

# Profiles of Outstanding Women in Public Administration

edited by:  
Claire L. Felbinger  
Wendy A. Haynes

ASPA's Section for Women in Public Administration (SWPA)

# PREFACE

In 2003 we edited a book titled *Outstanding Women in Public Administration*, which was published by M.E. Sharpe in 2004. For the book, we sought to engage scholars who were actively involved in research on women in public administration and to excite those who expressed interest in documenting their contributions. It is a book based on research about women who contributed to the public service in the United States. During our research, we discovered that there was no book published on women in public administration or even women in political science.

We did not know it at the time, but we would each eventually serve as chair of the Section for Women in Public Administration (SWPA). In any case, we proposed to edit two books on women in public administration. One would be research-based and the second would recount the accomplishments of women who have served in leadership positions in SWPA and in ASPA. SWPA and ASPA leaders agreed that the second book would be a “living document,” which would expand as we identified authors and women about whom to write. We concentrated in this first release on SWPA leaders. We have both been impressed, and intrigued by the histories of these women and look forward to including many more life stories in subsequent iterations of this second book. As much as possible, we retained the pieces as originally submitted and kept editorial changes to a minimum.

Future contributions will document SWPA Research Award winners, former ASPA Presidents, and other women who have contributed to ASPA and to the public service. These are stories worth telling and preserving for future generations.

We would like to thank SWPA leaders for their continued support for this project. Kathy Hensley was pivotal in moving the project along. We would also like to thank the staff at ASPA for taking on this publication project and its distribution. In particular, we thank Antoinette A. Samuel, Executive Director, Matt Rankin, Senior Director of Program and Service Development, and Steve Dunphy, Communications and Marketing Manager, for their continued support.

We thank, as well, the women whose contributions are chronicled here and the authors who took the time to learn and write about these amazing women. Subjects and authors alike have given generously of their time and energy to SWPA and to the profession.

Claire L. Felbinger  
Washington, DC

Wendy A. Haynes  
Cape Cod, Massachusetts

# PROFILES OF OUTSTANDING WOMEN IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

WOMEN IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: BREAKING NEW GROUND .....	7
<i>By Nancy R. Foye-Cox</i>	
WILLA BRUCE.....	43
<i>By Dorothy Olshfski</i>	
JEANNE-MARIE COL .....	49
<i>By Judith Kirchhoff and Vera Vogelsang-Coombs</i>	
LINDA MARGARET DELEON .....	59
<i>By Suzanne J. Piotrowski</i>	
PATRICIA S. FLORESTANO .....	65
<i>By Patricia M. Alt</i>	
CAROL LEONE JULES GANDY TANNEY .....	69
<i>By Kathryn E. Hensley</i>	
MARY ELLEN GUY .....	73
<i>Norma M. Riccucci</i>	
MARY MCBRAYER HALE.....	79
<i>By Carol Rusaw</i>	
MARY R. HAMILTON.....	85
<i>By Denise Wells</i>	
WENDY A. HAYNES .....	89
<i>By Claire L. Felbinger</i>	

KATHRYN ELIZABETH HENSLEY .....	93
<i>By Anne Osborne Kilpatrick</i>	
CHERYL SIMRELL KING .....	103
<i>By Patrice M. Mareschal</i>	
EILEEN LARENCE .....	107
<i>By Pamela E. Ransom</i>	
MARJORIE LOMAX .....	113
<i>By Donna Milam Handley</i>	
MEREDITH A. NEWMAN .....	117
<i>By Kathe Callahan</i>	
IRENE SHARP RUBIN .....	123
<i>By Maria Ernita T. Joaquin</i>	
MICHELLE A. SAINT-GERMAIN .....	129
<i>By Janet R. Hutchinson</i>	
CAMILLA STIVERS .....	135
<i>By Nancy Meyer-Emerick</i>	
ANNE SWAFFORD .....	141
<i>By Elaine Orr</i>	
GWENDOLYN A. WILLIAMS BULLOCK-SMITH .....	147
<i>By Nancy Foye-Cox</i>	

# MARY ELLEN GUY



By Norma M. Riccucci

“Ours is a society profoundly fissured by the qualities that define us: income, race, gender, ethnicity, age, lifestyle. Societal faultlines mark rifts between religions, parties, and ideologies. It falls on the shoulders of government to transcend these chasms—to forge a civic culture that bridges differences and strengthens commonalities. Responsive democracy, civility, and respect for one another depend on this.”  
(Guy, 2003: 641)

## IN THE BEGINNING...

Mary Ellen Guy was born on December 2, 1947 in the small town of Carlinville, Illinois. Situated in West Central Illinois, just 45 miles south of the state capital of Springfield, Carlinville was sprawling farm country at the time, where the center of town consisted of one grain elevator, two banks, a few schools, a handful of taverns and lots of churches. Mary Ellen grew up on a 160-acre homestead farm, surrounded by family, friends and neighbors. In fact, six to eight families inhabiting a one-square mile radius, farmed together

with community pride: the families were interdependent, working communally on each farm to the ultimate benefit of all the families. Her upbringing in this custom, where families depended upon one another for their livelihood, instilled in her at a very early age the public service values of community and civic pride, what we might now call “social capital.”

Mary Ellen’s parents believed in hard work, and taught Mary that she could do anything she set out to do. They valued education, and expected her as well as her two sisters to get a college degree from the University of Illinois and then return to the family and help with the farming. Her early experiences with civic pride, a strong work ethic and the value of education would ultimately provide Mary Ellen with a calling to public service. Mary Ellen thrived in school and recognized very early on that her skills and civic values could be of potentially greater value to a broader community than the one she would ultimately leave behind in Carlinville.

Mary Ellen graduated from high school in the spring of 1965 and began college studies that Fall at the University of Illinois. Midway through her undergraduate work, Mary Ellen married and moved to the South, where she enrolled in the psychology program at Jacksonville University in Jacksonville, Florida in 1967. In 1969, she earned her B.A. and then went on to take an M.A. in rehabilitation counseling from the University of Florida. Her first professional job was as a Rehabilitation Counselor for the Vocational Rehabilitation Division of Georgia’s Department of Human Resources. In this capacity, she worked with socially and culturally disadvantaged youth, mainly young African-Americans, to help prepare them for adulthood and in particular, jobs. In her role here, Mary Ellen harkened back to her childhood, where the values of civic engagement would translate into support services for inner-city youth. She forged linkages among government agencies, nonprofits, community groups and churches to work together to provide services to low-income, high-risk youth.

As her parents instilled in her, Mary Ellen realized that she could, in fact, do anything she set her mind on doing. And, so, once she excelled as a rehabilitation counselor, she knew it was time to move on and tackle new issues and problems. Still interested in services for the disadvantaged, she enrolled in the M.A. program in Psychology at the University of South Carolina and earned her degree within a year. For the next five years, Mary Ellen worked as a therapist and psychologist for the mentally disabled at South Carolina State Hospital’s Adult Psychiatric Unit. After mastering her work, she was poised for her next challenge and career change—Mary Ellen moved into administration in order to learn more about programmatic issues in the field of mental health. In particular, she wanted to research the factors determining the efficacy of programs in mental health: which programs worked, which did not, and why; she asked, “did some programs merely put salve on the wound, thus leading to high rates of recidivism?”

These questions and explorations led to Mary Ellen’s interest in the field of program evaluation. She was interested more broadly in examining why certain public programs and services produced effective outcomes while others did not. Recognizing that a Ph.D.

would provide her with the tools to sharpen and hone her skills in program evaluation, Mary Ellen entered into a Ph.D. program in Political Science at the University of South Carolina. Interestingly, at the time, Guy had no desire to teach or conduct research in a university setting. She wanted to work as an administrator and be better equipped to conduct program evaluation research in an applied setting.

As a Ph.D. student, Mary Ellen was very much influenced by her mentor, Marcia Whicker, who served as a strong, significant role model. Having a woman mentor exposed Guy to a new level of consciousness about the role of women in education, management and society at large. Guy recounted a story that clearly marked her thinking about the socialization patterns of women and men. One day before class, Guy was in the women's restroom and Wicker walked in. They began to chat about something banal such as the quality of the paper towels. But, Guy realized that these informal networks that male students are customarily privy to completely bypass women students to the extent that women faculty are not present and available to them. And, during the late 1970s and early 1980s when Guy was a Ph.D. student, there were very few women in the entire discipline of political science or public administration. The lack of exposure to women faculty in formal as well as informal settings creates a deficit in the overall educational and professional development of women. Guy pointed out that the presence of women faculty and particularly Marcia Wicker, "made a difference" and sensitized her to the difference that gender makes.

In fact, Guy, even though interested in women's issues at the time, made a conscious decision not to focus her research on women's issues, because at the time, she felt it would prove detrimental to her future career. Perhaps not too unlike the norms of today, when writing a dissertation on issues concerning women or people of color, one is pigeonholed and subsequently marginalized for writing on a topic which tends to be viewed by the overall discipline as secondary, prosaic, substandard or "soft." Guy wrote a dissertation on the use of quantitative methods for measuring the conflicts faced by health care providers.

Upon completing her doctoral studies in 1981, Mary Ellen planned to return to the profession of health care administration. However, Wicker encouraged Mary Ellen to at least consider the academic job market for its potential opportunities. Fortunately for the discipline of public administration, Guy did, and the rest is history!

## **THE MAKING OF A FORMIDABLE SCHOLAR**

Guy's first academic appointment was in the Department of Government and Public Service at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. In addition to her rigorous teaching and writing schedules, Mary Ellen quickly moved up the academic administrative ladder, from MPA director to department chair. By the late 1980s, Guy experienced another revelation which drew her into the world of women and public administration and policy.

In 1988, Naomi Lynn, then Dean of the College of Public and Urban Affairs at Georgia State University, played a key role in organizing a conference on “Women and the Constitution,” which addressed and linked the significance of the U.S. Constitution to women’s rights, history and concerns. Among those in attendance were First Ladies of the U.S. including Roslyn Carter and Lady Bird Johnson. Other high-profile women leaders such as Bella Abzug, Geraldine Ferraro, and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor were also in attendance. Mary Ellen was mesmerized by the collection of this powerful group of women. Yet, she recognized that the press did not afford much coverage to the women policy leaders such as Ferraro and O’Connor, but rather focused their attention on the First Ladies whose prestige and “power” were derived from their husbands. She recalled observing that it seemed a terrible travesty that 51 percent of the population is represented by the public policies made for us by our fathers, brothers, and nephews. The observation proved prophetic vis-à-vis her research agenda.

Mary Ellen was ready to tackle the topic of women in public administration. She began to make remarkable inroads in her research and writing, illustrating the challenges women face in public employment, particularly as they seek to move upward into policy- and decision-making posts. In a chef-d’oeuvre published in *Public Administration Review*, “Three Steps Forward, Two Steps Backwards: The Status of Women’s Integration into Public Management,” Guy found that the percentage of women in upper-level policy-making positions has been disproportionately low in comparison to their representation in the public work force. She argued that “women’s integration into the fabric of American governance has been marked by surges of progress followed by periods of quiescence,” concluding that “women have a long way to go before they will reach parity” (Guy, 1993: 285).

Mary Ellen has been a pioneer of women’s research in public administration and policy and has served as a role model for innumerable women in the field (including this author). She notes that one of her proudest accomplishments is that her work has helped to legitimize the study and research on women and that her work has opened the doors for other women to conduct research on women, and has helped propel people in the field of public administration. Guy further notes that “in addition to Naomi Lynn and Marcia Whicker, Pat Florestano and Rita Mae Kelly opened doors for me as well as for other women. These leaders provided me with research opportunities and were critical teachers for my writing on gender issues. They have helped to lift up our women colleagues.”

## **A LEGACY OF CONTINUOUS CONTRIBUTIONS**

So, then, what can one say about one of the leading figures in the field of Public Administration today? There is no succinct way to capture the remarkable impact that Professor Mary Ellen Guy has had on the fields of both public administration and political science. Currently the Jerry Collins Eminent Scholar Chair in Public Administration at Florida State University, Professor Guy’s twenty-three years of continuous contribution to

public administration and political science are marked by not only her scholarship, but by her visible leadership roles as well.

Guy was elected President of the American Society for Public Administration for 1997-1998, President of the Southern Political Science Association for 2001-2002, and she is currently the Editor-in-Chief of the leading journal in public personnel administration, *Review of Public Personnel Administration*. Guy is a Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration and has served as Chair of the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration's (NASPAA's) Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation, the accrediting body for Master's degree programs in public affairs throughout the country. Additionally, she serves, or has served, on a host of editorial boards, including *Public Administration Review*, *State & Local Government Review*, *Public Integrity*, *Journal of Health and Human Services Administration*, *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory*, *Public Organization Review*, *Public Voices*, *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, *Public Performance & Management Review*, and *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*.

Her contributions have been recognized widely. Among the awards she has received are the 1994 Dimock Award for best lead article in *Public Administration Review*; 1992 Lilly Award for Outstanding Research in Public Administration; and the 1992 Distinguished Research Award for best research on women in public administration, awarded by the Section for Women in Public Administration. She has also received the Faculty Mentor Award given by the Women's Caucus for Political Science, 1996 and award for Outstanding Woman Administrator at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, 1996.

And, as noted, Professor Guy's scholarship has had a salient impact on the fields of both public administration and political science. For example, as indicated by the *Social Sciences Citation Index*, her research continues to be widely cited. Indeed, her 1993 *Public Administration Review* article, "Three Steps Forward, Two Steps Backward" is one of the most widely cited articles in the field.

Guy continues to be a premier leader in the field of public administration. Her accomplishments and commitment to public service go unmatched by any other.

## REFERENCES

Guy, Mary Ellen. 2003. "Ties That Bind: The Link between Public Administration and Political Science." 65 *Journal of Politics*, 3: 641-655.

Guy, Mary Ellen. 1993. "Three Steps Forward, Two Steps Backwards: The Status of Women's Integration into Public Management." 53 *Public Administration Review*, 4: 285-292.

# MARY R. HAMILTON



By Denise Wells, Booz Allen Hamilton

Mary R. Hamilton (1934-) served as the Executive Director of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) from January 1997 to June 2004 at which time she was appointed Senior Executive in Residence in the School of Public Administration at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO). Having previously spent 17 years with the federal government, her contributions to public service began much earlier and continue to this day. From 1979 through 1996, Mary held a variety of executive positions with the U. S. General Accounting Office (GAO). These included Regional Manager of the New York Office, first Director for Quality Management, Director of Operations for the General Government Division and Deputy Director of the Program Evaluation Division. She was the first woman to become a regional manager. She claims Elmer Staats, Comptroller General of the United States and head of the General Accounting Office from 1966 – 1981, and ASPA President from 1961-62, as her friend and mentor.

In June 2002, Mary traveled to China to participate in the first Sino-US International Conference on Public Administration. This trip was one of many Mary made on behalf of ASPA's international outreach program. Additionally, she was continuously sought by the Department of State and other organizations, to host and address delegations of foreign

visitors interested in the American Society for Public Administration and more broadly, the complexity of our country's governance system.

We know much about Mary's philosophy on public service from the articles she penned for the PA TIMES. For example, in February and March 2004, she expressed her concern for the increasing bias toward the private sector at the expense of the public sector. This concern extended to public employees and public administration scholars who might be internalizing this bias. Never one to pose a problem without proposing a solution, Mary suggested that it is the public sector that can lead the way to achieving a more balanced appreciation of both sectors and their unique contributions to society. In her farewell message to ASPA members, she committed herself in this statement, "I am particularly interested in getting the message out that government matters more than ever, and public employees matter more than ever, in spite of a hostile environment that breeds contempt for both."

The many tributes on the occasion of Mary's move to Nebraska are indicative of her contributions to the field of public service and how well she is respected. Mary Ellen Guy, President from 1997-1998, noted Mary's

skill at handling ASPA's internal management issues" while at the same time focusing "on her role representing ASPA to our external constituencies. This 'ambidextrous' ability to manage both internally and externally brought a stewardship to the Society that is extraordinarily challenging and rarely achieved. Her commitment to public service coupled with her strategic management skills strengthened ASPA and leaves a legacy of goodwill.

Todd Argow, President from 1998-1999, stated "Mary Hamilton brought credibility to ASPA.

She always seemed to know just the right things to say and when to say them. She represented ASPA...with poise, class, and dignity. She usually led behind the scenes, but was not afraid to be up front...

Ann Swafford, President 1999-2000 particularly appreciated Mary's "outstanding management and academic experience and expertise" combined "with a passion for the public service...she worked with [ASPA] presidents and national councils to craft a vision for ASPA's future...she worked with volunteers, staff and leaders to implement our first strategic plan."

"Her energy never flagged. Nor did her ability to keep ASPA and its diverse constituencies on target and on task, to foster new ideas, and to build consensus," wrote Marc Holzer, President 2000-2001. "I respected her advice...The public service has many quiet heroes and heroines. Mary is a role model..."

According to Dan Ahern, President 2001-2002,

Mary Hamilton brought openness, honesty, sensitivity, commitment, and great skill to her role...She moved ASPA forward through challenging times. She encouraged us to confront difficult questions and pushed us for clarity. She focused on member service, mission, clear communication and networking. She navigated through the disparate constituencies of ASPA and forged greater links among them. She shored up our capacity by focusing on governance and partnerships, and by developing a loyal, skilled, and highly valued staff. She invited our ideas, suggestions, and even criticisms, in her quest to improve member services and advance public service. She was a committed and effective advocate and ambassador for ASPA,

Glen Hahn Cope, President 2002-2003 added,

She led and facilitated the upgrade of our ASPA website, improving service to our members in the process. She persuaded us to conduct a member survey to determine what was needed to attract and retain members...She worked...to develop the process for and complete a significant revision of ASPA's strategic plan. She negotiated a contract...to publish PAR that has been very lucrative for ASPA. She made several changes that improved the cost-effectiveness of the national conferences. She managed the ASPA budget well...She has hired and retained an excellent staff that are loyal to ASPA and provide us with very good service.

"Mary Hamilton is a consummate professional. She is able to hear all sides of an argument and move forward even when she strongly disagrees with a particular decision. This ability has redounded positively to ASPA on many an occasion," according to Walter D. Broadnax, President 2003-2004.

Likewise, her staff appreciated Mary's management style. According to Pharelda Scott,

Mary put the well-being of her employees first. She was committed to their growth and happiness. You could take any problem to her and she would listen. Even though she was the Executive Director, she was one of us and didn't mind rolling up her sleeves when there was work to be done. Mary likes to celebrate life; she is fun, sensitive and easy going.

Everyone who knows her, knows of her love for her husband, Jack, and their greyhound, Winslow. Mary is not just a jogger; she's a jogger who trained for and completed the Baltimore Marathon! Her less physical hobbies include reading and travel.

Mary received her Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Maryland at College Park in 1971, her MA in Sociology and Political Science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1969, and her BA in Sociology and Psychology from Bethel College, St. Paul, MN in 1966. She is a Certified Association Executive, a certified mediator

and certified to teach Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) Workshops. She has served as a Baldrige National Quality Award examiner, a judge for various quality awards, and is a life member of ASPA as well as a Fellow in the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA). She has received numerous awards and honors to include:

- GAO Senior Executive Service Bonus
- GAO Special Commendation Award
- GAO Senior Executive Meritorious Service Award
- GAO Distinguished Service Award
- Who's Who in U. S. Executives
- Who's Who in American Women
- Intergovernmental Audit Forum Certificate of Appreciation
- Joan Fiss Bishop Award for Innovative Leadership and Commitment to Women in Public Service from the Section on Women in Public Administration (SWPA) of the ASPA
- Certificate of Appreciation from the Conference on Minority Public Administrators (COMPAA), ASPA