelievable. When I got down there and when that shuttle took off, the ground shook, and it was just awesome. That's the only way I can describe it. And to be really part of it, I was hooked. That was it. This is the most incredible thing, and, to me, every astronaut was an amazing person to put his life on the line to do that.

Then when you meet them—because we'd also host, we'd have a hearing when they came back from whatever mission they were on, and they would testify before the

committee as to their mission. And then the staff would get a chance to meet them and get their pictures taken. It was just fascinating to meet these people because they were like real people. They were like real people. They had a sense of humor, and it was just . . . I would pinch myself that I was actually working on this committee because it was such a cool thing. I've always been fascinated by science, but it intrigued me even more that I was here. I wanted to know as much as I could about it.

Actually, at one point, they were offering flying lessons through the Congressional Staff Club at the time. And I'd signed up for flying lessons because I'd been a stewardess and I loved flying. I was never afraid of it. And I was taking the ground school. But then they were talking about the flight school, and I went, "Oh gosh, it costs money. Can't do that." So I kind of let it go there. But it really helped me understand, when I was working on that subcommittee, and you had said about was it necessary to be proactive. Here I am, working on the Civil Aviation Subcommittee. What better way to find out about what they're dealing with than to take this ground school? So I did the cursory thing. I never followed through. I only did it for a year, but it gave me a better understanding of what they were talking about.

Because on the Hill people use acronyms all the time. And you're sitting there going—we actually have a cheat sheet book that the committee made up on acronyms, because it was like, "I don't know what they were talking about." Even in the testimony, you didn't know—when they were talking about the CARD Study, for instance, which is the Civil Aviation Research and Development Study that was put out by DOD [Department of Defense]—what the heck that was. And at the time, it was trying to revamp civil aviation. Well, that came to our committee, and I was working on the subcommittee that had the responsibility for putting together that report. So, well, it's pretty difficult to put together a report if you don't understand what it's about. So I was in that sense, proactive.

Nobody really thought twice about it. I don't think people gave you extra points for doing that, being proactive. It was pretty much . . . and the sense I got, it was kind of like expected. If you want to be involved, you've got to get involved. If you don't, that's fine too. But nobody was going to tell you to do it. And I think that's the thing that intrigued me the most about this place (the Hill). That's when I saw you could pretty much go anywhere if you really put your mind to it.

When I was working on the Republican staff, my whole focus was administrative and legislative. I was very heavily involved in tracking all the legislation for the people I worked with, and administrative because there was only one, me! When we, the Republicans, took over the House in the 104th Congress [1995–1997], at that point my boss turned to me and said, "What do you want to be?" And, it was like, "I can't do both." I wanted to do both, but I couldn't do both. And I saw more opportunity for me to grow on the administrative side than on the legislative side, mainly because the Members were so heavily involved in the legislative side. All the professional staff were involved in the legislative side. I didn't have those credentials. Nobody wanted to do this, the administrative work, and it was a mess. And I could clean it up. I could provide something. So I became the chief clerk and took on my mission from there.

JOHNSON: Can you describe your path to becoming chief clerk, your titles and some of your job responsibilities during your career?

SCHWARTZ: When I first started, I was pretty much front desk. And at that point, it was answering phones, taking dictation, typing up letters, and whatever. Then as that got moving along, they gave me additional responsibilities. "Could you keep track of other publications that we print? When people ask for them, could you send them out?" "Okay, you're doing that." "Okay, she's done that. Now, how about transcripts? Want to do transcripts?" "Okay, I'll do that."

But I handled all the transcripts for the committee. And at that time, the Members especially, and the staff, edited them like crazy. They would change, just like they used to do with the floor. They would say something. The next day it would show up in print, and you'd look at it and go, "They didn't say that! I remember he said something else; that's not what he said." And it always amazed me, but that's the way it was.

Then I got more responsibility, and I met pretty much with the LAs (legislative assistants) and the appointment secretaries. And I handled disseminating schedules. And back and forth, and this is a change in this hearing and that. So I got very involved in that. From there, they moved me into the subcommittee. I think I had done everything that there was to do on the committee at that time and obviously had done it well. So they moved me into this position, the admin assistant Republican staff.

There was actually a group off the Hill called the Chowder and Marching Society, which consisted—it's a loose band.[2] It wasn't an official group at all. But it was a lot of the members of the staff, the professional staff on the committee, and the agencies and the lobbyists. And they formed this group, called the Chowder and Marching Society. And they gave these awards every year. Tongue-in-cheek mind you, but some of them were pretty serious. And I actually got Secretary of the Year Award in 1977. And it was like, "Wow," got a plaque for the wall and everything. And it was really a tongue-in-cheek group. But the fact that I got that said a lot because I was competing, believe it or not, with people in the agencies. People put you up for this, so it was kind of cool, I thought.

But from there you kind of get, when you're working on a committee, and on a specific subcommittee, you really get tunnel vision. You're looking at the committee through the perspective of that subcommittee's jurisdiction. So you don't really know what the other subcommittees are working on. Not until I moved from the Democratic majority staff to the Republican minority staff, where there were fewer

of us, did I realize what the subcommittee did, and then I got the full committee picture. Now I was in a position of being an AA, and I could see the picture. We were doing the Member briefing book at the time. My responsibility—we did it quarterly—so my responsibility was to get it updated, make sure when things changed, when bills got passed, when authorizations got passed, that they were updated as we went, and then we'd send out updates.

What I instituted—and I did it mainly because it was something that was needed—if I was in the position, and I had been, of a secretary on a subcommittee, you don't know what's going on on the rest of the committee. The information was important to all. Each subcommittee knowing what each was doing and how it translated to the full committee. I was now in a position of being an AA on the Republican staff, and we had secretaries on each subcommittee. So I had monthly meetings. I would make them, the secretaries, go to their hearings, sit in the hearing, and write a summary of that hearing. Give it to me because I wasn't there. I would read it, and then I could tell whether they knew what they were talking about. You can't write about something and explain it if you don't understand it. "Why do we have to do that?"

We took that summary—after I edited, my boss edited—and we sent it to the Members. And we kept it pretty simple. I said, "It's got to be one page, and it's got to be factual. You're not trying to put a spin here. The issue is 'this,' these are the people that testified, and the highlights. In other words, the chairman focused on this, the Ranking Member focused on this. No conclusion. This is just the facts, so the people that didn't make it to that hearing understood what went on when they got the transcript back."

What this exercise did over a four-year period was prepare the secretaries really well for when we (the Republicans) took over the House in the 104th Congress. So each one of the secretaries became the lead secretary on the subcommittee they were already on. And they knew the issues like the back of their hands. The Members'

offices would call. They could answer simple questions. They couldn't get into the logic or the policy behind the question, but they could tell you what happened. It made the transition seamless.

JOHNSON: This is something that you instituted?

SCHWARTZ: Yes. And it worked well. My boss was extremely supportive, and it just was—it pulled the secretaries in. I wanted them to feel the way I felt about where I worked. I loved working on the Hill, and I wanted them to love it. I remember every time I would interview—they actually got me into the position of interviewing for the staff assistants—I would do the first line of interviews. I'm here selling them on it, and I had to slap myself around saying, "Stop it. You're not selling them on the committee, stop it. They've got to sell you on hiring them." But I was so excited, and everybody that I talked to after that said you were so excited about your job. And even some, until recently when I left, I still did all the interviewing because I liked picking the minds of people that come to want to work here. "Why do you want to work here?" "This is what it's really about. Is this what you really want to do?" "This is not . . . you're not coming here to make money; it's not what you do. There's really no glory. The Members are where the glory is. But you're part of the process."

It's just, talking to you about it today, I still get excited about it. But that was one of the things that I was proud of because when we took over in the 104th Congress, it made the transition so much easier. The staff secretaries knew their areas. The people that supported the professional staff knew. Again, my boss wouldn't have thought of that, but I had been in that position of being support on a subcommittee. And I knew that if you don't know what's going on, how the heck are you going to make it work, or even help them to set up a subcommittee and help make it run, and understand what the focus of the committee was?

We were a small group, the secretarial staff assistants. We met once a month, and when we became part of the majority, I continued the same thing. We had more secretaries then, and you were even more spread out. But I never forgot how it felt to be at a subcommittee, how it felt to be in the basement of the Rayburn Building, wondering what the heck is going on up there, and why doesn't someone share information? And around here, knowledge is power. Information is everything. And not that you're going to do anything with it, but wouldn't it be nice if somebody just told you what was going on? And I think that was half of it and made us more inclusive.

JOHNSON: Is there a separate Member briefing book for the majority and the minority?

SCHWARTZ: They didn't do one.

JOHNSON: Okay. So, this was just for the minority?

SCHWARTZ: We did it.

JOHNSON: And something I was hoping you could talk a little bit more about was the minority and the majority staff of the Science Committee. What kind of interaction was there between the two?

SCHWARTZ: Daily. Actually, the way the committee was set up is, we were part of a team. Unlike most other committees—and this is what I've since found out—on the Science Committee, you had a full committee staff, and then you had, let's say for instance, five subcommittees. On each of the subcommittees, a minority person sat. On each of the subcommittees, also a minority staff assistant or secretary sat. So you had two people sitting among and supporting the staff assistant for the majority, and the staff assistant for the minority were part of a team that made that subcommittee work. We went in and set up the hearing rooms together. We xeroxed together, we covered the phones together, we did things together. My primary focus was to

support the person assigned to that subcommittee, and the folks upstairs. But I was part of this subcommittee, and that was my role, too. So I took a secondary position—majority staff assistant was the lead—I was kind of a backup. In some cases, on the subcommittees, they may have had two majority secretaries and one minority.

You have to understand, back then too, most of the people didn't do their own work. We, meaning the professional staff, they turned to us, and we typed everything for them. Things have changed. That is not the case now, where on most of the subcommittees you have one staff assistant, because the counsels and the professional staff are very used to preparing their own documents, even putting together their own booklets and doing everything themselves. So they're kind of raised in that environment. But most of the people that we supported came not from the Hill. They brought in expertise either from an agency or an outside entity. They were used to having support, so that's what we did.

JOHNSON: You mentioned several times that you felt like you were part of a team, and that there was a very collegial atmosphere. Did this stay the same, even with the minority splitting and becoming more formalized in the mid '70s?

SCHWARTZ: There were tensions, mainly because we were stretching our wings a little. One of the battles—we had Christmas parties every year—we had wine and cheese parties. Everybody got along. The staff got along very well. It became tense when things like training . . . we'd get new computers or new software, and the majority staff would get their training first, or they would get their computers first. And I'd be running and going, "Hello? Did you forget us?" "Oh, you'll get yours. Your turn will come." And you sit and wait. And I said, "Well, when are we going to get training?" "You'll get training." "Excuse me, can we . . ." that kind of thing. And it was a lot of that back-and-forth tension. We had staff, but we really didn't have any control over them. The majority staff took care of our parking, told us where we were going to park, and how many parking spaces we were going to have. And it was

their discretion. They also told us what our salaries were going to be. The only thing we could probably control was our time, but that was about it.

I remember at one point—it was when Jack Swigert, former astronaut from *Apollo 13*, was the chief of staff—he refused to give me a raise.[3] "She's married. Her husband works. She doesn't need more money." That's when it was like, "Do you believe what he said?" He was a single guy. And I'm working because I love it? You know, yes I did love it, but the salary was very important. But I couldn't make any more than anybody on the other side. There was no way, no matter what I was doing, even though it was more than, it was controlled by the majority staff. That drove me up the wall. I actually tracked the budget. I tracked—one-third of the budget, of the salary part, was supposed to be ours. So I tracked our salaries. I took a look at them. And I could see, here's what we were supposed to be getting, and here's what we did get. And we never, just to prove to them that we knew that we weren't spending that much money. And I knew what you guys were making, and "Hello, can't we? . . ." So it was a struggle.

And I think the staff went back and forth. And I think Jack Swigert at the time was struggling with it too because . . . and I didn't know this until I was reading the history, but he was a Republican. And he was told at the time, I think by Mr. Teague, not to mention that again. {laughter} But that was the way it was. Mr. Mosher, who was the Ranking Member on the Republican side, retired from Congress and ultimately was brought back as the majority Democratic chief of staff for the committee.

So that's the way the committee was set up. It really truly wasn't terribly partisan. It was that struggle for equal rights if you will. That our minority, which the Republicans are again now, have helped create more of a balance than there was under the Democratic majority of old. And the Democratic majority today will never go back to what they had before because they now know they could be back

there, and they do get one-third. It was very important to have control of the salary of the staff that worked for you for either party.

JOHNSON: Did you notice any significant changes with the different chairmen at the time, because you worked under several different chairs?

SCHWARTZ: Mr. Teague was still old school. Mr. Fuqua was—a lot of changes started happening with Mr. Fuqua. We started stretching our wings a little bit more, meaning the committee. There was a constant struggle for jurisdiction, I remember that. I think the committee went from a standing committee and major committee to a non-major committee too—and the battles for jurisdiction were huge.

And when we, the Republicans, took over in the 104th Congress, and I sat right outside of the General Counsel's office, that's when it became apparent to me that the battle was constantly watching the legislation as it came through. And reading the fine print and making sure things were . . . when we were drafting legislation that it would come back to us, which is what other committees were doing. And then challenging the Speaker's Office, or the Rules Committee, to hold on to that jurisdiction that should be coming to us rather than going to Energy and Commerce, because Energy and Commerce we looked at as the bad people who were pulling away all of our jurisdiction. And because Science was a small committee, it was a struggle to keep it alive. Now I think today, just with the issues of the environment, which were always there then . . . I remember doing alternative fuels, and wind energy and solar power, but this was back in the '70s.

JOHNSON: So even in the '70s, the focus of the committee wasn't just on space?

SCHWARTZ: No, no. It was on those things, even though it wasn't as paramount, because the oil issue wasn't there like it is today, in your face. It was still there. It just didn't . . . there was solar power. "Oh, that's great." There was wind power. "Okay, that's terrific." But the space program! {laughter} And everybody was still focused on that,

even though there were so many things that came from the space program, that I think today even the public isn't aware of, or maybe even Congress isn't aware of, because the agencies aren't set up to tout themselves. In other words, this is what you're getting back for the money spent.

I remember there was a booklet that NASA used to put out on the benefits of the space program. But their funding was cut, so they couldn't put the booklet out anymore. {laughter} And it was kind of like, hmm, if you put the booklet out, maybe they'd understand why you need the money. Because I'd asked them, "Why did you stop?" "Our funding was cut; we can't do it anymore." But it was that kind of thing. The one agency that to me at the time was the most forthcoming was NASA, and the National Science Foundation was huge. We worked very closely with them. And the jurisdiction of the committee focused on non-military research and development, so it was pretty broad in that area.

And it was just fascinating seeing the science evolve. I remember reading *ScienceNews* all the time, and I was so proud of myself. My biology teacher at school would be so proud of me, looking at what I know now. But it was a challenge to stay up. I think it was also a challenge to get Members on the committee who were focused in that area. For most of them, the word science freaked them out. That was not their background. "We've got a builder from Kansas." "What does he know about science? What does he want to be on this committee for?" "This is where he was assigned." "Okay. This is what I'll do." And then once you get here, you feel, okay, wind energy and solar energy and nuclear. Everything was here. It's just a matter of we always thought somebody else was doing it, the research and development. I know that the committee's always taken the oversight jurisdiction very strongly.

It's a responsibility that a lot of committees don't make time for. They authorize the legislation, but they never take a look at it after. Are they using this money wisely? I remember we used to put out reports on the $100,000 wrench that came out of the

space program or things like that. And those were the battles royal in our markups on legislation. "Why do we need this? Because of this." And it's still going on today, the pork-barrel spending.

But as far as the staff, I think everybody got along very well. I remember, even when I left the Science Committee to go to Judiciary, I was still in contact with them—the people I knew best from the minority—because they were the people that I grew up with. I literally grew up on the Science Committee. And it was kind of like a family, an extended family, as quirky as they were. {laughter}

JOHNSON: You talked about some of the Members on the committee, the Congressmen. And I say men because there really weren't many Congresswomen that were part of the Science Committee. What do you remember about the few women? I know that Marilyn [Laird] Lloyd was on the committee for her entire tenure. Do you recall anything about the women Members at the time?

SCHWARTZ: I did not work with her directly. I remember, I think she was on the Energy [Research & Production] Subcommittee. And she was very well respected. I think she held her own. She had her own focus, directed, of course, by the chairman, but still all of the subject matters she knew very well. She hired a female staff director. I can picture her—I cannot remember her name—and she was the first woman staff director because they had all been men before. And that opened a floodgate too. One of the people I worked with too was in the minority. Her name is Shana Dale, and she's now the deputy director down at NASA. And she worked on our Space Subcommittee. And I see these people, they kind of go into the administration, and it's like I knew you way back when.

JOHNSON: So you really didn't have the opportunity to work with any women Members?

SCHWARTZ: Not really, no.

JOHNSON: You talked about the Civil Aviation and Research Subcommittee. Were there other subcommittees that you worked on, or was this the main one?

SCHWARTZ: I supported the Space Subcommittee, but from a distance. I supported the Energy Research and Development Subcommittee. That's where I was when I was downstairs in the two subcommittees. We had two energy subcommittees. One was considered the clean fuel, and then the dirty fuel. I was on the clean-fuel side. I was the wind-energy person. The other was coal, oil, that kind of thing. And those were the two subcommittees that I had the most experience with. With the Aviation Subcommittee, I worked on the majority side, and that was just me. I was the only staff assistant, and I was there for three years.

JOHNSON: And you mentioned the preparation for hearings. Can you provide more specific examples of what it was that you did for the subcommittee?

SCHWARTZ: Basically you're setting up a meeting that the Members are having to take testimony from a series of witnesses that they have invited. We would be responsible—the staff assistants are responsible for getting the correspondence, which is an invitation letter from the chairman of that subcommittee, to the person that they would like to testify, giving them the parameters of the discussion we were going to have, what we're going to be talking about, and what we need from them. In other words, we need 100 copies of your testimony, we need a contact point, and then your contact point on the committee would be the staff assistant, and they would get back to me. I would make sure that they had everything they needed, whether it's a slide projector or whatever, to make their presentation at that particular meeting. I'd also make sure that they got what they needed after the meeting. Did they need copies of this or that? And I'd follow up with a transcript, send it to them, which in turn they would edit and send back to me, and then we'd put it in final print. But my job was just to make sure the paper flowed.

The professional staff on that particular subcommittee met with—usually talked to the witness a couple of times before they testified to make it—they were comfortable with what we were going to talk about, what they saw the issues coming up from both sides of the aisle would be, so that they were kind of prepared. The minority was also made aware at that time of who the witnesses were. A notice went out. And the subcommittee majority did that too. The subcommittee would usually put out the notice, or send the information to full committee, who would in turn put out the notice.

And basically, it was follow-up. You'd be running maybe two hearings a week. You'd have one that just finished, so you're closing that out, put that aside, start the other one up, and then the follow-up. And most of the time, it was up to you to keep the records straight, like this needs to be in by this time and this time and this time. So you're creating the mechanism to make it work.

JOHNSON: Were there any particularly memorable hearings that you recall?

SCHWARTZ: I remember one. It was the Aviation Subcommittee. We didn't have a timer, or the timer didn't work. And I was asked to sit in the back of the room with cards, and the cards had five, four, three, two, one on it. And I just remember sitting there, and I was supposed to use this little hand-held egg timer, and let them know that you had five minutes. This was for the Members, too. And I remember looking at, I think it was Mr. [Barry Morris] Goldwater, [Jr.], at the time. And I put up the "one," and I put up "stop." And he went, "I'm not stopping. So you can put up as many cards as you want there in the back. I'm not stopping." And I'm sitting there, "Okay." And that was about it. I said, "I'm never going to do that again." So we got them fixed really quick. But that was, I think, the only time I was embarrassed in a meeting, and I was really just in the back of the room.

JOHNSON: Well, if it's all right with you, I think we'll just stop for a minute to switch CDs.

SCHWARTZ: Sure.

END OF PART ONE ~ BEGINNING OF PART TWO

JOHNSON: What were some of the typical assignments and duties that committee staff were responsible for at the beginning of a new Congress?

SCHWARTZ: At the beginning of a new Congress, it's basically you've got your Members, so you have to do rosters, lists, find out who their point of contacts were in their office. So in each Member's office, you would need their LA, you would need their chief of staff, you would need their appointment secretary. Those were the points of contact. So you'd have to make the calls and create this master list for both the Democrats and Republicans. The professional staff would meet, would schedule meetings with each of the Members. So they'd go around and introduce themselves and let them know that this is the staff and what can we do for them and what their particular goals were in the process. They would also meet with the chairman, but this was cursory in the beginning.

For the support staff it would be actually archiving, getting rid of all the files from, we'd usually keep—the way I had set it up, you would usually keep the last two years on hand. So three years out, you'd have a Congress behind, and then you'd retire the third year, that would be gone. And you'd start all new files, because it's a brand new Congress, all new issues, all new Members. You'd usually have to put together for the Members some sort of a cheat sheet of who the Members were and what their little background was. That was as much for us as it was for them. We also did a pictorial directory of the staff because the Members didn't know who they were either. So we'd do all these pictures, and put it in the drawer of the desks, and they'd sit down. And they could just open the drawer and, "Oh, that's who that is." Because they don't know who these people are; they're just roaming around, doing their thing.

We would get the rules. The committee would go through its process where it would sit down, and it would organize. The first series would simply be the committee itself, would meet and organize. All these Members are now on the committee. The majority staff would meet separate from the minority. They would select and choose and organize into subcommittees, and they would set the ratios on those subcommittees by the number of majority Members that wanted those particular subcommittees. So it might be 10 on one, seven on another, five on one, and that would set the ratio for the minority. Big boards in the back of the room; each board had a subcommittee on it. This side was filled in; this side had five blanks or four blanks. The Republican Members, or the minority Members, whoever they were at the time, would come in, see the board, look at the jurisdictions, look at the titles that had already been set by the full committee, the majority staff, and they would choose subcommittees. Usually they'd go around in order or seniority, just like a roll call sheet. "Mr. So-and-so, which subcommittee would you like?" And they would become Ranking Members on those subcommittees. And then they'd trade off. "There's only one spot left. Does anybody want to switch with that subcommittee so I can get on that one?" And it was all behind closed doors, just the Members meeting. In most cases, there was no transcript, so it was just kind of a meeting; nothing was put on record.

Then after all that was done, the committee would have a formal sit-down where they would vote on the rules, they would vote on the memberships on the subcommittees, they would define who the Ranking Members were on those subcommittees, and introduced the staff. And that would be the official meeting that would make it into a transcript, the official meeting, the organization meeting. Then we'd start the business of the committee.

But usually the formal organizational meeting didn't happen until February. January was kind of the lost month. You're running around, kind of getting things organized. The staff would be in the background making sure that we had all our letterhead that we needed and the envelopes and the pads, that all said the correct

chairman and the correct Ranking Member. And people would get their marching orders, and then we'd go from there.

Everything kind of came to a head at the beginning of each Congress because you had an organizational meeting. You had a budget, an internal operations budget that had to be done, plus you had an oversight agenda. And all this had to be done by February. So my particular role was to pull together the internal operating budget for the committee. The oversight agenda was mandated by the House; the committee was required to get that done at a certain time. So the professional staff and the counsels were all working with the oversight agenda and the organization and the rules. And I was working on the internal operating budget.

At that time, the committee had a two-year operating budget. I think now they only have a one-year operating budget. It makes more work, but I think it's probably easier and a little bit more logical to control because it's very hard to project for another year out. You just don't know what's going to happen. And this way you have a little bit more control, I assume. That's what I've found out since then anyway. But that would be my role. And I would talk to a lot of the staff, asking them, "Okay, this is what we've had the last couple of years. What do you think you need in addition to what we already have?" I would work with our systems admin person, and we routinely just swapped out a third of all the computers, every year, just to stay current because the House was constantly updating the minimum basic requirements, so we had to stay up with it. And that was across the board. Again, that was one of the things that having been in the minority, and now being in the majority, you didn't differentiate. The computers went where they were needed, and I let the systems admin person make that determination. Don't ask me. It is not political.

What we did actually to make everybody feel like they got a new computer, went out and bought all new flat screens for everybody; whether they got a new computer or not, they thought they did. They got a new flat screen and a new keyboard. "Hey,

this is really cool!" They got a really old PC, but they didn't know that. So she would go around and just upgrade them. And psychologically, it worked like a charm. Everybody was really happy. "Why is my machine so slow?" But nobody would see that part of it, so that worked out really well. And all the equipment was just . . . we were back to simply giving the people what they need to do their job. "What do you need to do your job?" And in this day and age, it's not a typewriter, it's a computer.

So that was the 104th Congress. And we were trying to be cost effective, too. We had outsourced most of our tech support. And we actually cut the budget and saved about $80,000 at that point and hired our own internal systems person, who would go around and fix computers, instead of outsourcing. Because we didn't pay her $80,000 a year; I think at the time we paid her $45,000 so we realized the savings. Plus, she was there 24/7.

At that time too we were the Science and Technology Committee. I kept pushing, and Mr. [Robert Smith] Walker was pushing at the time for the fact that, how do we get the committee's information and business out to the public? How do we do this? We should have TVs in the hearing room, is what we should have. And I went at that time to the Architect of the Capitol and asked, "What can I do to start the ball rolling on trying to bring technology in?" What we had found that we wanted to do was videoconferencing, mainly because we had people—when we were doing the space issues, we had people down in Houston—instead of traveling all the way, you could get somebody in Houston, you could get somebody here and somebody here, someone out in California, and do it all at the same time. It turned out we did it a couple of times. It is extremely expensive. Now, the technology I'm sure has come a long way. But then it was just, it was actually cheaper to bring them in.

JOHNSON: And what time period was this approximately?

SCHWARTZ: This was the 104th. It was the 104th, 105th Congress [1995–1999]. And Mr. Walker was with the committee for two years. We never really got anything off the ground on the tech innovation, but I was putting out feelers. I was trying to find out what we could do and what we couldn't do, and how we would come about it. And the bottom line was, we were going to have to come up with the money because there was no extra money for anything like this. So Mr. Walker, who's chairman for two years and then decided to retire during the 104th Congress, he made the comment that, he said, "I'm a revolutionary. I came in to make the change, the change has come. My time had come and gone. I'm leaving and retiring." He left on a high note. He said, "I know what I am. This is what I am; this is what I do." And so he left. Now he's a big lobbyist downtown. He's a wonderful guy.

Then Mr. [Frank James] Sensenbrenner, [Jr.], came in as the new chairman in the 105th Congress. And he appointed Todd Schultz as the chief of staff. And we started talking, and he was very technologically-oriented. He said, "We should do this technology update. We should really do this. We should get this through. We shouldn't have to be outsourcing all this stuff. We should have a room that can do these things. See what you can find out." So I started making all these calls, and I think I got the leadership all in an uproar because the Senate already had some of this technology. I went over and looked at their Radio and TV Gallery, but they're set up differently on the Senate side. The Rules Committee over there runs the entire show. They maintain all the hearing rooms in one big block, and the committees borrow the rooms. Here on the House side, the committee "owns" their hearing rooms, so they don't have to go down to any central location to reserve them. They control their own rooms and what goes in them.

And we'd saved $80,000 out of our operational budget, so my boss said, "What can you save in this budget?" So I came up with another $150,000 out of that. I said, "I think we can do this. We're not going to buy it this year, but I think we can do this. We're going to manage this really tight, but I think we can do it." So I met with the Architect's Office, and I met with House Administration. Everybody wanted letters,

so I started doing the letter thing. I think Al Lacomi at the time was with the Architect's Office.

[An 18-second segment of this interview has been redacted.]

There was no formal bidding process, and I was like sitting here in my office one day, and I said, "Now how the heck am I going to do this?" I wound up calling the recording studio in the Senate. And I said, "Listen, if I'm going to call somebody in, I need somebody who knows what they're doing. You guys know what you're doing. Who would you recommend?" And they recommended Peak Audio (from Signal Perfection). And he had worked with them before, so he said, "Why don't you just give them a call?" I wound up giving them a call, and they helped me over the phone, laying out a plan and some parameters, no money changing hands, no contract—this is what you need to do, this is what you need to look at—because I had no idea what I was getting into. They were great.

It took me about six months to pull together a proposal to give to the chairman about what we wanted to do in the room, based on what other committees were doing or not doing. I went around to other committees and took pictures. It was so funny because you had the systems managers in each of the committees who would jerry-rig things and wire things and hooked up cameras, did the wiring all themselves. It was fascinating to see how creative people had been. And so I took pictures of all these things, and I put together this little briefing book for him. I said, "This is what they're doing, but this is what we need to do. If we're going to do this, we need to gut the room." So the biggest problem we're going to have is when because the room is off the market. And they're just like, "Okay, that's our full committee hearing room. When are we going to do this?" The only time we could do it was between Congresses. So they'd adjourn in October and had until February. So that was the time we had—can we get this done in four months?

I had the Architect working with me, I had House Administration, I had Alex Cusati, who is with the [House] Recording Studio and is still here.[4] He was phenomenal. He was just feeding me, "You need to do this and you need to do that, and you should get that and you should get this." And then Peak Audio helped with a local company, Signal Perfection—I can't remember their name, I'd have to look it up— but they came in. And I was really getting excited about bringing this technology in because it was the first hearing room on the House side.

What I found is the Architect had a big overall plan. They were going to be doing this, and I was jumping the gun. And that's what they told me. They said, "We have this campus-wide plan for the entire House side, and this is what we're going to do." And I said, "When?" "Five years!" I said, "My chairman's going to be gone in five years. We want it now, and we're willing to put our money where our mouth is. We have $230,000 to put up for it, to get this ball started." So we wrote the letter to House Administration and said, "We want to put this money up. We'll find more money, but we need your help. This is the infrastructure. We can't do without the support of the Superintendent's Office and you." So we waited, and we got the call back. "Okay."

And this was before a formal bidding process. We started working with the Office of Procurement, and I said, "Listen, before we get involved in this, I've never done any of these contracts. I've never been a contract officer before. I don't know what I'm doing, so we need some cover." We called in a former employee with House Procurement. He was a fantastic help. He came in, took a look at our expenses, and helped us cut our costs, getting rid of these little contracts here and there. And he came up with a contract for us to present to—as far as a proposal, this is what we need—to this company. And the company came back with their proposal. And I ran it over to House Procurement. They took a look through it, and they liked this, and they tweaked and added things. And it was a go. We were ready to roll. What I found out, and it was very early on into this, that Signal Perfection was willing to take a big cut in pricing because they wanted to make this work. This was going to

be their showpiece. So I think the room wound up costing over a million, and we put up $230,000.

JOHNSON: So this was the first state-of-the-art committee hearing room?

SCHWARTZ: First one on the House side. So the fact that that was happening, I wanted it to be perfect. And I wanted to think of everything. "What do we want to do with the screen? What do we want to do with this?" So we actually had a projector that dropped down, and showing on the back of the wall. We had all new microphones. They had to gut the room and put all this intricate wiring in, with the little boxes that sat in front of the Members so they could hear themselves, so you needed a sophisticated sound system. And the same people that were working with us at the time also were working with the Architect of the Capitol to develop the big campus-wide plan for the House. And they had been running into resistance because of cost factors, and the sole proprietor, and we were working with him on the side. So it was to their benefit to make this room work, too. I knew that. It was a win-win for both.

JOHNSON: Did the Science hearing room then become the model for the program they were instituting?

SCHWARTZ: Yes, yes. And I was really thrilled. When we had first had our first hearing, I remember the chairman got up, and I said, "It is so important that you thank the people that did it." And the people that did it were the House Administration, the HIR [House Information Resources] people, the Superintendent's Office, the Architect. These people were in here on the weekends, seven days a week, as was I. Because you're going through, doing that, and deciding where that microphone goes—it's in the wrong space because the Member needs to put a book down, so you're going to have to jerry-rig this and do that and do this. And they actually made it happen in four months. We had to build a console in the back of the room. We had to learn how to operate the console. I figured if I could operate the console,

anybody could operate the console because I was not a technology person. We had the staff assistants run the console for the hearings.

At that time, we were broadcasting our hearings live on our website. That's when I ran into another problem because we wanted to do this, and it was the bandwidth. The House couldn't support it. And I said, "You can't support it? What do you mean, you can't support it?" So we had to get an outside vendor to run the feed out to an outside location, and in turn would run it back to our website because of the security issues with the firewall. And it was like one thing after another. But once we got it worked out, it was like the floodgates opened, and poor House Administration was going, "Oh, my God, what have we done?" because now all the committees wanted it. "I want that, and I want that." So a lot of committees started doing their own thing.

And I think that's when it actually pushed the Architect, and pushed House Administration, to move faster because if they weren't going to do it, the committees were going to do it without them. We'd already done it and proven we could do it, so other committees were now doing it. But they were asking House Administration for money. And that's the difference.

The Architect has a campus-wide plan. So if you're using microphones, you use a set kind of microphone. You use a set kind of screen so they can support the infrastructure through House Administration. Prior to that, we were on our own. We had to have a support contract with a vendor that put it in because the House could not support it. They didn't have the technology to support it. So it actually forced the Architect Superintendent and House Administration to push forward. And now it's common. It is so common, it's incredible. You can't imagine not having it. The fact they were broadcasting live from the floor of the House made it even more important to do it in a committee.

JOHNSON: When was the hearing room completed? You said February. Do you remember the year?

SCHWARTZ: No. I'd really have to look back. The trouble is the years tend to blur all together. {laughter}

JOHNSON: I understand. There must have been—and you talked a little bit about it. You went to the different committee hearing rooms and saw what technology they were using, so there must have been similar issues that different committees, House Committees, had that they wanted to upgrade, and a lot of other issues.

SCHWARTZ: Right.

JOHNSON: Was there any sort of organization, any sort of networking between the committees where you could discuss different topics with people in your position?

SCHWARTZ: Yes. One of the things we found—when I first became the chief clerk in the 104th Congress, I wanted to create a group of chief clerks. But what I found was not every committee had what they called a chief clerk. You had an administrator in some capacity. You had a legislative clerk, and nobody wanted to do that. What we found was the finance administrators were our common denominator and our systems people, too. So the finance administrators of the committees had an organization, and they still do today. The systems admin people for the committees created their organization. They worked through HIR. But you have systems admin people in a Member's office that don't do anything like a systems admin person does in a committee. The systems admin person on a committee actually has to know everything about fixing and wiring and software and everything, your own little techno person within that structure.

So the big environment's what we're looking for. So what, there's 26 committees so you had 26 systems admins and 26 finance administrators. The finance

administrators would get together and say, "My committee is doing this." We hired our finance administrator, and she was new to a committee. So I went with her to the finance administrators' meetings, telling them this is what we were going to be doing. So the word got out that way. "Make sure your systems admin people know. And here's the name of our systems admin person, and here's a list. Why don't we all sign up so we know we have a list of people that can do this communication?" And it worked out really well.

We also found, by virtue of the finance administrators, we talked to procurement and said, "Why can't we do a bulk buy?" "What do you mean?" I said, "Why do we have to buy a copier from Xerox? Why can't we go to them as a force of 20 committees and say we want 40 copiers? What can you do for us?" "Good idea." So procurement was like, "Oh God, you're going to use us? Terrific." So we made them the lead on it. It was great. We started getting . . . you'd buy, everybody would start sharing information. Prior to that, not that I know of, but maybe they did.

But when we came into power in the 104th Congress, everything was gone. There was nothing left behind. There was no software technology or databases that tracked your budget or what you would spend or what you had bought or why you'd bought something. It was gone; there was nothing there. So we literally started from scratch. And that's when we found out at the finance administrators' meeting, "Well, what are you doing?" "Oh, we didn't have anything, they trashed everything, there's nothing here." So it's like, "Okay, here we go." And House Administration played a pivotal role in guiding us through this process.

[A 14-second segment of this interview has been redacted.]

You had people that didn't want to change, and other people who did want to change. And just trying to keep the logic of the technology that I knew was out there, that was not being used on the Hill, as far as leave tracking and personnel tracking and salary. "Why aren't we using a database? Why aren't we utilizing this

technology?" My boss, Todd Schultz, at the committee walked myself and my finance administrator through [Microsoft] Access and taught us how to use it. There was no class. So he said, "You can do this." He knew how to do it; he showed us how to do it. We did our own program. We called a vendor outside and said we need tweaking. We need this; we need that. We had our own software package. The trouble is, again, other committees were starting to do the same thing. So everybody had their own. There was no central process. Everything was done by paper. To this day, even now, parts of it are done—when you do a payroll action, you hire somebody; it's a piece of paper that transfers from the committee to the finance office. It's the official hire product. It's not electronic.

And now the House has got a system called CAPS [Congressional Accounting and Personnel System], which is working its way up into that technology that maybe, hopefully, someday will be electronic. And we let go of our software package to adapt to theirs. But you have to understand, for a good seven years, there was nothing. So you had to do something. And when we first came to the Judiciary Committee, they were using a ledger. It blew my mind. It was an old fashioned ledger, with all the handwritten entries, and that was their bookkeeping.

JOHNSON: And this was in 2000?

SCHWARTZ: Yes. I was blown away. My God, unbelievable. My hat is off to you. But then when GAO [Government Accountability Office] came in to do the audit, they were like—because it was like . . . {laughter} there's no way to track it. It is all handwritten. But that was the beginning of the 104th Congress with the challenge of starting from scratch. And having worked on the committee for a long time, I knew how it worked. But there was nothing there to help you through the process. We'd not been in the majority before. And it was, that was the challenge. But it was also the excitement of creating something, of building another team again, and including the minority and making sure that they had what they needed, and making sure that they got one third of the budget, and they had control over their salaries. And they

got, "Here's the parking. You get one third of this. Here's your parking slots, you assign them, just send me a list." "Really?" "Yes, okay." And that's exactly what we wanted when we were in the Republican minority, and that is what we gave them as the Democratic minority.

Now, not all the committees at the time in the 104th did that. And we didn't, at the Science Committee, have what they call "shared employees." There was no person that worked for both the minority and majority that they paid their salaries. Other committees do that. Mr. Walker at the time said, "No," flat out. "We give them what they need. This is what we so desperately wanted. This is what is fair, and this is what they need to do their job." So we did. We actually created office space, a set office space for them, instead of just that little lounge. Regrettably, it was over in the Ford House Office Building, but it was a huge suite. So, and I think to this day, they still have it.

JOHNSON: Stepping back just a little bit, keeping with the theme of technology, with the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970, this allowed and encouraged televised congressional hearings. Did you see a change in the way that hearings were organized, or how they transpired because of television?

SCHWARTZ: I noticed the Members were more conscious. I noticed initially they were there more because they weren't before. The whole proxy thing had gone too with the 104th Congress, which made markups better because if you weren't there, you couldn't vote, and no one could vote for you.[5] So it was a simple matter—you need to be there to vote, and that's it. We're not doing proxies anymore. It just made sense because when you would have a markup there would be the chairman sitting there with 20 proxies and two other people in the room. And it just didn't look really good on camera at all. But that wasn't the reason they did the proxy thing. It was just the proxy . . . the minority has a shot at winning. Who can get more people there? And I think that's not a bad thing. I think this is the way it should be. This is the way politics should be played. It's a matter of—you're present, you're interested

enough to be there, you didn't spread yourself so thin, and you happen to be there, and you won the vote. So next time, don't spread yourself so thin.

But as far as the way the hearings ran, both Mr. Walker and Mr. Sensenbrenner ran tight ships. They didn't like having 42 panels of witnesses. They didn't like having hearings that went on for six or seven hours. So they kind of got into the pattern of two- to two-and-a-half-hour hearings. Get to the point. No more than four witnesses. Get to the point. Keep it quick, keep it simple, get the message out there. We can go have another hearing. The Members have other things to do instead of sitting in a hearing room all day, droning on and on and on. And it worked out really well. Whenever there was a full committee here, there were no subcommittee hearings. Now, a lot of other committees don't do that, but the chairman thought that that was really important. If we're having a full committee markup or hearing, you can't be having something else because they're going to be pulled away to do that.

JOHNSON: What do you remember if anything about the 1970s, when televised hearings were a new, more consistent thing in the House?

SCHWARTZ: The amount of phone calls that we would get. Like trying to find it, or could you make it brighter? Things like that. We did find that we got a report from that company that did the live stream for us, and they kept track of who was watching, who tuned in. What fascinated me was the schools, and that's exactly what we were going for. You basically have K Street. They're always going to be interested, but it was the schools that couldn't get here. And the thing that I really liked was even though we had the hearings, say from 10 to 12, the hits that we would get because we would also archive it would be like two or four in the morning. Because they would—or maybe two or three days later, where if this was a particularly hot subject, say it was solar energy, and maybe a college class or high school class was doing a project on that. They in turn could logon to our website, go to that hearing, play the hearing, and actually have a discussion after they'd listened to the hearing.

"Okay, now what do you think?" So it was actually pulling government down to the basic level. And that to me is the whole purpose of televising the floor and televising hearings. You bring people right into it; you see it. It's not filtered; it's not edited. This is what they said.

The other thing that came with the 104th Congress was no transcript editing on committees. And that was the hardest thing—up until even the time I left—getting the staff not to do that. Our printing clerks knew that if it comes in edited, we just remove those edits and footnote. If the Member stutters and says, "Um, um, um," it's in there. I said, "The thing you have to remember, this is the same thing as a court. What they say is what stays there."

There was an incident when we were in the minority, and I think it was listed down as "Altergate." Mr. Walker . . . and it was something to do with the space program. One of the staff had put in there that he did not support such-and-such and such-and-such. They put the word "not" in. And it made it into print, and it wasn't found for two or three years until one of the staff had gone back. I think it was Dave Clement at the time, was the chief of staff for the minority, went back and was looking up what he had said to try and
. . . and he saw the "not." It turns out it was one of the majority staff who thought they were being funny.

So the whole issue then came down. The committee itself determined that they were not editing—this was the Science Committee when we were in the minority. I'm sorry. The Republicans were in the minority—that there would be no more editing transcripts. If there was, there would have to be a footnote at the bottom saying who edited it and why. There was an investigation. Two people lost their jobs over it. And then they spread that same process to the House Floor. Then, I think it's become a rule, and the committees are not supposed to do it. I know the Judiciary Committee didn't—neither did the Science Committee at the time I was there because I was there when it happened. So I was very tuned into that, that people

liked to change what they said, and you can't. I mean, no more than you can change a court transcript. Can you change that? Witnesses can, on a lot of cases, where they'll say—maybe they say one billion and they meant one million, and they certainly can change that. We put a footnote at the bottom, "Said one billion, but meant one million. Please correct accordingly," and that was fine. But that was another big issue. The proxies, the verbatim transcripts, making a certain accountability for what you said.

JOHNSON: I just have one final question for today that I wanted to ask you. What was the relationship between the Science Committee and the other standing committees of the House? Specifically, was there one committee or two committees that the Science Committee had a close relationship with or that there were issues that overlapped?

SCHWARTZ: Well, I know initially the Armed Services Committee, mainly because we had the non-military R&D, but it's really hard to pull out the non-military R&D from the military R&D. The space program was also—you had Vandenberg, which was a military site [in California] which also did space launches. So the Armed Services Committee and the Energy and Commerce Committee were two committees that we worked very closely with.

Now granted, we had battles occasionally. But I think the whole idea was we shared jurisdiction so we had to share the responsibility and the communication. And that was primarily where our chief of staff, the chief counsels, or the staff directors on each of the subcommittees played a pivotal role in really reaching out and forming that relationship with their peers on the other committees. And that's how we survived.

JOHNSON: Was there anything else you wanted to add today?

SCHWARTZ: No. I think we've covered quite a bit. I did talk to you briefly about the fact that when the Science Committee first started, and I first started there, they had international symposiums that were held every two years. They would call scientists from all over the world to come and testify. And we would hold it here. We'd make a big week event out of it, where they would meet with leaders of the House and maybe the National Science Foundation and people down at NASA and go on tours. Then they would get to see what we were doing, and we would get to hear what they were doing. And I thought it was really a very interesting thing.

I don't know that something like that would work as well today as it did then, when the whole atmosphere of science and space was kind of a world thing. It was kind of something that everybody appreciated and didn't look to fight over; we were actually looking to support and find ways to cooperate. It was like the new frontier or goal to do something. Now I think there's the politics and the environment around everything, including science now, is just not as clear. You're not really sure anymore where all the information is coming from. You hear so much from TV, and so I don't know that you'd get a clear-cut, unbiased, totally scientific approach towards anything anymore. I don't know. But that's about it.

JOHNSON: Okay. Well I hope you'll come back for another session. This was fantastic.

SCHWARTZ: I'm glad. I'd gladly do it.

JOHNSON: Thank you.

SCHWARTZ: Thank you.

— PATRICIA (TISH) SPEED SCHWARTZ—

INTERVIEW TWO

JOHNSON: This is Kathleen Johnson interviewing Patricia Schwartz, longtime House committee staffer. This is the second interview with Tish Schwartz. The date is May 10th, 2007. The interview is taking place in the Legislative Resource Center conference room, Cannon House Office Building.

In your first interview, you referenced the Congressional Staff Club. Can you provide more information on this organization?

SCHWARTZ: The Congressional Staff Club was something that was set up for the employees of the House of Representatives and the Senate. You joined the club and I think it was probably a five-dollar initiation fee. And you got—I think the reason that most people joined the club was that you got a license plate for your car, sticker that said, "Congressional Staff Club." So it was very cool. You would get privileges, it just identified you more. We didn't have the formal process that we have today, where you had to wear your IDs all the time. So you'd get a little card for your wallet.

It was the things that were going on in the Hill. They'd include you in certain luncheons and briefings. They made classes available—like I had said with the student pilot and the ground school training, all these little different things. It was a chance for the staff to get together. There wasn't a sophisticated way for people other than just going out to lunch and knowing the office next to you, to get to meet other people whose paths you might not cross otherwise. It's a big place, some 20,000 people on the Hill. If you don't work in the area that they're working in, chances are you will have worked 20 years there, maybe they're five doors down and you'll never know who they are. So this was an opportunity then. It was just cool to have this little plate that went below your regular license plate. It attached and said, "Congressional Staff Club." Now, after 9/11 and terrorist things, people really

didn't want their car identified as a congressional staff person because it kind of targeted you. Just like State Department tags do. So it just faded.

JOHNSON: So that's when the club disbanded?

SCHWARTZ: I'm not exactly sure when it disbanded. But I know that I had been a member of it. It was a wonderful opportunity when you first came to the Hill to find out what's going on. They looked at it from more of a social perspective.

JOHNSON: You'd also mentioned the Chowder and Marching Club.

SCHWARTZ: Oh, yes, I did. That was a very loosely organized group. And it consisted of people that worked on the House Science Committee, and the agencies that they authorized. In other words, it was the National Science Foundation, NOAA [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration], NASA, the FAA [Federal Aviation Administration], all these people worked with each other during the legislative course of the day. And they would get together and socialize. They created this—and it was predominantly men—created this group called the Chowder Marching Society so that they would have a purpose to get together every Friday at Bolling Air Force Base and have lunch and drink martinis. That was pretty much it.

Then they decided that it would be cool to have some sort of purpose. So they started doing the Secretary of the Year Award and Secretary of the Month Award, and things like that. It brought some of the people that worked for them and with them, predominantly female; there were no male secretaries then, into this social environment. You'd get to know people that you'd most likely talked with on the phone, sent information to. You meet him and you go, "Oh, I know you. Yes, I'm Tish. I'm the person that gives you all this." So it was really very social. It was very male chauvinist. All the jokes were typical in men's club jokes. Not dirty, just, if I can liken it to anything, it's like "blonde" jokes. You go on, and on, and on, from there. But it was funny. And no one, at that time, nobody took offense. It was the

way things were. It wasn't meant to demean anybody, especially women. But it just was the way things were. Eventually it just faded into nothingness, because, it was almost prehistoric, if you will.

JOHNSON: Was it in operation before you came on board to the Science Committee?

SCHWARTZ: If it was, I didn't know about it. But I wasn't really part of it. I was an awardee. I remember making a motion at the meeting just to be a pain in the neck, that there were no women members. I just thought it was about time in this day and age that there were women members. So they gave me the floor and they gave me some certificate. I can't remember. They said, "She gets all the privilege, but none of the benefits. We're going to nominate you to the board, but we have to vote on it. That would have to be the next meeting, and then we'd have to call a formal meeting and we're not a formal group. So we really can't call a formal meeting." So that's how it went. It was very tongue-in-cheek.

JOHNSON: That was during the 1970s?

SCHWARTZ: Yes.

JOHNSON: Just a few minutes ago, off tape, you talked about a very interesting tradition of the House. If you could just elaborate on that about the food deliveries.

SCHWARTZ: Oh, when I first started working on the committee, at the House Science Committee in 1969, I would notice on Wednesdays, there would be a knock on the main door of the committee. An older gentleman with a baseball cap would stick his head in and he would say, "Egg man." And I'd sit there and look around and wait for, everybody reaches into their purse, all the women, grab their pocketbooks, walk outside, and they'd go, "Come on, it's the egg man." He would deliver fresh chickens from his farm, fresh eggs. His wife would make banana bread or apple bread, depending on what the season was. Sometimes he would have tomatoes on

his cart. You'd go out, and every Wednesday, you'd come home with eggs, chicken, and maybe tomatoes—so one less stop on the way home. It was great. Everything was really fresh. It came right from his farm. You'd also sign up for turkeys. Thanksgiving, he'd deliver turkeys. But again, this was in the 1970s. Those little simple things just disappear. It was a simpler way of life.

JOHNSON: You spoke about, in your last interview, the cordial atmosphere of the Science Committee.

SCHWARTZ: Yes.

JOHNSON: What kind of activities were done to try to foster that camaraderie?

SCHWARTZ: We would have what we would call a happy hour on Friday. Everybody would just get together and kind of wind down from the week. Somebody might bring in a blender and make margaritas. Or somebody's birthday, we always used birthdays. Birthdays were great. Every month it was a birthday of some sort. So we'd save them up until a Friday. Whoever had a birthday that week, we'd have a party for them with cake, and wine, and beer, and everybody would sit around.

One of the things that we tried to do a lot was picnic. We would actually get together and literally walk across the street, Independence Avenue, plop our blankets down right on the lawn next to the Capitol, pull out bottles of wine. We had a cooler with beer in it. And we'd sit and we'd picnic for an hour-and-a-half. Get big sandwiches from up the street, the Italian deli. And then we'd pack it all up and go back inside. I don't think you can do that anymore. {laughter}

But it was really nice. It was actually an oasis because you felt like you were in the country, but you're in the city. It was very different than being downtown. Capitol Hill was a wonderful place. Then they had softball teams, just like they do now. I was an active part of that. I would go home and get my son when he was two or

three years old and bring him in. We would watch the baseball games. We had t-shirts. It was just very social. Very much that tradition has stayed. It's become a lot more competitive. But it's really nice to see. It was a way for the women and the men on the committee to get, no pun intended, an equal playing field. You're out there because two women had to be on the field at all times. So that was the joy that. . .

JOHNSON: Was this just something for the committee itself, the softball games, or are you talking about the annual Congressional Baseball Game?

SCHWARTZ: Well, the committee had a team, and we played other teams, other Members' offices.

JOHNSON: Do you remember attending the baseball game, the annual game?

SCHWARTZ: Yes, the Members? Yes. I did that once and it was a lot of fun. It was a lot of fun. They still have that annually, too. It just amazed me how agile some of these Members are {laughter} and they're risking life and limb because you know they haven't been doing that lately.

The other thing that I had done, and I don't need to digress, but the liaison offices on the Hill through the Marine Corps had what they called the "Friday Night Tattoo" down at Eighth and I [Streets]. That was tickets you could get here to go down and watch the parade, which they had. It was magnificent. You'd sit in these bleachers. I'm sure they still do it today. It was almost a light show. The whole place would go completely dark. And then one spotlight would hit the soldier as he was playing taps. You'd get chills, and then they would do the silent drill team with their guns. They'd march, and songs, it was just really, really a cool thing to do. Didn't even know it existed until I came to the Hill, and it's going on all the time. They do it over at the Iwo Jima Memorial, and they do it down at Eighth and I. Those were the things that I remember. I was just so excited, go home [and say to] my husband,

"We've got to do this. This is so cool. It doesn't cost anything." Anything that didn't cost anything was the way to go.

They actually used to have concerts down on the [Potomac] River. I'm not sure if you are familiar with between Memorial Bridge and there's an overpass, there's a series of steps that go right down to the Potomac. There used to be concerts. There was a barge on the water where the musicians would set up. They were free. And the entire audience would sit on those steps. They'd have free concerts every Friday night. They discontinued them because it was also the flight path for National Airport. So there was a jet going over like every four minutes. Nobody wanted to play there anymore. It was kind of sad because what a view. You're looking right over at Arlington Cemetery. So that was in the background. But they don't do that anymore either. You're not going to change a flight path.

JOHNSON: Well, since we're talking about the 1970s, and this is definitely switching gears some, how do you think Watergate impacted the House of Representatives?

SCHWARTZ: I think it made people realize that power can be a dangerous thing. That ambition, that confusing your purpose, and I know the whole Watergate thing probably stemmed from a lot of poor choices, a lot of bad advice, and power. When they say power corrupts, you can see that. You get in a position of thinking that everything's fair in love and war, so to speak. That if I need to get this information, by George, I'm going to find out this information. I can do this. I think it was a sobering effect for a lot of people because whenever a President's purpose is called into question, it really makes the whole country sit back because you don't want to go after the office of the President. You just don't want to do that.

I remember being very disappointed. I voted for [Richard Milhous] Nixon, and I was very supportive of his foreign policy. But when they would make the comment that, "Would you buy a used car from this guy?" "Probably not." He just looked very uncomfortable. I think he had a lot of problems with not trusting people. I'm

sure there's a lot more going on that I will never know about. But the whole idea was that the press brought it to the attention of the world. The press has gone a little bit overboard sometimes, but without the freedom of the press, that never would have been uncovered. They kind of keep us straight, and I think that's a good thing.

It also started a division where Republicans and Democrats got into either an offensive or defensive mode. When something like Watergate happens, it takes down not just an office, but a party because it represents you and your beliefs. So you have to find out how do we save the belief system for the poor choice that maybe two, three, or five people made because you give them that power and you have to trust that they're going to use it wisely. I think it made people very aware of the human frailties of even the President of the United States. And it also brought into focus the power of the press.

JOHNSON: Did you see a perceivable change in the House of Representatives among staff and Members during this period?

SCHWARTZ: I can't say that I saw a dramatic difference. I just knew that a lot of people who may have been Republican or Democrat, and depending on whether they worked on especially the Science Committee, might not be talking politics as much as they used to. I think the Judiciary Committee, which I was not on at the time, took the front blow because they had to do the investigation. They had to, I think it was under [Peter Wallace] Rodino [Jr.], formulate this whole nightmarish investigation. Just to get at the truth and to find out what happened and why it happened and make sure it didn't happen again.

I think it was an educational process that not just the Hill went through but the entire country went through. I don't think it was a bad thing. I think the vulnerability and sometimes corruption of power, you need to be reminded of that. And I think the people that hold the office that we put them in, that we elect them to have to understand that too, that there's a huge burden that goes along with that.

They've got to be up to the task, because we're not watching them constantly. The press does, though. {laughter}

JOHNSON: That's true. During the 1960s, you talked about the Science Committee and the enthusiasm and the excitement with the race to land on the moon. How did the committee deal with resistance and increased scrutiny once this honeymoon period ended in the 1970s and there was more attention to what the committee was doing and to the funding that was taking place?

SCHWARTZ: I think the committee realized that the basic euphoria that the country had with the space program and the "New Frontier" which was just like when we moved out to the West, the entire country was excited about it. President [John Fitzgerald] Kennedy made this his 10-year goal. It inspired the country. It gave us a purpose to be something and number one. And I think it really united us, made us proud. But there's a cost with that. And I think a certain reality comes into play when you start seeing how much this program costs, and the benefits versus the cost. "Should we do this, shouldn't we do this?" Again, you go back to the burden of being one of the most powerful countries in the world, the most powerful country in the world, that if we don't do it, then who? We had the resources. We've got to do it. We were also in a race with Russia at the time. *Sputnik*, they had sent a monkey up. And I remember that. That was very vivid in *The Right Stuff* movie, where they send a monkey and we're sending people. What is going on here? But it's huge. And now, again as I said, it's almost secondary. A flight will go up now and, "Oh, that went up yesterday?" People don't even think about it.

At the time though, we were challenged with the cost. Oversight became very intensive. They had the one terrible accident on the pad when astronauts were killed because the shuttle exploded on the ground. That's when the reality came this is no longer a honeymoon.[6] We really, I mean you're taking lives in your hands here. You've really got to make this thing work, find out what went wrong. The

technology within NASA has always fascinated me because people can relate to that. Again, it's like a frontier.

But the cost factor was constantly being questioned. We had the authorization ability over NASA and their research and development programs. So they were constantly up here justifying this cost and that cost. I think they had even gotten down to, where the space toilets were costing $2 million, this and that. It's the nature of the manpower that supports the technology that makes it go up. But the oversight was huge. It was very important that almost every single line item in their budget be addressed, just like it was with the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy. Although, the intrigue wasn't there at Energy, and FAA, and the National Science Foundation because people looked at it as science, okay, they know more than I know type of thing.

As I said before, a lot of the Members that we had on the House Science Committee at the time, or Science and Astronautics, were not scientists. They were builders or they were private businessmen who had come and now they've got to make sense of this and relate it to their district. It was a good forum. EPA [Environmental Protection Agency] at this time, too, was under our jurisdiction and EPA was under the gun, as it is now, for the landfills, nuclear energy issues.

Three Mile Island was in play then.[7] I look back on that, in retrospect now, and that pretty much shut down the nuclear power industry or the progression of it in this country, to a point where I think this country is now hurting. I think we have to revisit that whole nuclear power. That's just my impression, when you see countries like France right now who are totally nuclear powered. They haven't had any accidents. You see the tragedy that happened in Russia. But again, they're such a closed entity that they wouldn't let you in to find out what went wrong anyway at Chernobyl. But Three Mile Island was, "Oh my God, there's a leak." "All right, that's it, we're not doing this anymore." You couldn't get past that. Members lost jobs. People that supported that program would go up for re-election and people

would not re-elect them. And it falls by the wayside. So no matter what an agency wants to do, if the Members don't support it and the public doesn't, it's not going to go.

NASA has always been a very positive influence. They've always been, in my experience, and I am not a legislator nor was I involved in the legislative policy, but they were very receptive. Every time we would call down and deal with NASA legislative affairs, or ask a question, or send a transcript down for editing or get information back, they were extremely open and very forthcoming. They wanted to make it work, too. And they realized without the support of Congress, it just was not going to happen. With the scientific bent on it, they wanted to be right. They wanted to make it right. The scientists have this, it's got to be perfect before we go. It costs more that way, but it's got to be perfect.

They struggled more as far as their funding went in the years after the space program launched, got its footing and became routine, landings. I think the space station is one of the areas that we struggled on the most, what benefits are we deriving. And as I said before, I don't think you see anything in the newspaper on a weekly or monthly basis about any of the things that we're getting from the space program or the space station. We are, but nobody knows what they are. I don't know whose responsibility that is to tell the public, or whether they're really interested. They might be more interested in what's going on in Hollywood today.

JOHNSON: What do you remember about the *Challenger* space shuttle accident in 1986 and its effect the Science Committee?

SCHWARTZ: The *Challenger* accident . . . I remember we always had the TV on in the office whenever there was a launch that would go up. I just remember the gasps, the dead silence because we were watching it live on TV. The whole country, the whole world was—teacher, the first teacher in space [Christa McAuliffe]. I remember that we just sat there numb for probably like a half-hour to an hour after that. We could not

believe what we just saw. Maybe this wasn't real, only on TV. Even the commentators at the time were just blown away, just totally blown away. And the astronauts that were in that crash became overnight heroes. They risked their lives. It made you realize again that this was not commonplace. This was a risk and these people, as dedicated as they were, were getting in these things and trusting that everything would go fine.

We had a picture in our office of the *Challenger* astronauts and a little black ribbon on the side that said, "We will remember." It was up for a long time and finally came down when I left. I thought it should have stayed. Just to me, it is what we're all about. It was very tragic. I think the investigation that ensued after that was totally bipartisan. There was no finger pointing. It was like this was a tragedy. We have to find out what went wrong. We have to keep it from happening again. It was that simple.

JOHNSON: Did the Science Committee take the lead in the investigation?

SCHWARTZ: I think the House and the Senate got together in a joint commission, the *Challenger*, and actually came out with a report on the findings of the *Challenger* investigation. And then, when the report came out, NASA was up testifying, they testified on the House side. They testified on the Senate side. Everything was implemented after that. It wasn't political. That was the interesting thing about NASA. It didn't become a political battle as far as Democrats, Republicans. It was a battle over cost. And both parties fought the cost. But you realized that if you're going to have something that's going to work, you're going to have to put the money where, especially when something like this, we've got to find out what's wrong. We've got to fix it. Nothing else is going up until then.

JOHNSON: I'm just going to pause for a moment.

BRIEF INTERRUPTION

JOHNSON: I'm back talking with Patricia Schwartz. You spoke about the relationship between the Science Committee and NASA, that it was a very close relationship. What about the relationship with the National Science Foundation?

SCHWARTZ: That was just as close. I think the whole concept was, it was so totally linked. Everything that is science-related affects everything else. When you really think about your daily life without science, it wouldn't be. It crossed over into the FAA, aviation. It crossed over into EPA. It crossed over into Department of Energy. It crossed over everywhere, so science is extremely important. And the National Science Foundation is extremely important in the programs that they push forward. I think there's a fine line between what the federal government can do and what states can do. But you need something like that to be able to provide a resource for people. Without it, you wouldn't have that and it gives them a starting point, for nothing else, to build on.

JOHNSON: In 1972, Congress authorized the creation of the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA). How did the OTA work with your committee, with the Science Committee?

SCHWARTZ: The Office of Technology Assessment I believe was a separate entity. I'm trying to remember where OTA was located. And I don't know if they were in an agency. I think they were their own separate office. There were Members on that committee or that commission in the office. They would come to the committee and do reports to the committee. I think that was mandated by law at the time. They would basically simply, just like it says, assess the technology that was available at the time—what it was doing, what it wasn't doing, what could be done, what should be done—kind of step back and look at the big picture. The committee had a very close relationship with that entity, too. I was not as heavily involved in it.

JOHNSON: When the Republicans took the majority of the House in 1995, how did your job description and responsibilities change on the Science Committee?

SCHWARTZ: It was huge. I went from minority office where there were 20 people, and I was the AA, the head clerk or person of the committee, and walked right into the chief clerk administrator job for the entire committee. The committee consisted then of, I think they reduced the size. It had been up to about 87 people at the time. When the Republicans came in, everything was downsizing. Everybody's downsizing. So they cut the size of the committee to 40 majority staff and 20 minority staff. So it was actually total one-third split.

The whole idea was we were going to make it work with the people that we had. And we did. Everybody that was on the minority had been working in certain areas of jurisdiction already, so that they would fold if they were working on energy issues or aviation issues, that person would then go to that particular subcommittee. As I had said before—each subcommittee when we were at the House Science Committee—each subcommittee had a minority counterpart that sat on that subcommittee as well as the staff assistant. So when the change happened, it was very simple for that person if they had been competent, wound up being the staff director. And that staff assistant wound up being the head clerk staff assistant for that subcommittee.

My role was to find out how it all worked from the top level and make sure that we had in place everything that we needed to get our jobs done. Again, when you're in the minority you don't need to worry about that. When you're in the majority, it's the management. Who's going to do it if you don't? So it came down to organizing the basic infrastructure of the administrative staff: how we internally did business; how the paper flowed in the front door; what kind of systems we had to log in to get it to where it was going, to get it answered, to get it addressed, to make sure people saw it (get it filed, get it answered, get it out). That was just part of it.

Then you had to take a very hard look at the process that we used for hearings and testimony and printing, and develop an actual plan for our printer to say, "Okay, this is how the chairman wants these done." In other words, every hearing is going

to be set up when it's printed the same way. "You can have this in the front, this here, this here. We're going to use this method to go through the entire process, coordinating everything, of course, with GPO and GPO style, but the chairman had a style."

One of the things that the Republicans did that they had not done before, every time we had a markup of a particular bill, the report on that bill as well as the printed transcript of the markup were printed together. So every time a bill is passed in committee, the committee is responsible for putting out a committee report before that bill goes to the floor for further action. That's what the Members used to decide what happened in committees, so here we go. What we would do is take that report, and at the back end of the report, the markup and the discussion in that markup was printed right along with it. And that followed through the Science Committee, Republicans all the way into Judiciary, we did that too. And it turned out to be a very, very useful tool, so that you'd pick up one book and everything was right there. That was just one aspect.

I was extremely challenged, and I loved every minute of it, because it brought these things that nobody had thought about before and said, "Why don't we do it this way?" "Well, I don't know, because we've always done it that way." I got really tired of hearing, "Well, that's not the way we do it, because we've always done it." And I told everybody in the office, I said, "If someone says that to me again, I'm going to slap them," or something. "I don't want to hear we always did it that way." I said, "It's time to change. It's time to get fresh ideas. It's time to take a new look at how things are done and how we can to them better and more efficiently."

It was simple things like developing a database. We had never had one. The House wasn't doing it for us. Each committee, each Member's office is probably very similar, but each committee was kind of on its own. You hired people. You created a piece of paper. The piece of paper went over to the Finance Office, and they hired them. What you did internally was totally up to you. There was no guidance given

to you about what you can use, what you should use, what you shouldn't use. They just expected you to keep these records. When we came in in the 104th, again, there was nothing left there. So our predecessors had been doing this for the last 40 years. We had no idea how they did it. "Okey, dokey," here we are from scratch. So that became the challenge.

And that's where when I had to make a choice between legislative and administrative, the legislative has always continued. They had extremely competent people, they had attorneys, they had scientists, they had everybody. But they didn't have somebody who wanted to do and fix the little things that make it run, and I wanted to do that. I found my calling. I found my thing. I just dove into it head first and changed things, and fixed things very quietly in the background.

My joy was trying to anticipate what was going to happen before it happened and either get it done or fix it so that it worked seamlessly, so that when you walk into a hearing and the Members showed up, everything just moved. "Oh, that's great—" nobody even thought how it gets done. It just gets done. And all that is behind the scenes. (All that is administrative work, because the hearing is two hours.) Everything that goes on in the committee on a daily basis is a lot of, it's a small, little company. And it's the only way I can liken it. You're part of this big corporation and these committees are small, little companies, working in the big corporation. So you have to report to the corporation. But the company does its own thing. The only thing we don't have is a profit and loss margin. So it kind of makes it {laughter} a little hard.

JOHNSON: Did you work with any other committees, any other staff members that were chief clerks like you were during this transition period?

SCHWARTZ: No, as I had said before, there was a reluctance on the part of—and I don't know why—other chief clerks or administrators that were in my position, to get together and form a group. The finance administrators were actually the avenue, when they

had the finance administrator's group organized was the avenue that I used to get information and to give information to other committees. So what happened, and this was kind of interesting, too, all the finance people or budget people, finance administrators—whatever you called them, each committee called them something else—would show up to the meeting. But then people like me would show up with them—the chief clerk or the administrator—because it was a perfect place to talk about everything that was going on. Most of the simple administrative things that you were doing all cost money, or time, or it was a policy, administrative policy issue. So these things had to be worked out within this group or at least thrown out for discussion, so that you could go back to your boss and say, "We threw this out and of the 20 committees, 12 are doing this and the other eight are doing this. We would like to go in this way. We have the money to do this. The finance person is involved." So by virtue of both being there, it forced us into a team relationship, which I prefer.

Then I pulled in our systems manager. And the systems people were a whole other group that worked with HIR. They now became part of this team. So there were three pivotal people that made this committee work under the radar screen. And that's where I built my team, under the radar screen: I had the printer; I had the publications clerk; I had the systems admin.; I had the finance person; I had the office manager, and myself. And we all would sit down and say, "Okay, this is how we do it. This is what I'd like to see. How do we get there?" And we would come up with these solutions.

The challenge was do not go to your supervisor or your boss with a problem unless you have at least two solutions to that problem. I learned that the first time I asked a question. He said, "Well, what are you going to do about it?" It was like, "Are you supposed to answer that for me?" {laughter} So right there and then, he is paying me to solve the problem. Find the problem and solve it. And then he gets to say, "I like this one" or "I like that one." And you just do it. That's what I enjoy doing. And it worked very well.

I worked very closely, built a wonderful rapport with House Oversight, with the House Employment Counsel, and the office and services that they had. And I worked very closely with them when I built our committee handbook. It took me close to six months to pull together everything that I could possibly think of, ran it by the House Employment Counsel, and said, "I really need you to take a look at this from your perspective. Am I hitting the right things? Am I saying too much? Am I saying too little?" And they were very good, "You don't want to say this. You want to stay away from this. You want to do this. You forgot this." It was very comprehensive. So it covered a lot of issues. And it also gave people a sense of, "Oh, this is what we do." Even though you gave them the book, it wasn't a big deal because nobody really read the book, but it was there. It was a resource.

JOHNSON: Can you provide some examples of the material that went into the handbook?

SCHWARTZ: Simple things like emergency contact information. Who you go to to get this, or this, or this, how you set up a hearing. There were two parts to the book. The first part was policies. We're allowed to do this. This is the kind of leave we get. This defines parental leave. The second part, which to me was the most important part, was the administrative procedures committee. This is how we do business. Write down simply what the chairman wants his correspondence set up like this. This is the format he uses. This is the procedure you go through. A letter comes in, it goes to your boss, he approves it, it goes to the chief of staff, he approves it, goes upstairs and gets signed by the chairman. Here are the files that you are to keep. And I go through, here's your legislative. You're supposed to keep all your legislative files by the bill number. You follow it all the way through the House from committee to the floor. You pick it up on the floor and you continue following it through the Senate. So when you have that bill folder, H.R. 1222, everything the House did on it is in there. You used the *Congressional Record*, taught people how to read that, which they don't read anymore because it's online as much. But it's a very valuable tool. You have a complete history on this piece of legislation. That would be what would go in

the archives because people knew the bill passed but you really didn't know what went into it.

So you tell them simple things like, what I was finding, my fundamental training had been secretarial. I had gone to a secretarial school, Washington School for Secretaries. They taught you how to do office administration, how you organize an office, how you set up a filing system, dictation, and typing. There's no such thing anymore. Or that's what I was finding. Most of the people that came to the Hill were fascinated with the prospect of being in politics. They were political science majors. They wanted to be on the Hill. So they would come in the door and the only job open to them right out of college was an administrative support position, secretarial, staff assistant. My hard questions were, "Can you type? Do you know how to use a computer? Do you know how to write? Can you communicate? Can you organize a file?" And they're looking at me like they don't know what I'm talking about.

So I had to do this administrative procedure. If you're bright, and all of them were, they just never worked in an office situation before. So trying to explain that to somebody how you answer the phone, how you set up a filing system, what kind of files you're supposed to keep, what you're supposed to archive. It's like, "Whoa, do I have to do that?" "Yes, you have to do that." It's even more important if you start out as a staff assistant and move into an LA position, a legislative research position, and then into a staff director or legislative director position to understand, because you have done it, what these people need to do.

That was the other thing I found. Most of the professional staff didn't know what you needed to do. They just knew they needed to get this report out. So however you do it, do it. Those were the kind of things that were missing.

JOHNSON: Before 1995, there was no committee handbook?

SCHWARTZ: There was a handbook, but it was very loose. It was all policies and procedures, official. It had nothing to do with administrative procedures. It just had to do with legislative policies, what the jurisdiction of the committee was, the process, the things that you do for travel, what reports you need to fill out, who you go to for this. But it was just the policies of the committee. The administrative part of it was what I found was extremely important because those were the people that I was meeting with on a monthly basis who were constantly having questions. "How do you track the transcripts? I had five hearings a week. How am I supposed to stay on top of this?" So again, the team approach is the way to do it because if somebody's already doing it, don't reinvent the wheel, share. And next thing you know, "Well, we all like the way Kathleen does it. Do you mind coming down and showing me how you do that?" And next thing you know, everybody's doing it the same way.

So I had what I called my minimum basic requirement. These are the things I expected you to keep as a staff assistant. When I come down to your office as the chief clerk administrator, I want you to show those to me. I don't care how you do the rest of it. I need to know that you're keeping these files. I need to know that these are the hours you work, and that you keep this information available to your staff at hand. That if you are not there one day and I have to go down and cover for you, I have everything I need to do your job for you. That's the concept. It was that simple. And it worked.

Everybody always does things a little differently, and I think that's important to allow that. You don't want to be rigid, because that's where you find out, too, where there are better ways of doing things. But we didn't have databases at that time. We didn't have the sophisticated systems we have today. And usually the staff assistants who would come in, or the counsels, or the professional staff who had been somewhere else that they had it, would bring that knowledge with them and say, "Well, when I was over at the Heritage Foundation for instance, we had this database. You don't have one. Do you have Access?" "Yes, it's part of the package we bought with Microsoft except nobody knows how to use it." And there was no

training at the time through HIR. You would buy this software and, okay. So they have come a long way, too. They give training in everything now, so there's no excuse not to know anything. But then, it was a challenge.

JOHNSON: During this period, the Internet was starting to become prevalent in the House. Do you remember when the Science Committee first had access to the Internet?

SCHWARTZ: I remember that HIR, House Information Resources, and the House Oversight Committee were trying to develop webpages or encourage committees and Members to start using that. At the same time, I think THOMAS was evolving as a system.[8] One of the things that I was lucky enough to be involved in, lucky enough to be involved in the transition team with the House and House Oversight. I was part of the committee support for THOMAS, because again they were looking at, they knew what the Members needed. But what is it a committee needs? What is it you're constantly looking for? Research-wise, what kind of information does a committee have that we can put out there so that THOMAS can put it out there? That gave them a perspective. I think there was one other committee. I believe it was Energy and Commerce. We were very involved. They would kind of pick our brains and come over. We would do these sessions. Okay, they got very technical. They were going way over my head because it was very sophisticated. But it was, "What do we need? What do you have? What kind of questions . . . When you're using THOMAS as a committee, what do you need to access?" And that perspective was very helpful to them.

The same thing with House Oversight when we were dealing with the Internet—they started encouraging websites and House Information Resources provided a tool. They would create a basic webpage for a committee or a Member's office, and they would provide the links for you. They would show you once you created it, it's easy enough to post things to it. They would walk you through the process. But what we found, Member's offices were very simple—just a Member's office. You put it up there, it's linked back to home.

With a committee, you had the minority and you had the majority. So you had two parties vying for the attention of the public and only one chairman. The minority at the time wanted their own webpages. The majority wanted theirs. The reality was that there's only one chairman of each committee, and the chairman is ultimately responsible for everything that committee does or says, as chairman. So the only way the minority could get their own webpage was by a link from the main page of the majority, the chairman's, the official page. So it would say, "Committee on Science and Astronautics," and there would be a button that would say, "Minority" or "Minority views" or "Minority membership," and you'd link to that. Then as soon as you linked to that, it would say, "You are now leaving the main committee page and you are going to the minority's page." So it would help the public understand the structure of the committee, that there weren't two science committees. There was one Science Committee that had a minority support. So that was integral.

[A 12-second segment of this interview has been redacted.]

JOHNSON: Do you remember what year that was that the Science Committee had the first website?

SCHWARTZ: No, I don't.

JOHNSON: What about the content of the webpage?

SCHWARTZ: At the time, it was very basic. We would put our membership; we would put up our hearings. Then it started begging the question, while we're putting up the notice of the hearing, but how is anybody going to find out who are the witnesses? So we'd put up . . . it would just be a static page that would have the title and the witnesses that were going to be there. But then you got to, "Well, what happened at the meeting? What about televisions? They're doing this in the Senate, why can't we do it here?" Everything just started, it was like a ball rolling down a hill. "Why can't we do this? The technology is there. The House doesn't have it. Or they're not utilizing

it. Well, we're the Science Committee. If anybody's going to do this, we got to step up and do this."

What we found is a lot of committees, the audio systems in the hearing rooms were archaic. Very, very old. The wiring is very old. The Rayburn Building was the newest, mind you, but the same systems were being installed everywhere. We had to constantly be fixing this and fixing that, and echoes. So I think House Oversight knew that they were in for a huge undertaking. So they went out on their own, unbeknownst to the committees and the rest of the House to get a campus-wide plan. And they had actually gone to a huge company that did stadiums. Their name was Peak Audio. They were based in Denver. They came up with this huge campus plan.

Now again, the leadership didn't share information with committees. This is something they were doing. And not until the Science Committee decided that it wanted to put money that it had saved on contracts, outside contractors that would come in and fix our computers and things and we'd started doing it in-house, we saved $80,000 here and we cut all these publications. We streamlined our budget. We saved another $150,000. So now with $150 and $80, we had $230,000. At the end of the year, the way it goes, if you don't use it, you turn it back and it goes into the "Speaker's slush fund." That wasn't going to happen because if you turn back money, the way government works, you don't get as much next year. "Use it or lose it." So we didn't want to just spend it, we wanted to put it somewhere.

So my boss at the time said, "We'll just get a new sound system." He was going to go over to Circuit City. {laughter} As it turned out, he was looking at that kind of thing, and I went down and talked to the Superintendent's Office, the [House] Radio and TV Gallery and [House] Recording Studio and I said, "There's an infrastructure here. If we're going to do this, what do we need to do?" "Well, you can't do this and you can't do that. If you're going to do this, you need to do this." And he kept going, "Oh, we need somebody who knows what they're doing." And

that's when I pretty much put a call into the Architect's Office in the Capitol. First of all, you don't mess around with the infrastructure without contacting the Architect. Or I didn't think so anyway. They helped to guide me. That's when we found out about the campus-wide plan that they'd been working on for two or three years. I said, "You were going to tell us this when?" I said, "Who are you working with?" And he had told me this gentleman's name, so I called him.

One night I was home. I called him and said, "I am so in over my head. I have no idea. I've been tasked with this project to upgrade our hearing room with a new sound system. But then my boss thought, 'Well, we want to do video conferencing. If we're going to do video conferencing, why don't we webcast our hearings? And if we webcast our hearings, what does that do to our webpage? Do we have enough bandwidth?'" And I said, "I don't know the answers to these questions. The House doesn't know because they don't have this yet. The Senate does. I need to talk to somebody."

So he actually was wonderful. Came in the next time he was in, sat down, we walked through the hearing room. We went over to the Senate, took a look at their recording studio—very sophisticated operation. They were so far ahead of the House at the time. We went and talked to Alex Cusati who's currently in the [House] Recording Studio and who walked us through this process. And he showed me, "We have this and this. It's pathetic." Because he knew what the potential was. But there wasn't any funding there. So you can't do anything without money.

We got the ball rolling at that point. Slowly worked into proposals. He recommended a company that was local that he completely trusted, because again, you're going cold. I don't know who these people are. There's no track record for anybody on the Hill. It's not like they had done this room, they did a great job, so we'll use them. No. Nobody had done a hearing room on the Hill before. So that was the challenge: keeping the integrity of the hearing room and layering in all the technology necessary.

So again, after the administrative functions, now I'm the techno person, and I'm getting involved. It was wonderful. I worked seven days a week. I was here Saturdays and Sundays because the crew was in there digging things up. I was taking pictures, sharing all the information. Moving this, "No, you don't want that there because the Members need to have this and this." The guys that are building the room don't know. Again, they don't know what committees do. They don't know what the room is being used for. So you had to be there 24-7, and I was.

It turned out after I think it was close to five-and-a-half, six months of constant work that we came up with this great room. Everybody wanted to use it when it was done. House Oversight wanted to use it. Every other committee wanted to use it. And then it whet their appetite. Well, if Science can do it, we want to do it, too. So the floodgates had opened. But that's how the technology started. It was just a simple question, how can we improve the sound system? That was the 104th Congress. That was with the Republicans.

When I came to the Judiciary Committee, the Judiciary Committee is so busy constantly, they just don't have time to look sideways. They're just constantly busy. They had not upgraded anything. Even though they had already gone through the whole impeachment, [President William J. "Bill"] Clinton impeachment, they jerry-rigged everything what was in that room. The TVs that were on those big consoles, everything was supplied by the recording studio. It was just a blank slate. All the old technology was in that room.

So one of the first things we did when we came to Judiciary was say, "It's now or never. If we're going to do this, we got to do it." But the House had become much more sophisticated by then. They had a plan. So you had to fold in the plan and you had to politic to get to the top of the list because there are other committees there and they wanted to do it a certain way. The old model that the Science Committee used had been already outdated.

JOHNSON: And this was just in 2000 that it was already outdated?

SCHWARTZ: Yes. Technology changes. Even if you look at computers, every three years you're getting new everything, because it's not . . . and the House has a basic, minimum requirement for even their computer systems. So you're constantly changing over your entire system every three years. That's going on in the background, too. So that's kind of the facilities operations is what my job turned into. It's administrative facilities operations officer, whatever. It evolved. I felt very much a part of it and enjoyed every bit of it.

JOHNSON: I am going to pause for a minute so I can switch CDs.

END OF PART ONE ~ BEGINNING OF PART TWO

JOHNSON: We were just talking about technology and the changes in the House. I wanted to step back just for one minute you had mentioned that you were part of the input for THOMAS, the committee input for THOMAS. Can you provide an example of some of the recommendations that you made?

SCHWARTZ: Oh, man. I worked very closely with a lady who was our legislative clerk. Her name is Vivian Tessieri. On the Science Committee, she was our archivist. She took care of all the legislative filing to make sure we had everything in order. She also was the person we directed a lot of our questions to. A lot of the staff used her for putting together reports because she had her fingers on information. I pulled her in to work with me and THOMAS.

A lot of the issues simply came, I'm trying to think, the reporting process, the way certain bills were linked and searched, cross-referenced. For instance, you would pull one bill that may have had to do with, and I'm just using this as an example, NASA funding. There might have been five other bills that were very, very similar to that bill. But it was important to know they were out there. So when you would pull up

this bill, they would reference those bills, also. Would also reference the fact that that bill, once it made it through committee in some cases might have been reported as a clean bill with a new number, because they had made so many modifications to it, or they incorporated, it was an original bill they incorporated four other bills into it. They molded it and shaped it into this new bill with a brand-new number. And unless you had those references behind it, you wouldn't know they were related in one way or another.

So it was very important for us, from the committee side of it, to know that these were out there from a research point of view. Because when we were doing research for the counsels or for the professional staff on the committee on legislation that had already passed or exists in the House, the only way THOMAS was going to work for us is if you could put that issue in and it would pull all these things and cross-reference for you, and let you determine after viewing it, "Well, I don't need that. I don't need that. But I do need this, and this, and this, and this." So that was the search engine part of it was very important to the committee's function. Vivian was very important in helping me verbalize to the folks that were doing the research over at the Library of Congress for THOMAS what we needed, since she did it on a routine basis within our little committee at science. And she was very good at it, that they understood what the committees need this research tool for.

That's one of the things that I really appreciated about the Library, when they were doing this whole huge project, which it's turned into, it's almost secondhand, how did we ever not have that, or Legis? That they were taking into consideration the external uses by the public, but primarily the internal uses by the people that were creating the legislation and researching it, trying to find out historically what happened and how we can go back and find what we need to find. That was the input that they needed from the committee. As far as a specific, I really can't think specific one issue, although I know Vivian probably could. {laughter}

JOHNSON: That's fine. How did the Internet and specifically sites like THOMAS change the work of the Science Committee and then the Judiciary Committee?

SCHWARTZ: Well, it brought us very front and center to the public. And the role of Congress, and I think I had said that before, it's always been kind of a mystery whatever happens up here. I think when the public became aware of the floor proceedings, when C-SPAN took an active role in broadcasting live from the floor, you were seeing, "Hey, that's my Member. Look at him. He can really talk. He really knows what he's talking about. I like what he says." People were actually watching C-SPAN like they would watch soaps. They would get hooked on C-SPAN because this is our government at work.

And they wanted to translate that over to committees, so that you could see how the committee functioned, what role the committee function played in the floor operation. What these people are doing before it got to the floor. I think it was from that perspective where we saw television so second nature now. The cameras are in there and you don't even know that they're there. There's a certain accountability. There's a lot of showmanship that goes into it too.

JOHNSON: Did you find that the general public was more interested in the committee work because they were able to communicate with you?

SCHWARTZ: Yes, I did. I also found that one of the things we were doing, people would call and they would want copies of testimony. They'd want copies of reports because this was the only way they could get the information. Until it was published, which was usually six months after the fact, it was gone. The moment was passed. That's when we started posting the witness statement the next day on our website. We would post the transcript in raw form on the website, before it was published, because again we had the *verbatim* rule. So there was no reason not to publish it. It wasn't in paper print, but we also were making it available to the public. It eliminated a lot of mail process. We didn't have to send all these reports. We got to the point where

GPO would work very closely with us. As soon as the document was printed, the paper copy was printed. GPO had a digital file on it, and they would tell us where the link was to get the digital file that we would put that right under the hearing. So on our webpage at Judiciary, you could look up the hearing. And under news, it would have the testimony. You'd click on the person's name, the testimony would pop up, you'd go under the news, you'd see transcript, you'd see the report, you'd see the printed hearing. It was one page. Everything was there. Fantastic. To me, that was like perfect. That's what everybody needs. And most committees do that.

We spent a lot of money building our current webpage, the Judiciary webpage. And I've noticed it's stayed very much the same. The backbone of the webpage still operates I believe the way it was. The content has completely changed, because it's new leadership on the committee. And that goes without saying. But the way it works was really good, and we actually got an award for it.

JOHNSON: A few times during your interview today, you talked about the transition team, or you referenced the transition team. Can you provide some more detail on what this encompassed?

SCHWARTZ: The transition team was simply a matter that the House had been a Democratic run entity for close to 40 years. When the Republicans took over, it was just all brand new. You needed, it was like a corporate transition. So you had people that were representing all the various entities of leadership, including the committees. The chief counsels on each of the committees worked directly with the leadership. There were people on each committee, like myself in the administrative function, who became part of the administrative transition, so that this is what this committee needs. Now, we would sit and meet with House Oversight and come up with plans. "This is what we need to do. We have to do a budget. What guidance is House Oversight going to give us to do our budget submission to them? Are we doing a one-year budget? Are we doing a two-year budget? Are you going to give us some guidelines? Are you going to throw some standard questions at us? We need

guidance. We don't know what and how this process was done before. Help us here."

Now, some of the finance administrators, and actually I think there were three who transitioned, who had been in the majority, Democratic majority, who moved over. That was our core fundamental information source. This is how we used to do it. But again, just because that's the way . . . and what I found is those three, and they were women, dug in. This is the way we did it. This is the way we've always done it. And this is the way we're going to continue to do it. They probably lasted about two years and were phased out because it's not the way you can work. You cannot be that rigid in an environment that's changing as much as it is.

As part of the transition team, they were looking for people who were willing to try and solve the problems that were facing committees and the regular order of the House from the committee perspective. I was more than willing to get involved because I knew so little. I knew a lot, but I didn't know how the committee ran externally, and I didn't know what other committees did. I had been closeted in the minority for so long that I really wasn't aware. So I didn't know. The only way I was going to learn was get out there and find out. And I didn't want someone else telling me. I wanted to find out for myself. So you got involved and you started talking to people. House Oversight pulled together a transition team. I was part of that.

Every time they ran into an issue, like the webpage issue, because it was fundamentally committee, the Members didn't have the same issues internally. And then what you can do with it and what you can't do with it. "Is House Administration or House Oversight going to put out rules? Don't you think it'd be a good idea if we put out rules?" "I think it'd be a great idea. It'd help us. We need guidance in travel. We need sounding boards. House oversight needs to do outreach to the committees that they support. You're telling us how to do our job so we need to be able to have somebody to call. And you have to guide us through this." They actually wound up putting out a committee handbook. They have a Member

handbook and they have a committee handbook. Everything is now online, but it was that kind of thing that because of the change in Congress, it put a lot more into print that people had just assumed had always been done a certain way. And it was almost handed down verbally, like fables. {laughter} So it forced things pen to paper. "Okay, we need a policy. We need this. We need this."

The House was a unique place that just operated, did its job, didn't worry about answering to a whole lot of people. Even then, we didn't have the Fair Labor Standards Act. There was no such thing when I first started working here. You worked the job. You worked every day. You worked until 10:00, 11:00 at night. No, you didn't get paid for it. No, you didn't get comp time for it. That was because you were privileged to work on the Hill. Then when Fair Labor Standards came in and the Congressional Accountability Act was passed, people that we made exempt or not exempt, I still get confused on that, non exempt, that had to work a 40-hour work week, that we had to kick out of the door at 6:00 resented it, because they wanted to stay. They were the ones, "I want to be there. I don't want to go home. I want to stay." "No, you can't stay. Or if you do stay, you're going to have to take Friday off. But I don't want you gone Friday so you get out of here now." But those are the kind of things that it was just the nature of the job. And the new kid always got the longest hours type thing. And not necessarily the chief counsel. It was usually the secretarial support staff.

There was no union. Actually, I do remember at one point where they . . . and I can't remember when this was, but I believe it was after the 104th Congress, where they actually sent out questionnaires, did we want to form a union? And resoundingly "no" was the answer. We did not want to form a union. Now, there's a union shop in the Superintendent's Office, [Capitol] Police Force and all that. But the House did not want that. And I think they just take a certain pride in being an at-will employee, whatever that means {laughter}. Plus, I don't think the Members would handle that really well.

JOHNSON: Before moving on to your time on the Judiciary Committee—I have some specific questions, of course, about that—just wanted to wrap up with your tenure on the Science Committee. Can you provide some background on the written history of the Science Committee that was done by Representative [Kenneth] Hechler?

SCHWARTZ: I remember, believe it was under Mr. Teague's tenure, and I believe, he was getting older and so much had happened. Again, everything had kind of leveled off. The space program had found its footing. Everything was kind of settled, if that makes sense. We had a routine going with launches. And there was so much history that had happened, that Mr. Teague wanted to preserve. I'm not sure how the conversations transpired, but I don't think he was alone in that. Mr. Hechler had retired from the committee. They reached out to him and proposed, since he was an author that had written the book, *The Bridge at Remagen*, which turned into a film. He was an author and he was a member of the committee. "Would you come back and take on this job for us of writing the history of the Science Committee?" He did. It took him a good year, maybe a little bit more. They set up an office for him. They gave him an assistant. He went around and interviewed people.

Mr. Teague from the start, I remember we had a staff meeting, and he said, "I'm authorizing this history of the committee, and I'm not reviewing any of it. Ken's got full reign on this. I'm not going to edit. I'm not going to do anything. He's going to write this history and it's going to be a total bipartisan, just, 'this is the facts.'" And he held true to that. I think if you look at the Science Committee's history, you see it's actually a pretty good read. It's fascinating. He pulls little tidbits in that unless you had worked there you wouldn't even know to ask or dig up. That would be to me the goal of most histories, something like that, although I don't think most committees have the time or the money to be able to put behind doing that kind of history. Mr. Hechler was very good at it, pulled in lots of pictures, formatted it more like a novel.

JOHNSON: Did the committee staff find it useful to be able to go to this one publication and know the history of its own committee?

SCHWARTZ: I think so, mainly because a lot of the people were retiring and leaving. Again, the word of mouth thing, it just wasn't there anymore. History dies so quickly unless you put pen to paper. There would have been so much of how the space program got to where it is today lost because NASA was not doing a history. Thank God he did that because you do look back and it's a very important part of the country because it was a focus and a goal of the Kennedy presidency, when you think about it. It was a monumental achievement—so, without that background and to find out what went into it, little intricacies, the politics.

JOHNSON: The 50th anniversary of the establishment of the House Science Committee is on the horizon because it became an official standing committee in 1959. If you were asked to select some significant events in the committee history, what would they be? I know that's a difficult question, so if you just had to pick one or two, what would you choose?

SCHWARTZ: I think landing on the moon was huge. It really gave a credibility and a visibility to NASA, to the country, and to the committee and what it was all about. Let's see, the legislation that came out of the committee, the oversight that the committee did I think was totally underplayed. It was a very important part of the committee, but I don't think it was played up by the House or the press as much as it should have been because when you're authorizing funding, which the Science Committee, that was our role, authorize these agencies, there's a responsibility that goes along with that. You're giving somebody money, but you want to know how they're spending it and make sure they're spending it correctly. So one thing to authorize money, but it's a whole other thing to do the appropriate oversight and make sure that that money is going where it's supposed to. I know that because I wasn't as involved in the Democratic majority and their oversight functions, and I was involved in the

Republican majority and the oversight functions, that they took it very, very seriously.

The landing on the moon for the Science Committee was huge. It just brought the spotlight onto that committee and everything that went along with it—the oversight responsibilities, *Challenger* accident. I think the whole demeanor of the committee changed because Members now wanted to be on that committee. It wasn't just, "Oh, got the Science Committee. Ugh." Now, they wanted to be on the committee. And the Science Committee was changed from science and astronautics to pure science, so it would cover a broader spectrum with the energy issues, and the science issues, and the space issues and the aviation issues.[9] None of them really have taken off, and again, a pun is there, like the space program.

And yet now, the space program isn't what the Science Committee is all about. It's interesting to see how it too has evolved. And it's back to its roots again. It's back to the environment, energy, solar energy, aviation technology. It's back to its roots. Now NASA's still a big part of it, but I think it's focusing on all of them simultaneously instead of just one. Again, I think the most important thing was the landing, actually during my time.

JOHNSON: When and why did you move from the Science Committee to the Judiciary Committee?

SCHWARTZ: When Mr. Sensenbrenner, who was chairman of the Science Committee was appointed as the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, we had a new chairman coming in, Mr. [Sherwood Louis] Boehlert from New York, and I had known him and I knew his new staff director. There was going to be a big change in the direction of the Science Committee. As much as I love change, I also love certain continuity. I wanted to be able to perform the same functions, be able to be challenged. And I knew the management under Mr. Sensenbrenner, Phil Kiko, Todd Schultz. They knew me. It's like any corporation. When you become the chairman of the board of that corporation, who do you bring with you? You bring

your proven team with you. So I got a call. Todd asked if I would like to be the executive assistant at full committee, and I said, "Well, I've not done that before. That would be a nice change. Yes, I would. I'd be very interested." So I went down and talked to him and he told me what my new job would be, and that they had a chief clerk. So I didn't need to do that. And I said, "Actually, that's fine. This would be nice. I can get maybe a little bit back into the legislative function because I'd be in the front office area." I took the job and went down.

Now, Mr. Boehlert was very upset when I left. He didn't want me to leave, because again, I think he looked at me as the continuity of the operation. I took with me my team. {laughter} That was part of my stipulation. I told Mr. Sensenbrenner, I said, "If I go to Judiciary, I want my systems person, I want my finance clerk, and I want my printer. I want them all because they already know how Mr. Sensenbrenner works. I don't have to go through this, there's no down time. We just slide in and slowly do it."

Now, it was an education for me because I'd always been on Science Committee. I started there, I grew up there, I became the chief clerk there. So I come into the Judiciary Committee now I'm the new kid on the block. And I had to do a step back because everything at Judiciary was, "This is the way we've done it, this is the way we've always done it, and this is the way we'll continue to do it." And I'm going, "Oh my God, I'm back at square one again." So you had to bite your tongue. And that's when you kind of just slow and easy, slow and easy.

Then I was in the executive office, then Jim Farr who was the finance person and the chief clerk, went over to International Relations Committee. So I get the tap on the shoulder, "You got a new job." "Wait a minute. I've only been here two months." "We need you to be the chief clerk administrator, please." So I slid over into that job. And that's when I started.

All the subcommittees on Judiciary operated totally independent from the full committee, totally. They did their own thing their own way—no idea what they were doing, nobody did. So I literally went and visited each staff assistant, sat down, asked them to show me their operation and how they did things. I took notes, went back and went, "Oh my God, they're all over the place." Everybody was doing something totally different. So I started, and I said, nobody likes being dictated to. I don't. So I don't think anybody else does, too. Back to [the] team. Okay, we're going to have a little team. A lot of resistance. But when you started bringing in fresh faces, new staff assistants, the people that had been there a while realized, "Oh, I can help them and they can help me." It worked.

I got all the things that I wanted implemented. I got them archiving. They hadn't been archiving for six or seven years. So there was like this huge, I'm looking at our book and there's nothing in there. I'm going, "What's going on?" Each subcommittee does their own. At the Science Committee, we had one central person do it. So it really depended on the motivation of the staff assistant. That's not good.

So that's when I reached out to the Legislative Resources Center and archiving and Robin [Reeder].[10] I said, "Robin, we need your help." So she came over and did a little tutorial on, this is what you need to archive. And then they started doing it routinely. So every six months, I would make mandatory, everybody goes, because you need to know these things. Again, the policies and procedures that we had at the Science Committee, I folded those in. There was a handbook at Judiciary, but again it was just the policies, not the administrative stuff. So I did a whole new handbook incorporating, slid it out there quietly. Slowly but surely everything came and was working beautifully. Then we took on the hearing room technology update again. Already done one room, so this wasn't as big a deal, and it got done very well—different people.

JOHNSON: This is upgrading the hearing room?

SCHWARTZ: Hearing room. Right, the House took over the operation. I didn't need to be the contracting officer anymore. The House had Wes Simms who was with the Architect's Office. He was the contracting officer. So he pretty much, we just laid out the plan that we wanted. We got the proposal. Everybody approved the proposal. He just ran with it. So a lot less stress on me, so I could actually do my other jobs, which was good.

JOHNSON: You spoke about archiving committee records. When you came onto Judiciary, this was after the impeachment, the [President] Clinton impeachment hearings in 1998. But you still were involved in the archiving process.

SCHWARTZ: Right, they had hired a gentleman named Steve Lynch. Steve Lynch had been on the committee during the [President] Nixon impeachment [in 1974]. So he had already done the Nixon impeachment. He had retired. They called him back to help archive the Clinton impeachment, which was a wonderful idea, because he'd already done this. They gave him a separate room over in the Ford Building with locks and safes and everything. He had been doing this archiving for close to, gosh, two years, by the time I came. They were winding down. New chairman came in, Mr. [Henry John] Hyde left and Mr. Sensenbrenner's in, "What's taking so long? Why can't we get this stuff done?" So we set a timetable to get as much done as possible, and then Steve left me with a lot of the general correspondence that had come in from the public that needed to be archived and organized. That's what I took on. It was fascinating, since I hadn't been physically part of the Clinton impeachment, that I was now picking up the tail end of it and got to see how involved the public was.

JOHNSON: What kind of general correspondence, can you provide an example?

SCHWARTZ: People would send things like their Purple Hearts. They did. They sent their Purple Heart into the [impeachment] managers saying that they deserved it more for the courage that they displayed going against, standing up for what they perceived was

right, in the face of all that they were getting from the press. I was touched by things that were made and sent in by people.

I remember calling Robin. She had to come over and I said, "What are we going to do with this? I don't know how to store this stuff." People did drawings. People poured their hearts out and their emotions on paper. To me, you don't just get rid of that. It has to be archived. So we had two interns that went over there with me. We sat through, took the general stuff and then we tried to organize it by state. That didn't work. We tried to do this. Then we said, "Oh, we're just going to take it and say these are general." We did it kind of alphabetically. But you can't even put all the names in there.

So that's kind of what we did. In the archive sheets, we were as detailed as we could be. We had tapes that we archived from the recordings that most of the recordings that were done were done by C-SPAN or by NBC, ABC, CBS news. So basically a lot of the tapes didn't even belong to the committee. So we had tapes. The public and the news agencies had tapes. And C-SPAN had tapes. So we wanted to make sure these got archived, too. We wound down on all that. We got everything archived. It has its own separate detail numbering system and everything.

JOHNSON: And for people that don't know anything about archiving committee records, what are some of the basics that are involved in this process?

SCHWARTZ: It's all of the formal correspondence that goes out. We're not looking for things like notes, personal notes. But the correspondence that comes in from agencies goes out over the chairman's signature. Legislation, what goes into making that legislation. Any kind of transcript that the committee has that they did not put in print, that goes into the official archives, anything that is an actual function of the committee. We have trip reports when people would go on travel; they were required to do trip reports: the purpose of their trip, what they found out, this kind of thing. That

would get archived. Our financial records would get archived. Our personnel files would get archived.

But all of the official documentation, the official business of the committee, we tried to—it's overwhelming when you look at the whole committee, but when you break it down to a subcommittee and you help them structure their files accordingly, when they do their legislative files, it's an automatic they go. When you do the agency files by the agency incoming and outgoing correspondence and you break it down by Members' correspondence, all of these things get archived.

What doesn't get archived are subject files, things that might come in as a press release from somebody or an article or a random letter that has to do with, "I'd really appreciate if you'd look into this," for instance, they might not get archived, because it never developed other than a thank you for your interest in the committee. We don't want to waste archive space. But there's a lot that needs to be archived because you don't know what people are going to go back and look for.

I remember when I was going through how detailed the Waco [Texas] investigation was.[11] I was not here for that, at Judiciary. But just the impact of what is in the archives becomes so apparent when you look at it and you know that this is huge stuff. This is big stuff. At some point in history, people are going to want to go back and find out what happened, what went wrong. The public is paying us to do our job. Therefore this belongs to the public, the way I look at it. Now granted, most things are under wraps for 25 to 30 years. But the whole point is, it's still available.

You had to impress upon the staff assistants and the counsels that what they were doing is historical stuff, and that not everything goes into the archives, but they have to be proactive and responsible. A simple way we got around that is all the correspondence that came in (all the original correspondence never, ever went to the counsels). Original correspondence went in the file. What the counsels got were copies. So the counsels, whatever they kept in their office, when they left, they could

take it with them or throw it away, because we had what we needed (the originals). That's what we were working on this for a long time because counsels kept everything. They just kept everything. So we were trying to think, "How can we do this?" Okay, follow the paper. The paper comes in the front door, we open the mail, we stamp it, it goes to the staff assistant. That's our trail. We do not give them original of anything. That goes in the file. It's very simple, if you just go back. It doesn't make extra work. Then it's a no-brainer.

JOHNSON: Was this the policy that you implemented?

SCHWARTZ: Yes. You had to go back and do that, because what would happen is the correspondence would come in and go directly to the counsel. Counsel would put it in his files. He'd leave. The files would wind up in boxes along the wall somewhere. Somebody then, and I did this many a time, you'd have to go through 50 boxes trying to find out what was in there, if anything was valuable. We did that on all of the subcommittees because so little had been archived because the person that did the archiving was the staff assistant and she had only the legislative files. She or he, at the time, did not have this agency correspondence, these memos, these reports that came. Now you've got a whole other issue with e-mails. People do so much now with e-mails and I don't even think they look at that as archivable (at least then).

JOHNSON: Were you involved at all with the archiving of committee webpages?

SCHWARTZ: Yes. This last change, I became . . . we had put so much work into the functionality of the Judiciary Committee webpage, I had a genuine fear that it would just be tossed aside and they'd build a whole new webpage. This is what I'd been led to believe. I reached out and talked to other committees and they said, "What are you going to do with your webpage? What are you going to do with everything that's on there, because this is a resource now?" "I don't know." So I called House Administration, I said, "What are we going to do? We have to do something. Who

owns this? Does Mr. Sensenbrenner own this? Or does the committee own it? Or does the House own it?" It took, I'd say, it took about three months for me to get an answer. They had to get the House Counsel involved. They had to get the legal people. And they said basically, "The webpage belongs to the House of Representatives. Therefore, the House has to archive it and everything with it."

What I found, when we left, when Mr. Sensenbrenner moved from the Science Committee to the Judiciary Committee, even though the parties did not change, everything that we had put up on the Science Committee website was now gone. It was there somewhere, but it was not public anymore. So I would go back to the old website looking for something, it was no longer there. They did it differently, which they're entitled to do. All that's gone now. All those hearings, all those archived videos of the hearings are now in limbo somewhere. And I just said, "Oh, this is going to be a nightmare," because we had gone through when we built the webpage and literally key entered everything in on the Clinton impeachment. Every document that was in print was up there. Every hearing that we had, every witness, you could research the whole thing.

I was part of the keystroke people. My systems manager, my office manager, and our legislative person, all of us hand entered that entire thing. So we had a vested interest in this. And I just didn't want to let it go because you had histories, you had issues. It had the voting rights bill. This was the first voting rights legislation in the 20th century that had come out.[12] It's just going to disappear. You can't have that happen. What are we going to do with this? I kept pushing, pushing, pushing. I kept asking what can we do, what can we do, what can we do?

We've got a history coming out. I want that posted to the webpage. I don't know if it's going to come out when Mr. Sensenbrenner's still chairman. So if the new chairman doesn't want to post it to the webpage, he doesn't have to. But that's the history of the committee. The whole idea was, make it a House document, make it digitally available, let's put it up there. To this day, it is not on Judiciary's webpage.

What we do have now, and I found that we're allowed to do this, is if we can get a university to host the old Judiciary webpage and we provide them with the data up to date, and I link in the last three documents, they will host it. So it is now a resource. They have done that with other commissions, like two- or three-year commissions that have gone into, just disappeared. They did their work. They reported out their work. It was online for a year. Three years later it's disappeared. Universities are now taking up the slack and hosting this. What I don't know is how one would go through the House network to the archived Judiciary website because the information that we had inputted—if that's the correct term—isn't there anymore. It's all the new stuff, which is fine. I mean that's what a chairman has the right to do. But where's the old stuff? Where's the history?

JOHNSON: So as far as you know, there's no official policy on archiving websites?

SCHWARTZ: There is. I mean the House is responsible for it. HIR is responsible for it. I'm now part of the public. I'm not part of the Hill anymore. How do I, "John Q. Public," find that site. I don't know where to go. I'm probably going to pursue it just by picking up the phone and calling, and I'd probably call HIR. I'd call . . . probably I'd start with our systems person on Judiciary who's still here now and say, "Where is it?" Let her do the sleuthing and say, "Oh, it's right here." "Well, how does the public find it?" "It's archived, but what does that mean? Does that mean it's over in the [National] Archives under lock and key somewhere? How does a person with a computer get to it? I don't know that that's available. It's archived, but I don't know how you get to it." That's a concern for me, so I am pursuing right now with Mr. Sensenbrenner's office, putting a link on his page. Because there's so much information—since he's still a Member of the House, he hasn't gone anywhere—that he did that it's research. It's resources. Again, it's history, six years. A lot happened then.[13]

JOHNSON: Especially with the Judiciary Committee.

SCHWARTZ: Right.

JOHNSON: There is a lot more I want to ask you. But we're pretty much out of time.

SCHWARTZ: Running out of time.

JOHNSON: I hope you'll come back for another session. But is there anything else you wanted to add today?

SCHWARTZ: No. You're right, there's a lot more, especially when it comes to Judiciary that we hadn't even touched on yet. The perspective I think that you're looking for me to bring is the perspective from a female support person on a committee. I hope I'm giving you what you need.

JOHNSON: You definitely are. Thank you!

NOTES

[1] According to the *Congressional Staff Directory* (1975), Patricia Schwartz worked for the Subcommittee on Aviation & Transportation Research & Development. In 1977, Schwartz also worked for the subcommittee, although the name changed to the Subcommittee on Transportation, Aviation & Weather.
[2] The Chowder and Marching Club organized in 1949 out of opposition to a veterans' pension bill backed by Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman John Elliott Rankin of Mississippi. The group's membership boasted many prominent congressional leaders and included future Presidents Richard M. Nixon and Gerald Rudolph Ford, Jr.
[3] American astronaut Jack Swigert served as the executive director of the Committee on Science and Astronautics (later named the Committee on Science and Technology) from 1973 to 1977. In 1982 he won election to the House from Colorado, but he passed away before being sworn in to Congress.
[4] Alessandro "Alex" Cusati, chief engineer in the House Recording Studio, retired in 2013. *Congressional Record*, House, 113th Cong., 1st sess. (1 August 2013): E1192.
[5] A part of the institutional reforms included in the 1994 Republican campaign platform, the "Contract with America," the House voted to ban proxy voting in committees at the beginning of the 104th Congress.
[6] On January 27, 1967, the Apollo/Saturn space command module caught fire during a launch pad test killing three astronauts. In honor of the deceased astronauts, NASA redesignated the AS-204 mission, Apollo I.
[7] Reference to a partial meltdown of a nuclear reactor at the Three Mile Island power plant in Pennsylvania in March of 1979.
[8] First launched in January 1995, THOMAS, a website maintained by the Library of Congress, helped to make federal legislative information accessible to the public.
[9] When Patricia Schwartz joined the committee in 1969, the panel was named the Science and Aeronautics Committee. In 1974, it became the Committee on Science and Technology. In the 100th Congress (1987–1989), the name changed to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and when the Republicans gained control of the House in 1995 they called the panel the Committee on Science.
[10] Robin Reeder serves as the Archivist of the U.S. House of Representatives.
[11] Reference to a congressional investigation into the federal response of the standoff at the Mount Carmel Center near Waco, Texas, in 1993.
[12] In 2006, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Sensenbrenner of Wisconsin played a leading role in the successful House vote to renew key provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.
[13] The Center for Legislative Archives, the repository for the official records of Congress, conducts a web harvest (http://webharvest.gov/) of congressional websites at the end of each Congress. The harvest captures web content created by congressional committees, Members, and organizations from the 109th Congress (2005–2007) forward.