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Patricia Carpio Whiting: Women, Environmentalism, and the Oregon Legislature in the 1970s

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Patricia Carpio Whiting: Women,
Environmentalism, and the Oregon Legislature
in the 1970s

by

Kim L. Andrews

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
History

Thesis Committee:
Patricia Schechter, Chair
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Portland State University
2022

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Abstract

This thesis explores the life of one woman, Patricia Carpio Whiting, during the second half of the twentieth century, in an effort to expand the genre of women and environmental studies. It provides context for Carpio Whiting's accomplishments as an elected official in Oregon by describing her childhood in Chicago and her formative years in California, particularly how growing up Filipino American shaped her as an adult. As such, this thesis engages themes of gender, race, and class in historical scholarship. The thesis focuses on Carpio Whiting's life in Oregon and explores the opportunities and challenges facing women as they engaged with environmentalism and political processes in the 1970s. Finally, this thesis relies on new oral histories to tell the story and, in so doing, expands the record of Patricia Carpio Whiting's thinking, her personal/professional relationships, and her environmental activism. With gender, race, and environmentalism as key categories, this study contributes to a critical understanding of women and their influence on politics.

Dedication

To all Oregonians—so that they may know their past better.

Acknowledgments

First, I want to thank my husband, Gerard. He was the one who spurred me on to better myself and complete this program. Your support, love, and help during the frustrating times allowed me the opportunity to become a better historian. Thank you.

Vincent Whiting and the Whiting family: Thank you for your time, insight, and clarifications about Pat Whiting and her early years. Your oral histories were an integral part of this activity. I am so grateful that you allowed me into a part of your history.

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Figure 1: Patricia Carpio Whiting.

Introduction

Patricia Carpio Whiting was born Patricia D. Carpio on October 22, 1940, in Chicago, Illinois.¹ She was the eldest child in a migrant farmworker family of Filipino, Icelandic, and Native American heritage.² Carpio Whiting helped raise her seven younger siblings while her mother battled multiple sclerosis. This experience cemented her desire to serve others in hopes of a better world. As a teen, Carpio Whiting worked in agriculture to support herself and her siblings. After high school, she pursued an Arts and Humanities bachelor's degree from the University of California at San Jose. After graduating in 1969, she married Vincent Whiting, a young pharmaceutical representative, and moved to Oregon. In 1972, after only a few years in the state, Carpio Whiting ran for a seat in Washington County for the Oregon House of Representatives and became the first Filipino American woman elected to the body. She served three terms, from 1973 to 1978. Her efforts in Salem toward environmental reform are her most important and most hidden legacy.

Patricia Carpio Whiting's legacy as a legislator remains all but lost to Oregon memory and the written record. Placing Carpio Whiting requires many pivots through existing scholarship and archives. Carpio Whiting was a Democrat who married and converted a Republican man. She worked in California agriculture but earned a college degree for herself. Carpio Whiting was married but chose not to have children. She

¹ I have chosen to use the name Carpio Whiting throughout this thesis because I believe it gives her agency beyond her married name and allows for influences, patterns, and beliefs that were hers before her marriage.

² House Concurrent Resolution 7, Oregon State House of Representatives, 77th Leg., 1st Session, § (2013).

earned a general Arts and Humanities degree in college but excelled in interpreting and explaining the sciences. Carpio Whiting was from a mixed heritage immigrant family but never let racism stop her from achieving her goals. She was a woman in the male-dominated field of Oregon politics in the 1970s but was not part of the “second wave” of feminist activism that was newly visible in the streets and the legislature.³ Eventually, she was honored with a plaque by the city of Metzger, and her name was placed on a building, but the employees of that building today do not know who she was or what she did to earn that recognition. To begin to recover a fuller story of her career, establishing some context from Oregon environmental history, western women’s history, and the state of the archives follow below.

Oregon Environmentalism: Modes and Memory

“Environmentalism” is a broad category with many expressions in the twentieth-century U.S. This introduction surveys a few critical local themes to set the stage for what Carpio Whiting encountered when she migrated to Oregon in 1969. This survey is not exhaustive but instead identifies some of the more prominent and best-memorialized legacies of environmentalism in the state. The political possibilities around environmental issues can be framed as four modes of engagement: heroic, protective, militant, and recuperative or anti-colonial. Each of these modes has been unevenly documented and remembered in Oregon history, and none precisely captures the mode that Carpio Whiting came to accent, which was the mode of science and fact. These

³ Tara Watson and Melody Rose, “She Flies with Her Own Wings: Women in the 1973 Oregon Legislative Session,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 111 no. 1 (2010): 38-63. These authors discuss the topic of women in legislator and their female agenda in their joint article but do not discuss race which this thesis does.

modes are not airtight containers—all shared some common ground and language around science, political power, and the human relationship to nature. However, sketching these “modes” helps to place Carpio Whiting and to put into relief some of the choices she made and the political strategies that she used in her own time.

If Carpio Whiting might be the least remembered environmental politician in Oregon history, Governor Tom McCall might be the best remembered. The extensive memorialization of his legacy is notable for this thesis. A highly visible park in downtown Portland is named for him, and a substantial and celebratory full-length biography by Brent Walth keeps his name current and his work accessible.⁴ Interestingly, McCall was also a migrant to Oregon, from Massachusetts, and he attended the University of Oregon. After graduating, he worked in journalism in Portland at the *Oregonian* and newscasting. He was highly skilled in media. McCall made environmentalism into the news with his film “Pollution in Paradise” (1962). Historians acknowledge the galvanizing impact of this widely shown film.⁵ McCall was elected secretary of state in 1965 and then governor in 1967, serving until 1975. The Bottle Bill of 1971 is one of his most touted pieces of legislation, and its passage set a tone of change and active environmental stewardship in the state legislature.⁶ In his book’s title, biographer Walth links McCall's name with “The Oregon Story”; McCall stands for the

⁴ Brent Walth, *Fire at Eden’s Gate; Tom McCall & the Oregon Story* (Oregon: Oregon Historical Press, 1994), 118, 410, 411.

⁵ Carl Abbot, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth in a Twentieth-Century City* (Lincoln: University Press of Nebraska, 1983), 250.

⁶ While often touted as the originator of the Bottle Bill, it was actually Richard Chambers who first promoted the idea. For more information please see Brent Walth, “No Deposit, No Return: Richard Chambers, Tom McCall, and the Oregon Bottle Bill,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 95, no. 3 (1994): pp. 278-299.

entire state in a hard way for a reader to miss. This construction of his accomplishments and legacy resonates with a heroic telling: an outstanding, typically male, leader who stands for and directs a people.

This accent on heroic male leadership in environmental journalism and scholarship is not unique to Oregon. Outstanding figures like John Muir, John Burroughs, and Henry David Thoreau are widely cited and remembered in academia and beyond. While influential women and women's organizations have been part of the story, their work tends to be less prominently memorialized and, accurately or not, is typically rendered as helping or protecting rather than leading. There are some outstanding women in science, such as Rachel Carson and her book *Silent Spring* (1962), but actual equal representation in social movement rhetoric and images can be hard to come by. The scientific nature of environmentalism has sometimes disadvantaged women or at least obscured their contributions. Scholar Vera Norwood argues that middle- and upper-class women, who studied plants or the outdoors, were generally sidelined by male colleagues into "supporting roles."⁷ Men have dominated the genre from the earliest works describing plants and animals to more defined research areas in academia.

What does women's environmentalism look like in Oregon? Like other states, women citizens in Oregon generally cared for the natural environment after World War II in ways that resonate with Norwood's description: as caretakers, protectors of their family's health, and as beautifiers. Outside of specific research areas identified by

⁷ Vera Norwood, *Made from this Earth: American Women and Nature* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993), xv.

Norwood like botany and ornithology, this “separate tradition” among mostly middle- and upper-class white women found expression in local clubs and organizations, notably garden clubs. As early as 1868, reformer Caroline Severance and poet Julia Howe founded the New England Woman’s Club.⁸ These clubs took on various improvement projects. Californians were especially engaged, promoting nature's study, protection, and conservation. After World War II, these clubs sometimes took an activist turn, especially given the fears around nuclear fallout and radioactive poisoning in some regions.

Concerns arose over hazardous chemicals in some ground environments, permeating urban and suburban home sites’ soil and water, causing sickness and disease.⁹ There is also evidence that harmful pollutants—including radon, formaldehyde, and nitrogen dioxide—were present in the air in homes, offices, and schools.¹⁰ One women’s antiwar group, Women Strike for Peace (WSP), is especially well documented. WSP made compelling arguments about protecting children from the toxic effects of nuclear energy from a maternal and protective standpoint in the 1960s, including powerful, widely publicized testimony in front of the House Un-American Activities Committee in Washington, D.C., in 1962.¹¹

Evidence is spotty, but Oregon women citizens engaged in some of this kind of activity as well. When Carpio Whiting arrived in Oregon, concerns about radioactive

⁸Glenda Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the Wild West* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 98-99.

⁹ Carolyn Merchant, *Earthcare: Women and the Environment* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 147.

¹⁰ Comptroller General of the United States, *Indoor Air Pollution: An Emerging Problem*, U.S. General Accounting Office, Gaithersburg, Maryland, September, 24, 1980, 1.

¹¹ Amy Swerdlow, *Women Strike for Peace: Traditional Motherhood and Radical Politics in the 1960s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

water around the Hanford nuclear reactor in Washington state began to make headlines.¹² Her papers from her time in the legislature indicate that women reached out to her with school and workplace concerns about secondhand smoke. Beaverton resident Anne Dresser attended local public board meetings and was concerned about their environment; she and others wrote letters to their newspapers and elected officials complaining of smoking's harmful effects.¹³ While in office, Carpio Whiting heard from Mrs. Edward Westfall and Jean Wilkerson of Portland, who complained about secondhand smoke at P.T.A. Board meetings held during school hours. Wilkerson warned that a pregnant woman must "choose carefully" when entering public schools for meetings or activities or "suffer a headache and/or nausea caused by the tobacco smoke."¹⁴ Westfall also described her own negative experience with second-hand smoke in the Social Security Office in Salem. She lamented having to endure a "smoldering" cigarette as the "young things (clerks)" attended to their business.¹⁵

Oregon women citizens made their own environmental headlines in the 1970s. Some of these headlines were in a protective mode, and others were in a more militant mode. These two modes are distinct by social class and age or generation. Columbia Gorge activist Nancy Russell well represents the protective women's model of environmentalism. Drawing on the women's club and garden club tradition, Russell

¹² "Hanford World's Hottest Atomic Graveyard," 25 January 1970, p. 8 and "Some Hanford Atomic Waste Shipped, Some Farmed Out," 23 July 1970, p. 16, *The Oregonian*.

¹³ "Rule Broken," *Oregonian*, August 20, 1976, 64.

¹⁴ Letter from Jean Wilkerson to Representative Pat Whiting, (Feb 1, 1973) (Reel 57-H-3, Accessed at Lewis and Clark, Roll #102).

¹⁵ Letter from Mrs. Edward Westfall to Pat Whiting, (Feb 1, 1973) (Reel 57-H-3, Accessed at Lewis and Clark, Roll #102).

helped found and lead Friends of the Columbia River Gorge to a successful federal conservation act in 1986.

In the 1970s, a proposed bridge across the Columbia River north of Portland threatened to spread suburban sprawl to the Washington side of the Gorge, where development rules were much laxer than in Oregon. For those who prized the scenic beauty of the Gorge, a political and federal approach seemed necessary.¹⁶ Russell asked Oregon Senator Mark Hatfield for help. Hatfield said that he would push for special federal protections if citizens could organize supporters from both sides of the river and both ends of the Gorge to stand behind him.¹⁷ With John Yeon, a well-known architect and the son of the Historic Columbia River Highway roadmaster, Russell reached out to “well-connected people and influential politicians, and who could advocate for the Gorge with quiet determination.”¹⁸ Russell and Yeon formed the Friends of the Columbia Gorge. The group initially consisted of Russell’s fellow Portland Garden Club members and quickly gathered socially and environmentally like-minded individuals. The Friends developed a board of directors that included two Oregon ex-governors, Tom McCall and Bob Straub, ex-Washington governor Dan Evans, and Mike Lindberg, a Portland city commissioner.¹⁹ By spring 1981, the group was made up of 150 well-placed people and

¹⁶ Don Bundy, “Unit Named to Battle for Gorge,” *Oregonian*, November 19, 1980, B1.

¹⁷ Villano, Matt. “Return to Cape Horn.” *TPL.org*. Accessed 3/16/2021, <https://www.tpl.org/magazine/return-cape-horn>

¹⁸ “Our History & Accomplishments,” Friends of the Columbia Gorge, accessed March 16, 2021, <https://gorgefriends.org/who-we-are/major-accomplishments-of-friends-of-the-columbia-gorge.html>.

¹⁹Villano, Matt. “Return to Cape Horn.” *TPL.org*. Accessed 3/16/2021, <https://www.tpl.org/magazine/return-cape-horn>

primed to be a potent political force.²⁰ Creating a bi-state, federally designated area required significant educational outreach and Russell “pounded the pavement” for money to fund the effort.²¹

Russell helped forge a partnership with the Trust for Public Land to ensure public access to the Gorge’s most beautiful and vulnerable sites. After about five years of effort, on November 17, 1986, President Reagan signed the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act, which designated more than 292,000 acres as federally protected land.²² Under Russell’s leadership and perseverance, the Friends became a leading advocate for sound policy and regulation in the Gorge. Today, Friends of the Columbia Gorge has grown to more than 7,000 members, engages in conservation advocacy, and supports outdoor and youth education programs.²³ Bowen Blair, a Trust for Public Land leader, praised Russell. “If Nancy taught us anything,” he declared, “it was to keep fighting to protect what’s important.”²⁴ Acknowledged as a teacher, leader, and even a “force of nature,” Nancy Russell’s story has not quite joined the region’s written environmental history. Three websites carry pieces of this story, and a recent book based on interviews describes her efforts.²⁵

²⁰ “History and Accomplishments,” Friends of the Columbia Gorge, accessed March 16, 2021, <https://gorgefriends.org/who-we-are/major-accomplishments-of-friends-of-the-columbia-gorge.html>.

²¹ “Remembering the one-woman force of nature behind the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.” Accessed 3/16/2021. <https://www.tpl.org/blog/oregon-washington-columbia-river-gorge-nancy-russell>

²² Villano, Matt. “Return to Cape Horn.” *TPL.org*. Accessed 3/16/2021, <https://www.tpl.org/magazine/return-cape-horn>.

²³ “Our History & Accomplishments,” Friends of the Columbia Gorge, accessed March 16, 2021, <https://gorgefriends.org/who-we-are/major-accomplishments-of-friends-of-the-columbia-gorge.html>.

²⁴ Bill Bowen, quoted in Villano, Matt. “Return to Cape Horn.” *TPL.org*. Accessed 3/16/2021, <https://www.tpl.org/magazine/return-cape-horn>

²⁵ Marcy Houle, *A Generous Nature: Lives Transformed by Oregon* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2019), 204-217.

Interestingly, the story of student environmental militancy, also significantly led by women, also requires digging for access, and seems shadowed in local memory and media by the anti-war militancy of the late 1960s. The strategic decision by youthful environmental activists to piggyback on the energy of the anti-war movement worked both to their advantage and disadvantage. The advantage was that Oregon politicians' eyes focused on youthful demonstrators and militant public protest for a moment. The disadvantage was that student anti-war activism, for various reasons, has come to be better remembered and more strongly memorialized. November 15, 1969, was national "mobilization day" against the Viet Nam war, with thousands of protests and demonstrations coordinated across the United States. Three days later, at least 1,500 people gathered in Eugene and marched from the University of Oregon campus to the Willamette National Forest Service Headquarters to protest logging the French Pete area, a low-elevation old-growth forest in the Western Cascade Mountains.²⁶

These largely student protestors had some seasoned faculty and local activists around them. In the preceding year, those interested met at the home of Richard Noyes, University of Oregon professor of chemistry, and his wife, Win, to form the Save the French Pete Committee.²⁷ The Noyes were well established with environmental clubs and local nature enthusiasts. Win Noyes headed the local Sierra Club chapter, and she worked for many years on wilderness campaigns, including the French Pete effort.²⁸

Environmentally conscious women elected officials took the opportunity to weigh in on

²⁶ Kevin Marsh, "Save French Pete," in *Natural Protest: Essays on the History of American Environmentalism*, edited by Michael and Jeff Crane (New York: Routledge Publishing, 2009), 223.

²⁷ Sarah Hale, "Maternal Environmentalism and Women's Activism for Wilderness Preservation, 1956-1980," (MA thesis, University of Oregon, 2002), 43.

²⁸ "Conservationist, Loggers Battling for Virgin Valley," *Eugene Register-Guard*, February 11, 1968, D.

the French Pete issue. Mrs. Haywood, a Lane County Commissioner, chaired a hearing that saw dozens of women testify on the valley's uniqueness and beauty.²⁹ The hearing was critical because it amplified voices in Oregon. The timing was also crucial since the chief forester had announced plans to reopen timber sales, and Oregon Senators Mark Hatfield and Bob Packwood and Congressmen Dellenback subsequently requested that the Secretary of Agriculture, Clifford Hardin, intervene by placing a sixty-day hold on timber sales in the area.³⁰ Packwood was aware of the growing political capital of environmental issues. He spoke out against logging plans and sponsored a bill to protect the French Pete area by December. Years of activism followed. Final approval of French Pete as part of the Three Sisters Wilderness Area came as part of the Endangered American Wilderness Act, signed by President Carter in 1978.³¹

The more militant "mode" of protest at French Pete, as described by historians Hale and Marsh, is in keeping with new styles of student activism that made headlines in the 1960s. As the Eugene protestors marched, they jeered and goaded the logging trucks, symbols of the timber industry's interests in French Pete.³² The students' position was that French Pete deserved protection because of its ecological uniqueness. They argued that "that man has not changed," and humans still needed access to woodlands that should be available to all.³³ The march ended with a rally in which activists demanded that chief forester David Gibney defend his decision to log the area. When Gibney

²⁹ Hale, "Maternal Environmentalism and Women's Activism for Wilderness Preservation, 1956-1980," 48.

³⁰ Hal Rothman, *The Greening of a Nation? Environmentalism in the United States Since 1945* (Forthworth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1998), 230.

³¹ Robert Smith, "Packwood Drafts Bill to Save French Pete," *Oregonian*, December 11, 1969, 34.

³² Hale, "Maternal Environmentalism and Women's Activism for Wilderness Preservation, 1956-1980," 50.

³³ Randy Barbano, "Mason Williams Heads 'Save French Pete' Day," *The Oregon Daily Emerald*, November 18, 1969, p. 1.

refused to speak to the crowd, activists deposited seedlings at the office door, mocking the Forest Service policy.

Women played vital roles in this protest. Linda Mills, a SEARCH member, and Sally Sharrad of Nature's Conspiracy, a student-based organization that helped organize the protest, encouraged and directed the crowd. According to the University of Oregon student newspaper, *The Augur*, a highlight of the protest was a presentation from a radical theatrical group. In this presentation, the women actors performed a skit acting symbolically as "virgin" trees while men dressed as loggers who threatened to "violate" them.³⁴ The sexualizing of power relations and protest messages seems connected to the social status of these protestors. For example, given the long-standing vulnerability of African American women to sexual assault, it is difficult to imagine any such restaging to make a political point (crucifixion was the metaphor of choice in the anti-lynching movement, for example). For the purpose of this thesis, the French Pete case of youthful environmental militancy seems to be underwritten by a certain amount of privilege, yet the daring and leadership of some of the young women involved at the time have been largely forgotten.

A final "mode" of environmentalism surveyed for Carpio Whiting's Oregon context is a recuperative or "anti-colonial" mode. This mode has long been articulated by Native Americans, a diverse group who have developed a wide variety of projects involving natural resources as part of survivance and resistance to colonialism. Native Americans have had an important voice in Oregon environmentalism. The traditional

³⁴ Hale, "Maternal Environmentalism and Women's Activism for Wilderness Preservation, 1956-1980," 49.

Indigenous idea of a balance of humanity and nature has long been embattled under colonial rule.³⁵ Native Americans support the “abandon[ment]” of this ideological separation.³⁶ The “conservationist” notion that certain areas remain “untouched” is problematic since it side-steps the long-standing and active relationship between land and its original inhabitants.³⁷ In addition, many Native Americans feel there is a lack of sacredness when land and people are separated. Writers have noted this “lack of spirit, this loss of a sense of wonder interlinked with community, livelihood, and place that remains at the core of modern difficulties with land and the maintenance of the natural world.”³⁸ Recuperating this spiritual dimension has a high value among Native Americans.

Native women have also engaged in confrontational politics and successfully changed public policy. As discussed by Dina Gilio-Whitaker, Native women have been and continue to be valued storytellers, keepers of culture, defenders of their lands, and shared political power and leadership roles with men. One such example of Native female leadership was the women-headed group Women of All Red Nations (WARN), a group contemporary to Carpio Whiting. WARN focused on Native women’s health issues. One such issue was the federal government's sterilization program, affecting thousands of Native women. In 1972, WARN occupied the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and “seized” secret files documenting the eugenic policies involving some 42% of

³⁵ Joy Porter, *Native American Environmentalism: Land, Spirit, and the idea of Wilderness*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 18.

³⁶ Porter, *Native American Environmentalism: Land, Spirit, and the idea of Wilderness*, 19.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 18.

³⁸ *Ibid*, 47.

reproductive age Native women and women of color in various health-related programs. Eventually, these findings and a study by the General Accounting Office led to several lawsuits and reforming the Indian Health Service's reproductive healthcare practices. WARN also evolved and incorporated other issues related to "American Indian women's health," such as documenting the effects of the South Dakota Black Hills uranium extraction, which caused "miscarriages, birth defects, and various forms of cancer." While only one example, WARN demonstrated that Native women have engaged in vital activism to resist colonial encroachments on the environment, bodies, and health.³⁹

General Historiography of Women in the U.S. West

Given these environmentalist modes as a context for Carpio Whiting's entry into Oregon environmentalism, how does the practice of women's history in the western United States contribute to the retelling of her story? Like "Oregon environmentalism," women's western history is episodic, especially for the Pacific Northwest; it is more thematic than fully synthesized. However, a few insights and approaches are helpful for this thesis. One is the idea that pioneer "white" women are the best-documented group in terms of the archive. The other is that colonized or enslaved women, or migrants from racialized parts of the globe, like Asia, enter into the historiography on problematic terms. Most women scholars argue for "inclusive histories" and offer various assessments of "multicultural scholarship" in the field.⁴⁰ However, I found it difficult to connect to these frameworks for this project because Patricia Carpio Whiting's archive struck me as

³⁹ Dina Gilio-Whitaker, *As Long as Grass Grows: The Indigenous Fight for Environmental Justice, from Colonization to Standing Rock* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2020), p.117-119.

⁴⁰ Elizabeth Jameson, "Looking Back to the Road Ahead," *Pacific Historical Review*, 79 (2010), 576.

relentlessly neutered in terms of “racial” categories. The 2012 Special Archives statement at San Jose State University Library includes “racially” identifying language: “She became the first Filipino woman elected to the Oregon State Legislature and served three terms from 1973 to 1978, focusing key legislation on Environmental issues.”⁴¹ Even that description—echoed in her Wikipedia page—is not entirely accurate since Carpio Whiting might be considered bicultural; her father was a Filipino immigrant, and her mother was of mixed background, including Scandinavian heritage. “Filipino American” might be a little more accurate, but it still is not the whole story and not the way that she identified herself in her lifetime.⁴²

Two clusters of scholarship in women’s history are helpful, if not exactly a perfect fit for this thesis. One group of works focuses on how to balance the general scholarship on colonialism in the U.S. west to include issues of women and gender. The second group focuses on placing the variety of women’s politics within the context of “second wave” feminism in the 1970s when women ran and served in electoral politics in significant numbers in many states.

Within the scholarship on women in the western U.S. is a call to “decolonize” the questions and approaches historians use. As leading scholars put it, the problem is that women’s western history has increased in volume and variety but does not make enough connections among women, nor does it dislodge the unidirectional and heroic male

⁴¹ "Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers," digital image, Online Archive of California, January 19, 2012, <http://library.sjsu.edu/sjsu-special-collections/sjsu-special-collections-and-archives>.

⁴² “Pat Whiting,” Wikipedia (Wikipedia, February 19, 2022), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pat_Whiting.

“frontier narrative” sufficiently.⁴³ In “Getting Out of a Rut: Decolonizing Western Women’s History,” Margaret Jacobs observes that women’s western history has had trouble reframing the field, despite a concerted effort to challenge male biases. Despite the “multicultural approach,” Jacobs argues there still has not been “much of a dent in popular images of the West.” Also, Jacobs criticizes western women’s history for its continued focus on the idealized “white women” and its failure to offer a way to interpret and analyze power relationships based on “race and colonial privilege.”⁴⁴

A helpful essay by Susan Johnson, “Nail This to Your Door: A Disputation on Power, Efficacy, and Indulgent Delusion of Western Scholarship that Neglects the Challenge of Gender and Women’s History,” takes inspiration from the revolutionizing quality of Martin Luther’s 95 Theses. She argues that historians should always question their subjectivity and positionality to see its effects on gender scholarship. According to Johnson, too many western histories have analyzed the importance of gender but failed to do anything revolutionizing with that information. She argues that a large number of “books, articles, documentary films, and museum exhibits” slight the insights of gender history, except in the inclusion of occasional female actors, and that a standard settlement narrative remains the norm within the profession, despite the various how-to manuals for change.⁴⁵ Oregon’s exceptionalist historiography lags behind California’s, where

⁴³ Elizabeth Jameson et al, “If not now, When? Gender, Power, and the Decolonization of Western History,” *Pacific Historical Review*, 79 (2010), 573.

⁴⁴ Margaret Jacobs, “Getting out of a Rut: Decolonizing Western Women’s History,” *Pacific Historical Review* 79, No. 4 (2010): 585-604.

⁴⁵ Susan Lee Johnson, “Nail This to Your Door: A Disputation on the Power, Efficacy, and Indulgent Delusion of Western Scholarship that Neglects the Challenge of Gender and Women’s History,” *Pacific Historical Review* 79 no. 4 (2010), 606.

scholars have started re-centering colonialism and capitalist land development to make visible the subordinated and exploitative conditions facing Indigenous people, African Americans, and migrants, including women, who were not considered legally “white.”⁴⁶ A special issue in 2019 of the *Oregon Historical Quarterly* on white supremacy in the state is a notable benchmark, though issues of women and gender remain relatively muted.⁴⁷ As a result, the challenges for a biographical project on Oregon women are notable.

This historiographic situation leads to the second group of works: the political science literature on women politicians of the “second wave.” This literature is also episodic and, for the Oregon case, mainly exists in primary source narratives of the women participants themselves. A 2010 article by feminist political scientists has described the 1973 Oregon legislative session, during which a bipartisan group of legislators worked together to pass eleven feminist bills into law. Primarily driven by recently elected women lawmakers, this article spotlights a feminist-friendly political climate, the support of male legislators, the strength of “grassroots” women’s organizations, and a great sense of historic opportunity to promote a feminist agenda. These legislators passed anti-gender discrimination bills, family planning bills, updated

⁴⁶ For more reading on the construction of race and whiteness in the west, see Pascoe, Peggy. *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), Ian Haney-López, *White by Law the Legal Construction of Race* (New York University Press, 2006), Quintard Taylor. *In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the American West, 1528-1990* (New York: Norton, 1998). See also Elizabeth Jameson and Susan Armitage, eds., *Writing the Range : Race, Class, and Culture in the Women's West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997) and Albert L. Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers: Sex, Gender, and Culture in Old California* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999).

⁴⁷ “White Supremacy and Resistance,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 120, no. 4 (2019): pp. 356-624, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1353/ohq.2019.0021>.

discriminatory insurance codes, and equalized the prosecution of prostitution.⁴⁸ The list of new female Oregon politicians in the 1973 session includes Senators Betty Browne and Betty Roberts and Representatives Pat Whiting, Peg Dereli, Mary Rieke, Mary Roberts, Grace Peck, Nancie Fadeley, and Norma Paulus. Patricia Carpio Whiting is acknowledged in this important *Oregon Historical Quarterly* essay but not described, nor is her environmentalism engaged. Carpio Whiting is visible yet marginal to the story of woman-centered legislative initiatives of the so-called second wave of feminism in Oregon.

Oregon State University Press's series "Women and Politics in the Pacific Northwest" has produced two memoirs that help contextualize Carpio Whiting in the 1970s. These are Betty Roberts's memoir *With Grit and By Grace: Breaking Trails in Politics and Law*, published in 2008, and Avel Louise Gordly's autobiography *Remembering the Power of Words: The Life of an Oregon Legislator, Activist, and Community Leader*, published in 2011.⁴⁹ More will be said about these texts later in the thesis, especially Roberts's description of her time in the Oregon senate (1968-1976), but in this context, I connect these books to the general historiography. In Roberts's memoir, women do things with other women with a commonsensical appeal to equality. In Roberts's telling, women needed citizenship parity with men. In Gordly's book, she struggled to be seen by her peers and was frequently pushed into a "black only" box. In her first election campaign to the House of Representatives, for example, Gordly recalled

⁴⁸ Watson and Rose, "She Flies with Her Own Wings," 38.

⁴⁹ Betty Roberts, *With Grit and by Grace: Breaking Trails in Politics and Law, A Memoir* (Corvallis, Oregon: Oregon State University Press, 2008).

her opponent's campaign literature which claimed that "everything... I belonged to was Black," implying that she could not represent the whole of her district.⁵⁰ If these essential works map a "default white" or "Black only" landscape, it can be challenging to place anyone of any other subject position.

What is in the Archives?

The historiography creates some challenges and opportunities for this thesis. The archive, split between two states, also makes it challenging to place Patricia Carpio Whiting in Oregon history. Carpio Whiting did not identify with the dominant "black" and "white" articulations of identity in media and political discourse. And, as I will suggest here and develop further in the thesis, she does not quite fit in the more visible modes of environmentalism in the state, heroic, protective, militant, or anti-colonial. Her influence and efforts remained overshadowed by male personalities with big environmental ideas. However, her papers, both their content and their silences or gaps, offer clues about how to explain some of her work. A few words about how the archive fits with the historiographical landscape are in order.

I first encountered the archive of Patricia Carpio Whiting via her collection at the Five Oaks Museum, located on the Portland Community College, Rock Creek campus in northwest Portland. The museum archive holds documents and images and has separate storage rooms for 3D and artifact collections. Carpio Whiting's collection is stored on the mezzanine level of the archive and consists of twenty acid-free boxes filled

⁵⁰ Avel Louise Gordly, *Remembering the Power of Words: The Life of an Oregon Activist, Legislator, and Community Leader* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2011), p. 141.

with various items ranging from newspaper clippings and photographs to schoolbooks and local legislative information pamphlets. Overall, the collection is a hodgepodge of ephemera from Carpio Whiting's life. While some items link to her legislative life, the collection appears more situated in her post-legislature years from 1980 to 2000. There are newspaper clippings from when she was a Representative from Washington County, but they are sporadic. These clippings are primarily about her popular legislative bills, such as Senate Bill 771, which bans aerosol cans using specific chlorofluorocarbons. There are also newspaper clippings about SB 508, which banned smoking in public places. These clippings provided clues that led me to explore Carpio Whiting's legislative career and learn what she cared about the most.

Fortunately, more materials are held at San Jose State University's King Library archive, although these reflect something of a patchwork as well. No archive is perfect, but her collections bear the marks of her multiple migrations from the Midwest to California and then to Oregon. I can only guess what documentation remains lost, especially from her early life. At San Jose State, there are personal materials, photographs, diary entries, and professional materials. When placed along with the public record items I researched for this thesis, the materials in this collection amplify several themes in her later career in elective office.

It is clear from the speeches and news articles in the Portland archive that one of Carpio Whiting's biggest concerns was caring for her fellow humans. The many maps, photographs, and planning committee letters suggest that she was also concerned about development in wetland regions in the Tigard-Tualatin area. In one manila envelope,

there are letters relating to livestock still grazing on Tigard land, an essay by Peter Steinhart on mitigation (the formal system of fish and wildlife reparations required by federal law), public hearing notices, and other documents salient to wetlands issues in the county. Even long after her time in the legislature, I found that Caprio Whiting continued to work on environmental issues, including a 1999 development inside 100-year floodplain areas in the Tigard area. There is also an exciting speech preserved in the archive. Carpio Whiting demonstrated a concern with population control, a headline issue from the 1970s and one with gendered overtones. Entitled “Balancing Human Populations with Life Support Systems,” Carpio Whiting framed birth control as an environmental issue rather than a feminist or women’s issue. She had a similar scarcity-related concern about food and nutrition, which she placed in a natural resource framework. These interesting standpoints and frameworks position her outside feminist scholarship with its focus on race and women’s rights.

The uneven quality of her collections complicated my effort to place Carpio Whiting’s identity and heritage in a historical or contemporary context. In terms of her family of origin, Whiting is neither entirely white nor fully Filipina. She remains an obscured person on this country's predominantly white and black binary. These factors led me to reach out to her husband, Vincent Whiting, to try and fill in more detail about Patricia Carpio Whiting’s life and career. In early 2019, I came across a Trust document for the Whiting family that included a physical address. Without knowing the context of this address, I decided to mail a letter to the address explaining who I was and why I was reaching out to learn more about Patricia Carpio Whiting.

To my delight, I received a call back from Vincent Whiting, and we discussed his willingness to work with me about his late wife. Whiting agreed to be interviewed by me. We conducted two interviews that discussed his wife's early years, marriage, and interest in the environment. We also discussed her influence on him and her interactions with different groups of people. These oral histories are critical to this thesis because they hint at some of Patricia Carpio Whiting's thinking and motivations. They describe how hard she worked for her constituents and described some of her passions. Stored at the Oregon Historical Society, the interviews are an effort to remember her legacy in the state more actively.

Structure of the thesis

Chapter one pieces together the story of Patricia Carpio Whiting's youth and education to understand how this daughter of immigrants in Chicago came to find a workable political voice in the state of Oregon. What emerges from that story is a hard-working eldest daughter who managed to succeed in higher education. It also discusses her marriage and the couple's decision to remain childless in favor of service to people and the environment. Chapter Two describes the launch of her political career in Tigard: how she campaigned, who supported her, and what arguments and issues gained traction with her neighbors in her adopted community. It also explores her membership in the "class of 1973" of feminist legislators in Salem, constituent relations, and the evolution of her public voice in newsletters and the press. Chapter three narrates the culminating activities of her legislative career in Salem: the passing of anti-smoking and anti-fluorocarbon bills. This last chapter also involves a high point of her public visibility—

an appearance on the Today Show in New York— and describes how she used her authority to push for important legislative issues. The conclusion then reflects on Patricia Carpio Whiting’s life lessons and offers some thoughts on her memory in Oregon history.

Chapter One: Finding a Voice: From Chicago to Oregon

This chapter pieces together Patricia Carpio's early life and retells the story of her arrival in Oregon and her eventual decision to run for the legislature in 1972. It tries to fill in some gaps in her archives with supplemental research and provide context through the secondary literature, notably on immigration in Chicago, and through oral history sources. In Vincent Whiting's oral testimony, he alludes to Carpio Whiting's early years as hard, with little money and a mother who was "wheelchair-bound."⁵¹ According to Whiting, his wife's father, Henry Carpio, was active in the Filipino community, but there is no evidence specifying his activity level.⁵² It is unknown if Carpio was a member of the Union of Democratic Filipinos despite the Chicago Filipino community's well-documented activity for an anti-martial law in the Philippines.⁵³ According to his naturalization document, Hermogenes "Henry" Carpio entered the United States in Seattle in 1923 and listed his occupation as "chemist," implying education and training.⁵⁴ Together, the sources suggest that, like many first-generation immigrant children in big cities, Carpio grew up in poverty amid prosperity. Primarily through education, she took advantage of post-war optimism and opportunity in the United States to make choices for herself.

⁵¹ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 13:40.

⁵²"Re: More Questions," *Re: More Questions*, March 16, 2021.

⁵³ James Zarsadiaz, "Raising Hell in the Heartland: Filipino Chicago and the Anti-Martial Law Movement, 1972-1986." *American Studies* 56, no. 1, (2017), 144.

⁵⁴ Ancestry.com, *Illinois, U.S., Federal Naturalization Records, 1856-1991* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2016. Original source: National Archives at Chicago; Chicago, Illinois; ARC Title: *Petitions for Naturalization, 1906-1991*; Record Group Title: *Records of District Courts of the United States, 1685-2009*; Record Group Number: *RG 21*. Accessed 2 April 2022.

The Chicago Years

In post-WWII Chicago, Filipinos lived in a distinct context compared to the larger and more widely studied immigrant Filipino community of Stockton, California. Unlike those living on the west coast, Filipinos in Chicago did not work in agriculture as their primary occupation. The work of Roland Guyotte, Professor of History at the University of Minnesota, and Barbara Posadas, Professor of History Emerita at Northern Illinois University, documents how Filipinos in urban midwestern settings worked in the poorly paid service industry due to racial restrictions.⁵⁵ Many found employment in Chicago's hotel industry as dishwashers, cooks, and waiters, while others served as butlers and gardeners for the city's wealthier citizens. The United States Post Office offered Chicago's Filipinos a way to make a decent living, and as many as 300 worked for the Pullman company.⁵⁶ Steady industrial work was challenging to find due to racial segregation.

Though the exact neighborhood of the Carpios residence as a married couple in the 1940s is unknown, scholars of immigration have described Chicago as roughly segregated by race, ethnicity, and class. This residential segregation typically involved segregation within the public school system as well. Based on this scholarship, it is likely that the schools Patricia Carpio attended had many immigrant and first-generation children, had limited resources, and were set apart from white communities.⁵⁷ Filipinos

⁵⁵ Roland Guyotte and Barbara Posadas, "Interacial Marriages and Transnational Families: Chicago's Filipinos in the Aftermath of World War II," *Journal of American Immigration & Ethnic History Society* 25, no. 2/3 (2006), 137.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

of the early twentieth century exploited the gray area as neither “white nor black” and married white individuals in Chicago. There were no anti-miscegenation laws for Filipinos, but society did regulate where racially “mixed families” could live. These areas were low-income areas with little access to recreation facilities and suitable housing.⁵⁸

The limited resources of poorer immigrant and mixed heritage families may have contributed to instability within the Carpio family. Henry Carpio left his family when his firstborn daughter was very young and divorced Doris, Patricia Carpio Whiting’s mother, a few years later.⁵⁹ As a result of the divorce, Carpio Whiting and her young siblings lived with their white mother and her family’s support. There were two more marriages for Carpio Whiting’s mother and a few more brothers and sisters. After the divorce from Henry Carpio, Doris married a Filipino man named Leo Castello, another marriage that did not last long.⁶⁰

Given the sparse direct evidence about the Carpio family, a few more observations from the literature on Chicago immigrant communities bear mentioning, particularly those touching gender. Here the work of Barbara Posadas is vital. Posadas points out the numerous ways that newcomer status, poverty, and racialization shaped Filipino/a experience and that these conditions were gendered. While it is unclear how

⁵⁸Barbara Posadas, “Teaching about Chicago’s Filipino Americans,” *Organization of American Historians* 10, no. 4 (1996), 39.

⁵⁹ “Re: More Questions,” *Re: More Questions*, March 16, 2021.

⁶⁰ This marriage took place in 1954. Ancestry.com, *Cook County, Illinois Marriage Index, 1930-1960* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2008. Original data: Cook County Clerk, comp. *Cook County Clerk Genealogy Records*. Cook County Clerk’s Office, Chicago, IL: Cook County Clerk, 2008. Accessed 2 April 2022.

Carpio Whiting's parents met, these scholars have documented that the sex ratio imbalance among migrating Filipino men created conditions conducive to marrying "white" women.⁶¹ These women tended to be daughters of Eastern European immigrants or migrants from rural areas in the U.S.⁶² Some of these unions were the product of shared sociability in poorer neighborhoods, like "taxi dance halls."⁶³ Bartering for feminine companionship in these spaces could shade into sexual barter or prostitution, thus leaving the women open to familial ostracism on a "moral" and "racial" basis. As a result of this ostracism and residential segregation in the city, intra-racial couples created new family units in distinct neighborhoods. Posada points out that these units tended to cluster together with their husband's "province-mates" and in employment areas. Also, these couples lived predominately near the North or West side of Chicago to landlords and owners who rented to "racially mixed couples." As Posada describes this first-generation cohort, many "mestizas," daughters of mixed parentage, lived, went to school, and grew up in an ambiguously racialized setting.⁶⁴

Mestizas found themselves walking a delicate line of social acceptance and rejection during the middle of the twentieth century. Like Patricia Carpio, who had a Filipino father and "white" mother, whose racial identity remains hard to place, mixed-heritage daughters were encouraged by their parents to fit into white society as much as

⁶¹ I have chosen to use quotes to illustrate that white is a constructed category that is not political but often given or assigned by a dominant power.

⁶² Barbara Posadas, "Mestiza Girlhood: Interracial Families in Chicago's Filipino American Community since 1925*," in *A Companion to Asian American Studies*, ed. Kent Oto (Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, 2004), p. 229.

⁶³ Yen Le Espiritu, *Homebound: Filipino American Lives across Cultures, Communities, and Countries* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 55.

⁶⁴ Posadas "Mestiza Girlhood: Interracial Families in Chicago's Filipino American Community since 1925," 229.

possible. Oral testimonies from Posadas's work suggest that these daughters needed to "reject their ethnicity and race" to better assimilate to white institutions by creating easily pronounceable names (such as Patricia). Residents of these ethnic areas used "language, food, and homeland traditions" to try and reinforce ethnic ties for the next generation. Nonetheless, parents generally looked for ways to free their daughters from being labeled as other. Daughters and sons learned and spoke English. Some testified to wanting to stay out of the sun to avoid "darkening their skin" during the summertime. Mestizas even rejected pierced ears, a strong Spanish/Catholic custom, until it became fashionable among other white American teenage girls. By melding into larger white culture, these mixed girls distanced themselves from "ethnic" behaviors, such as conservative dress, ethnic food, and Filipino dialects, which labeled them different.⁶⁵

A few more themes around gender and first-generation daughters are notable in the Chicago context. As scholars of the Pacific Rim migration have demonstrated, Filipino/a migrants were members of post-colonial society, where pressures to Americanize had been intense since 1898. Some Filipino/a migrants negotiated these pressures, for example, by rejecting the sexual morals of that dominant culture in favor of more traditional (Catholic) mores.⁶⁶ Feminist scholars note the pressure on women and girls in this context, documenting intense scrutiny by their parents. Filipina parents

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 229- 230.

⁶⁶ Roland Guyotte, Barbara Posadas, "Interracial Marriages and Transnational Families: Chicago's Filipinos in the Aftermath of World War II," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 25, No. 2/3 (Winter-Spring 2006), 137, Barbara M. Posadas "Mestiza Girlhood: Interracial Families in Chicago's Filipino American Community since 1925." In Asian Women United of California, *Making Waves: An Anthology of Writings by and about Asian American Woman*. Edited by Kent Oto (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), 229, Yen Le Espiritu, *Homebound: Filipino American Lives across Cultures, Communities, and Countries* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003).

expected their daughters to be chaste while their American counterparts enjoyed dating and going out. Education was also an essential value to many Filipino families and passed down to the children. However, Filipinas found themselves restricted in their educational pursuits, whereas their brothers were less so.⁶⁷ Finally, Pacific Rim migrants after World War II encountered racist stereotypes in the US, an older one—the “yellow peril”—and a newer one, the “model minority,” which emerged by the 1970s.⁶⁸ These factors were part of the context of Carpio’s formative years and are well documented in the settings surrounding her life.

The Move to California

During the 1950s, in Chicago, Doris Carpio was a single mother with limited skills and could only find work in lower-income fields of waiting tables, agriculture, and canning, which prompted the family to move to the Bay area of California.⁶⁹ According to the oral histories, there were two more marriages for Carpio Whiting’s mother. The third and final marriage was to a Japanese man named Uyeda, but that marriage did not last long. The combination of all these marriages gave Carpio Whiting a total of five younger brothers and two younger sisters.⁷⁰ According to Vincent Whiting, education remained essential, despite these upheavals, to the family unit, but Doris’s deteriorating health also took its toll.

⁶⁷ Yen Le Espiritu, *Home Bound: Filipino American Lives across Cultures, Communities, and Countries*, 129.

⁶⁸ Yen Le Espiritu, *Asian American Women and Men: Labor, Laws, and Love* (San Diego, CA: University of California, 1997), 86.

⁶⁹ “Re: More Questions,” *Re: More Questions*, March 1, 2021.

⁷⁰ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 13:40.

In California, abetted by class, racial, and ethnic segregation in employment, Doris Carpio and her children worked as migrant workers in agriculture. Often the family had to move around to follow employment opportunities. A diverse community of workers participated in this low-skill seasonal labor to provide income for their families.⁷¹ The needs of their mother, Doris, shaped the children's daily lives. The children attended school during the week and worked the fields during breaks and during the summer months. Based on my research, existing legislation regarding child labor in agriculture was laxly enforced by the government and full of loopholes.⁷²

The move to California shifted the family system of survival and seemed to open up some space for Patricia as the eldest sibling. According to Whiting's oral history, she did not appear to have an overly restrictive mother or stepfathers. Patricia Carpio enjoyed dating, relationships with young men, and exploring the sexual dynamics of relationships in the 1960s.⁷³ She also enjoyed exploring the arts, learned to dance Flamenco, and performed in amateur dramas.⁷⁴ Even though Carpio was a mestiza, it appeared that she went to school, lived, and worked in the mid-twentieth century "American style," alongside influences of the Mexican-American culture of San Jose, California. It is interesting to note that she studied Flamenco dance. "Flamenco" might have been "whitening" and "Spanish" as opposed to the fandango, which would have

⁷¹ Zarsadiaz, "Raising Hell in the Heartland: Filipino Chicago and the Anti-Martial Law Movement, 1972-1986," 144.

⁷² Ronald B. Taylor, *Sweatshops in the Sun: Child Labor on the Farm* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1973), 105-107.

⁷³ Diary Entry dated June 18, 1964-1968, File No. 378-001. Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.

⁷⁴ Series II, Box 3, File 428. File No. 378-001. Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.

been more “Mexican” and closer to the dominant Mexican American population of San Jose.

Vincent Whiting’s memory and Patricia’s diary entries about her relative freedom as a teen seem to distance her from what historians have documented about Filipina girlhood in the U.S.: rather strict Catholic upbringings and unique gendered pressure on young women and girls as repositories of traditional culture and values. Leading historians of the Filipino American experience note that families experienced intergenerational tension between parents and children regarding teen culture, dating, and peer pressure. Notably, fathers had a substantial role in enforcing these rules on daughters within immigrant families, which Patricia seems not to have experienced. Yen Le Espiritu’s interviews with Filipinas suggest that some migrants did not see themselves as “Americans” but as primarily Filipina or as creating a new “Filipina American” identity because “American means white.”⁷⁵ Espiritu’s work also suggests a distinct cultural consciousness of being family-oriented and caring instead of embracing individualism.

As a researcher, it is difficult to get at the details of Patricia Carpio’s experience in her family or as a part-time migrant worker in the 1950s and 60s. What is known is that after a few years of hard work in California, her mother developed more severe health problems and was eventually diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. The disease left Doris disabled and in a wheelchair. The children had to continue working in the fields to make ends meet. There was help available from the church and state, such as food and

⁷⁵ Espiritu, *Homebound: Filipino American Lives across Cultures, Communities, and Countries*, 128-131.

financial assistance programs, but the family lived an impoverished lifestyle. Again, some adjustments in family roles took place. According to Mr. Whiting's description, these conditions forced Carpio Whiting to take on the role of "lieutenant" for the family.⁷⁶ While direct evidence is lacking, it is worth considering the role that Patricia, as the eldest daughter, might have played in the family. Carpio Whiting helped with the cooking and cleaning around the house, but she also delegated different tasks to her siblings, hence the "lieutenant" nickname. Whiting recalls stories where his wife's siblings called her "bossy" and even joke about it to this day.⁷⁷ Patricia Carpio eventually graduated from James Lick High School in 1959 and continued to college.

A glimpse at the educational context of these California years is visible in some school records from East San Jose, where the Carprios lived. Originally East San Jose was designed as a white, suburban enclave with its own Carnegie library. James Lick High School, built in 1950, was marketed as a beacon for white families in an area full of orchards and open land. However, as agribusiness grew in the surrounding counties of Santa Clara and San Benito, there was an influx of immigrant workers, especially Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and Filipinos. Workers lived apart in apartment complexes that filled in the area's land. The small number of Filipinos who lived in the East San Jose area became part of the larger population of Mexican Americans, limiting visibility and voice, especially compared to the Stockton community.

By reviewing a study done by the East Side Union High School District (ESUHSD), we can learn some of the conditions facing youth. In a 1961 study on the

⁷⁶ "Re: More Questions," *Re: More Questions*, March 16, 2021.

⁷⁷ "Re: More Questions," *Re: More Questions*, March 16, 2021.

1957-8 graduates, when Patricia Carpio graduated, the ESUHSD tabulated the dropout rate for students based on various categories, such as sex, bi-lingual status, marital education, and employment status. First, there is no clear indication that Filipinos were either a part of this study or subsumed into the Mexican American category, practically erasing them. One finding of the 1961 study was a significant marriage rate for dropouts after leaving school. Notably, some 46% of the dropouts were married when they filled out the study questionnaire. The study recommended “more instruction for marriage and family life” based on these percentages since many dropouts were female. The study also showed how employment jumped up 9 % from previous years, suggesting that bilinguals and dropouts, perhaps primarily boys and young men, had some employment opportunities. It is difficult to fully grasp gender in the sample of students, since the study used the pronoun “he” and included a discussion of the military draft.⁷⁸

Given the concerns expressed in the report, it appeared that Patricia Carpio attended high school under challenging and maybe restrictive conditions. She was of Filipino descent in a survey that made no such recognition within a binary of Mexican Americans and white students: nor was she bi-lingual or a dropout. Her sex only came up once in this study, suggesting that this study ignored a good portion of the school’s population. Also, it bears mentioning that the students listed in these studies were seen as a “problem” by city authorities who needed “fixing,” which suggests an atmosphere of power over the powerless. By labeling a portion of their student population as dropouts

⁷⁸ East Side Union High School District, *1961 Follow-Up Study of Drop-Outs and Graduates of 1957-58 and 1959-60*, 1-5.

and problematic, the study placed a stigma on individuals who did not finish high school.⁷⁹

Additionally, Filipino/a status as “post-colonial migrants” points to an in-between identity in the U.S. context. Filipino/as were not American citizens but “U.S. nationals.” They could participate in institutions such as the military and higher education, although, as Henry Carpio’s documents indicate, they still needed to naturalize to formally become full citizens of the U.S. The Philippines became independent of the United States in 1946, and after a half-century of U.S. control, there developed some shared infrastructure in health care, education, and labor market relations.⁸⁰ More broadly, European colonizers and global employers in the industrializing west viewed Asian workers as an ideal replacement for African workers because of their ability to “advance the prevailing social hierarchy.”⁸¹ Espiritu explains that white society uses Asian immigrants to be “black but not black” and successful.⁸² The perception of diligence, frugality, and willingness to sacrifice propelled some Asian Americans socially upward. Asian Americans who were perceived by white society as assimilated earned the dubious title of a “model minority.”⁸³ The model minority stereotype, particularly assimilation through education, is salient for contextualizing Patricia Carpio’s next steps after high school.

⁷⁹ East Side Union High School District, *1961 Follow-Up Study of Drop-Outs and Graduates of 1957-58 and 1959-60*, 1-5.

⁸⁰ Catherine Choy, *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2003), 8-9.

⁸¹ Espiritu, *Asian American Women and Men: Labor, Laws, and Love*, 109.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ David Crystal, “Asian Americans and the Myth of the Model Minority,” *Social Casework: The Journal of Contemporary Social Work* 70, no. 7 (Sept. 1989), 405.

The College Years

Historians of migration have documented the power of education as an essential factor for many growing Filipino communities and key to social mobility.⁸⁴ Based on my interview with Carpio Whiting's husband, it seems clear that education was a strong value for her; her father's occupation as a trained chemist adds further weight to this idea. Indeed, in her generation, many Filipinos came to the United States to attend universities, notably in Chicago, like Northwestern and the University of Chicago.⁸⁵ A significant number of migrants were students, called *pensionados*.⁸⁶ However, alongside this aspiration of mobility and some expectation of assimilation was another stereotype in the dominant culture that of the so-called yellow-peril, a fear of Asian-origin peoples, due to their supposedly extra hardy "stock" and high rates of fertility, could "overtake" other "races." The Yellow Peril is a niche of the larger "unassimilable alien" concept, which in U.S. law restricted Chinese and Japanese immigrants from access to naturalization and full citizenship rights until the 1950s.⁸⁷

For this thesis, a very particular set of documents surrounds Patricia Carpio's college career in the 1960s. It is unclear whether her mother supported or opposed the idea of attending San Jose State. Nor is it possible to grasp Patricia's interior thinking about the matter or how she made sense of her experience at James Lick High School. It is not difficult to imagine that Patricia and her siblings dealt with some forms of racism

⁸⁴ Espiritu, *Homebound: Filipino American Lives across Cultures, Communities and Countries*, 130.

⁸⁵ Barbara Posadas and Roland Guyotte, "Filipinos and Race in Twentieth Century Chicago: The Impact of Polarization between Blacks and Whites." *Amerasia Journal* 24, no. 2, (2019), 140.

⁸⁶ Dawn Mabalon, *Little Manila Is in the Heart: The Making of the Filipina/o American Community in Stockton, California* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2013), 5

⁸⁷ Espiritu, *Asian American Women and Men: Labor, Laws, and Love*, 89-90.

while they attended school and church. However, the conditions may have been more supportive than hostile for Patricia Carpio, as she studied at San Jose State from 1960 to 1968.

She seems to have found a sense of community on the campus. San Jose State embraced something of the “internationalism” typical of cold war cultural activities in the period. She was a very involved student and a member of the International Platform Speaker Association.⁸⁸ A defining experience was her time as a student secretary under the tutelage of Dr. Carl Duncan, prominent entomologist and head of the natural science department at San Jose State. Dr. Duncan became a mentor and friend of Patricia Carpio until he died in 1966.⁸⁹ He fostered her love for the environment and focused her interest on creating a better world for all.⁹⁰

Based on letters and diaries held at Knight Library, it is clear that Carl Duncan’s mentorship was unique and formative. The mentorship began when Carpio Whiting was his student secretary in 1964. Her duties included maintaining student and professor files, preparing various correspondence, researching assigned topics, and attending meetings. Dr. Duncan formed a very effective and emotionally paternal relationship with Carpio during this period.⁹¹ They exchanged poems, ideas, and thoughts, some of which

⁸⁸ Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives. <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c87p8zzr/admin/#ref3>

⁸⁹ Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives. <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c87p8zzr/admin/#ref3>

⁹⁰ Carl Duncan. Letter to Patricia Whiting. “Untitled Letter.” San Jose, California: Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives. November 25, 1963.

<http://digitalcollections.sjlibrary.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/sjsuwhit/id/608/rec/92>

⁹¹ Carl Duncan. Letter to Patricia Whiting. “Untitled Letter.” San Jose, California: Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives. July 2, 1964. <http://digitalcollections.sjlibrary.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/sjsuwhit/id/325/rec/113>

she later used in her legislative career. Carl Duncan provided Patricia Carpio and, later, her siblings with a solid and stable paternal figure, and he also helped financially with their educations. This mentorship became the starting point for Patricia Carpio's scientific education and her training in using scholarly authority to create a meaningful argument.

The scientific themes were many. Carpio came to understand the cost of disease on families and society; she also learned about the fragility and dependency of humans on the earth for food and sustenance. Duncan was an entomologist, and he passed along his knowledge and appreciation for the environment through various books, discussions, and recommended readings.⁹² Dr. Duncan used his background in the study of wasps and biology to demonstrate the interrelationship of insects, humans, and nature. In this mentorship, Carpio gained a sense of purpose and goals for the future.

The diary in this collection makes several important points about her development in her college years. Her diary reveals a young woman with a need to protect others. Carpio even characterized her own need to help humans and their environment as a "duty."⁹³ Her desire to aid humankind stemmed from her fortunate upbringing, scholarships, and relationship with Carl Duncan.⁹⁴ Carpio Whiting's diary expressed many professions of love and friendship for Dr. Duncan, a person she looked up to and

⁹²Carl Duncan. Letter to Patricia Whiting. "Untitled Letter." San Jose, California: Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives. , September 18, 1964.

<http://digitalcollections.sjlibrary.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/sjsuwhit/id/338/rec/1>

⁹³ Diary Entry dated Nov. 25, 1963. File No. 383-001. Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.

⁹⁴ "Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers" Abstract. *San Jose State University Scholar Works*. (February 2019) https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/speccoll_archives/170/

often considered her “father.”⁹⁵ It is evident in this diary that the special relationship and mutual respect helped mentor Caprio Whiting into power while she seems to have played a role for him as a helpful and dutiful “daughter.”

The assassination of President Kennedy also makes a significant appearance in the diary. Carpio notes this momentous event in an entry dated November 25, 1963. In this entry, Carpio Whiting discusses the funeral of President John Kennedy. Carpio Whiting’s sorrow is palpable as she retells her impressions of that day. “The last rays of the sun shimmers on the ground,” she wrote, shocked and saddened by the president's death.⁹⁶ However, in that same entry, Carpio Whiting also solidifies her resolve and the desire to help others. On the funeral day of President Kennedy, Carpio Whiting asked herself, in her diary, how she could show gratitude for the president and all his policies. She answered her question by stating: “through discipline and devotion of my duties to present life.”⁹⁷ These words point to Carpio Whiting’s growing drive to preserve, repair, and protect all aspects of human and environmental life.

Carpio also used her diary for self-reflection on the environment and the beauty she felt within those environments. In an August 1963 diary entry, she proclaimed how much she yearned to be among the “mighty towers of pine” in Yosemite.⁹⁸ Overall, the diary tells the story of a woman who loved nature and wanted it to remain a large part of her life. Her diary also indicated how important it was for the natural environment to

⁹⁵ Pat Whiting. Letter to Carl Duncan, “Untitled Letter”. Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives. July 10, 1964. File No. 413-001. On file with author.

⁹⁶ Diary Entry Dated Nov. 25, 1963, File No. 383-001. Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*

⁹⁸ *Ibid*.

remain accessible to everyone. Her diary entries expressed anger, frustration, and hatred of deforestation and the destruction of the environment for future generations. In an undated journal entry, she railed against deforestation, calling it the “raping of the redwoods,” and bemoaned the cement that covered places “where once there was the abode of the mammals and insects.”⁹⁹ Her diary points to some of the fundamental beliefs that informed her later environmental legislative endeavors.

The diary consistently describes a love of nature and Carpio Whiting’s belief that human health and welfare were essential to balance with the natural world. In an entry dated September 21, 1967, there is a brief reference to the troubles that were part of her youth.¹⁰⁰ As the oldest of her siblings, Carpio Whiting helped raise her brothers and sisters. This experience ingrained the belief that an individual should help care for fellow human beings and avoid bringing harm. Such beliefs may have informed her to terminate a pregnancy, believing she carried an “ex-ray exposed embryo.”¹⁰¹ In Patricia Carpio’s life, it seemed that death was a little too close for comfort, and she made it her duty to fight for others and support life and health as much as possible.¹⁰²

While Patricia Carpio was unsure how to accomplish this goal while in school, Carl Duncan’s mentorship provided a starting point where she explored, discussed, and organized her personal goals. This relationship also was fruitful for Duncan. Being a widower, he gained “a new sense of purpose,” “fulfillment,” and “spiritual and emotional

⁹⁹ Undated Diary Entry. File No. 404-001. Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.

¹⁰⁰ Diary Entry Sept. 21, 1967. File No. 393-001. Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² Diary Entry dated Nov. 25, 1963. File No. 383-001. Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.

reward.”¹⁰³ He also gained a companion and, in his words, a “daughter.”¹⁰⁴ He put resources behind his words. Carl Duncan willed Carpio Whiting several thousand dollars upon his death in 1966.¹⁰⁵

Marriage and Life in Oregon

The Carpio Whiting story is full of strange coincidences that illuminate historical race, gender, and class. Vincent Whiting grew up in Chicago and Cook County, Illinois, yet the two never met due to residential segregation by race and class.¹⁰⁶ He grew up on the Northside, in Mt. Prospect, and Carpio Whiting grew up on the Southside, at the opposite end of the city.¹⁰⁷ At first, they saw each other from a distance at a fishing hole in Bear Lake, California, in the 1960s. Mr. Whiting, in his oral history, noted:

We met once by mistake. I was fishing up at Mammoth Lakes. I was still a mid-teenager at the time, and I saw this beautiful lady floating out on this raft there. To get a better look, I climbed over some rocks and, about 18 feet over the water, lost my balance and fell into the water.¹⁰⁸

Later on, after their relationship had begun, Mr. Whiting retold the story to Patricia. He recounted: “She said ‘well I was a Mammoth Lake at that time, and I saw a guy fall off

¹⁰³ Carl Duncan. Letter to Patricia Whiting. “Untitled Letter.” San Jose, California: Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives, September 1, 1964.

<http://digitalcollections.sjlibrary.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/sjsuwhit/id/334/rec/8>

¹⁰⁴ Carl Duncan. Letter to Patricia Whiting. “Untitled Letter.” San Jose, California: Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers MSS-2012-01-19, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives, July 10, 1964.

<http://digitalcollections.sjlibrary.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/sjsuwhit/id/324/rec/1>

¹⁰⁵ “Finding Aid of Dr. Carl Duncan and Patricia Whiting Papers.” San Jose. Accessed April 6, 2021.

<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c87p8zzr/>

¹⁰⁶ “Re: More Questions,” *Re: More Questions*, March 17, 2021.

¹⁰⁷ Vincent Whiting. Letter to Kim Andrews. *Extra Tidbit Questions*, August 2, 2021. It is worth noting that many historians usually associate the Southside with African-American populations.

¹⁰⁸ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 11:09.

the rocks, into the water.” He continued: “And I said, ‘Yeah, that was me.’”¹⁰⁹ The relationship was not to be at that time, and Whiting remembered his wife’s beauty especially fondly. It is worth noting that sometimes pretty girls get a pass into restricted “male” areas. While it is unknown if Carpio Whiting experienced such pressures, it might explain her attraction to science as neutral and objective. It is worth pointing out that she met her husband but in an educational setting and not socially.

Patricia Carpio officially met her future husband, Vincent Whiting, in early 1964 when they both attended a Field Studies course at San Jose State University. In this course, they studied volcanology, geology, and forest habitat.¹¹⁰ They also studied coastal tide pools, migratory birds, and the relationship between the ocean and the estuaries.”¹¹¹ By October of 1968, the Whitings were married and living in the Hook Snook area, just north of Paradise, California. Whiting had difficulty finding housing as a student, so they opted to live off-campus. Whiting described this period as living literally in “Paradise.”¹¹² Growing up in urban Chicago, he relished the area’s natural beauty and wildlife. In his oral history, he recalled spending weekends “hunting with his dog” while his wife chose not to participate in hunting.¹¹³ Whiting also discussed the bountiful wildlife that the couple ate. He listed “pheasant, duck, geese, venison, quail, pigeon, mourning doves, yeah just about anything was around those areas” that supplied them

¹⁰⁹ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 5:34.

¹¹⁰ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 11:09.

¹¹¹ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 11:09.

¹¹² Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 10:00.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

with food.¹¹⁴ It was an idyllic setting for two newlyweds, young in life, and open to new influences. This early chapter of their marriage cemented the place of nature and environment in their lives. Whiting described his wife's burgeoning environmental interest: "She was able to live in an environment she had never lived in before and ...you'd wake up in the morning and there would be 30-40 deer in a herd outside."¹¹⁵ Whiting noted that the couple "welcomed [the] primitive conditions" of life in Paradise and suggested that his wife got a new perspective on the environment, which put nature in control and placed humans more as supplicants. She was already interested in the environment and ecology, and her time in Hook Snook underscored the need for good environmental practices.

After Hook Snook and graduation, the couple found themselves headed to Oregon. Vincent Whiting had received a grant to continue his studies, so they sold all they could, packed up the rest, and set out to Corvallis, Oregon, to attend Oregon State University (OSU).¹¹⁶ Carpio Whiting secured a position as an Honors program paid Assistant/Coordinator on the campus. However, soon after their arrival, Whiting's grant was canceled, and he made ends meet by working at gas stations, packing plants, and a freezer warehouse.¹¹⁷ The Whitings took on the additional financial burden of helping Patricia's siblings during this period. Whiting joked that he had "eight kids including

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 13:40.

¹¹⁶ Vincent Whiting. Letter to Kim Andrews. *No Title*, April 6, 2021. On file with author.

¹¹⁷ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 41:39.

Patricia,” all of whom still needed to complete their college educations.¹¹⁸ The bequest of \$15,000 from Carl Duncan proved helpful in securing education for her siblings.¹¹⁹ Husband and wife toiled so that others could benefit, a legacy that became a theme in Carpio Whiting’s legislative career.

In Oregon, Patricia Carpio Whiting began to test her voice in environmental activism that was also growing on college campuses. In 1970, she published in the OSU Honors Program Newsletter, *Ecotrip*. In an article entitled “Man is Shitting in his own Nest,” she argued for greater awareness of the dangers facing the world ecosystem. Companies and individuals were guilty of “over-emphasiz[ing] profit,” “overpopulation,” and the “contamination of closed ecosystems.” She recommended some educational resources like “Ecotactics,” an activist how-to published by the Sierra Club, and Paul Ehrlich’s *The Population Bomb* (1970). She encouraged her readers to “voice your opinion and continue to help others.”¹²⁰ Also, Carpio Whiting maintained a Sierra Club membership from 1960 to 2010.¹²¹

Vincent Whiting eventually got a full-time job working for the pharmaceutical company Glaxo-Smith-Kline, a position that improved their family's financial stability in Oregon. Whiting serviced Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, California, and Alaska at Glaxo. Fortunately, Carpio Whiting was able to travel with her husband. Financially, the cost of travel, hotel stays, and food were nominal, and the company paid for most of it, including a car and gas. Vincent Whiting made enough income so that his wife did not

¹¹⁸ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 13:40.

¹¹⁹ Vincent Whiting. Letter to Kim Andrews. *Extra Tidbit Questions*, August 2, 2021. On file with author.

¹²⁰ Patricia Carpio, “Man Shitting in His Own Nest,” *Ecotrip* 2, no. 10 (April 30, 1970), 1.

¹²¹ Vincent Whiting. Letter to Kim Andrews. *Extra Tidbit Questions*, August 2, 2021. On file with author.

have to work unless she wanted to. By 1972, they had saved enough money to buy a house in Tigard, where they lived until Patricia Carpio Whiting's death in 2010. Combined with Dr. Duncan's estate income, the pharmaceutical job helped pay for Carpio Whiting's siblings' college educations. During this time, the couple decided not to have children. Mr. Whiting jokes that seven was enough, referring to his in-laws. In his oral history, he noted: "I was one of the first vasectomies in America."¹²² As he told the story, the couple's financial situation could not accommodate the added burden of their own biological children.

Towards Politics

The main legacy of the OSU chapter of the Whitings's Oregon life was the emergence of public land use as a concern. This concern is likely connected to the Sierra Club, as conservation was and remained a hallmark of the organization. Patricia Carpio Whiting also helped set up the first Earth Day at OSU.¹²³ Of course, the Whitings' experience at Hook Snook bathed the natural world in the happy glow of early marriage. Moving to Oregon brought a more action-oriented dimension to their lives. Vincent Whiting recounted a telling story right after the first Earth Day of April 22, 1970. He and his wife, some friends, and "some custodial staff" went down to the waterfront in Corvallis to clean it up.¹²⁴ He recalled: "Patty and I joined [in]... and we cleaned it up."¹²⁵ The police caught wind of this commotion and asked the group what they were

¹²² Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 31:21.

¹²³ "Extra Tidbit Questions,"⁴ September 2021.

¹²⁴ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 1:09:05.

¹²⁵ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 1:09:05.

doing. Whiting explained that they were cleaning and beatifying an area for everyone to use. As a result, several police force members joined the group and pitched in with the cleanup. He concluded:

And everybody was out there cleaning brush and barrels, taking pick-up trucks full of brush and that away, and then we built benches. The custodial staff helped us with building benches down there. Now, it's a beautiful parkway down there along the waterway.¹²⁶

This little story emphasizes friendship, community, and love of nature rather than official politics. It also points to the Whitings' willingness to gather with volunteers to do community work. As a relatively spontaneous and friendly act, these individuals did not use city or county facilities to aid their goal (the exact role of the "custodial staff" is ambiguous in the story). Indirectly, the story also shows a lack of care and maintenance by the City of Corvallis towards its waterfront, a fairly common situation in the late 1960s and early 1970s.¹²⁷

Another important theme from the Whitings' entre into Oregon was population control. As noted, the couple chose not to have children during a period when married couples were expected by society to parent. The exact links between Vincent Whiting's vasectomy, Patricia Carpio Whiting's abortion, and the couple's concern about the population explosion headlines of the day are not evident in the archive. In terms of recent scholarship, population control is one of the technologies, like "tropical medicine," that industrialized nations have used to exert paternalistic control over colonized, post-

¹²⁶ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 1:09:05.

¹²⁷ For further information on pollution of the period, check out Tom McCall's film "Pollution in Paradise."

colonial, or what was then termed “Third World” countries.¹²⁸ Whiting noted his wife’s interest in Zero Population Growth.¹²⁹ He explained their understanding at the time as follows: “We were over-populating the resources of our planet, and we wanted to be able to.... have a population number that is supported by what we have learned” about the environment.¹³⁰ Clearer connections among these themes await further research.

The archive documents a critical initiative by Carpio Whiting from this time. In 1971, she wrote an inquiry letter to Laurence R. Jahn, a Wisconsin-based member of the Wildlife Management Institute newly placed in leadership in the Washington, D.C. office. “I feel that the subject of human population in relation to closed eco-systems is one of the most important issues presently confronting mankind,” she wrote.¹³¹ The letter went on to offer her perspective for a presentation at an upcoming conference in Mexico. She held herself as someone with experience on “how to proceed and carry through with organizing responsible action.”¹³² Carpio Whiting had heard that Nobel Prize winner Norman Borlaug, creator of the high-yielding wheat varieties that helped avert mass famine, would be attending the Thirty-Seventh Meeting of the North American Wildlife Federation in Mexico City. Hoping to meet Borlaug and discuss his work, she garnered a sponsor, Nova Pharmaceuticals, for a position at the conference. Eventually, she secured

¹²⁸ Matthew James Connelly, *Fatal Misconception: The Struggle to Control World Population* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), XI.

¹²⁹ Zero Population Growth is the belief that the world population is at a balance. It is neither growing nor declining. It is seen as an ideal number in which countries should aspire to reach in order to maintain long term sustainability and avoid famines or other natural disasters. For more information check out www.populationconnection.org.

¹³⁰ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 1:11:35.

¹³¹ Pat Whiting. Letter to Laurence Jahn. “Thank you for your correspondence informing me of forwarding my communique to Dr. Leopold and to the other speakers.” Portland, Oregon: Five Oaks Museum, July 20, 1971. Box 18, Pat Whiting Collection, Courtesy of Five Oaks Museum.

¹³² *Ibid.*

enough money to pay to enable her participation and presented a speech: “Balancing Human Populations with Life Support Systems.” This speech emphasized a concern that the human population growth would continue and “decrease natural resources such as water, air, wildlife, and wilderness,” leading to famine and international insecurity.¹³³

This speech turned out to be a pivotal event for Patricia Carpio Whiting. While at the conference, some state legislators who had heard her speech approached and suggested that she run for office. Vincent Whiting summarized the legislators’ words as follows: “several members of the legislature there said, ‘You know you got talent. And what you say is so concise and precise, and your testimony that you gave us is not piecemeal or anything else. It is coherent. You should actually run for the legislature.’”¹³⁴ These observers were impressed by Carpio Whiting’s “intelligence, direction, cohesiveness, and a youthful spark,” and they believed those talents would work well back in Oregon.¹³⁵ They may have recognized her from Democratic politics, since Carpio Whiting had volunteered for the party and had served as a delegate to the state convention.¹³⁶

In the upcoming race in Tigard, Carpio Whiting’s potential opponent was Clayton Nyberg. Nyberg was a white Republican who had traditionally held the reins of political power in Washington County. He also served as a county commissioner and judge. In

¹³³Patricia Whiting, “Balancing Human Populations with Life Support Systems,” *Balancing Human Populations with Life Support Systems* (Washington, D.C.: National Wildlife and Natural Resource Institute, 1972), 1-2.

¹³⁴Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 1:11:35.

¹³⁵ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 1:11:35.

¹³⁶“Extra Tidbit Questions,” September 4, 2021.

his previous years as District 7 Representative, Nyberg helped to pass the Home Preservation plan, which provided needed homeowner tax relief, and served on the Revenue and Urban Affairs Committee and the Local Government sub-committee.¹³⁷ However, some complaints about Nyberg were his rural conservatism, his connection to certain special interests, and his inability to be a “full-time” representative because he was a property manager (even though the elective office was not a full-time job).¹³⁸ Nyberg appeared out of step with a county growing fast and becoming increasingly urbanized. In contrast, Patricia Carpio Whiting was a fresh voice who offered a balanced perspective between industrial growth and maintaining “agrarian areas and parks.”¹³⁹

After some deliberation, Carpio Whiting decided to run to represent District 7 of Washington County, made up primarily of Tigard and Tualatin.¹⁴⁰ The inner workings of this decision-making process are not in the archive. However, as an untested newcomer to the district and as a woman, it is at least plausible that Carpio Whiting created little concern among her neighbors about a power grab; perhaps she was seen as a promising youth or a woman “naturally” good at tending to others’ needs. From Vincent Whiting’s description, she approached the prospect of running with humility and proved herself to be a good learner and, eventually, a good teacher.

Carpio Whiting had to petition for a spot on the ballot. The petition required over 10,000 signatures of residents in Washington County. Mr. Whiting recalled: “It took a

¹³⁷ “State of Oregon Voter's Pamphlet General Election November 7, 1972,” State of Oregon Voter's Pamphlet General Election November 7, 1972 § (1972), p. 89.

¹³⁸ “Pat Whiting Speaks Out,” *Tigard Times*, November 2, 1972, p. 3.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ “State of Oregon Voter's Pamphlet General Election November 7, 1972,” State of Oregon Voter's Pamphlet General Election November 7, 1972 § (1972), 90.

year and a half. Day by day. Day by day. And she had to do it by bus because she didn't drive at the first part." Carpio Whiting took the time to walk her district, talk to people, attend coffees, and send out surveys to get a sense of what the district's residents wanted. Mr. Whiting described this time as the "shoe leather" period, and his oral history recalled the couples' laughter about it over the years: "[c]ause shoe leather is what she put towards her campaigns."¹⁴¹ "She walked the entire district," he explained. "There were 32,000 people at that time, and they are in I forget how many households, like 11,000 households, in her district."¹⁴² Whiting estimated that his wife visited well over 5,000 households, and he noted that both Democratic and Republican voters signed the petition for her to appear on the ballot.

Once on the ballot, Carpio Whiting decided to campaign for election through door-to-door canvassing. Though she had gained much knowledge about her district, the campaign still took enormous determination to complete. Vincent Whiting recalled: "when you got a little skin in the game...you're gonna work harder for it than if it was just given to you."¹⁴³ Mr. Whiting explained that as a candidate, Carpio Whiting "wanted to know what people thought and what was interesting to them."¹⁴⁴ The petition effort and subsequent campaign were defining activities for Patricia Carpio Whiting. These activities allowed her to speak to voters one-on-one and learn directly how she

¹⁴¹ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 54:01.

¹⁴² Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 12-2-2019. Time Stamp 5:35.

¹⁴³ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 54:01.

¹⁴⁴ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 54:01.

could help. She reached across generations and party lines.¹⁴⁵ Carpio Whiting convinced voters about her skills in problem-solving, her topically relevant education, and her burgeoning experience with environmentalism. As a result of her diligent campaigning, Patricia Carpio Whiting won a House seat in the 1973 Oregon Legislature.¹⁴⁶ The following chapter details her political initiation in Salem, with its momentous “feminist” session, and her evolving relations with Tigard constituents.

¹⁴⁵ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 54:01.

¹⁴⁶ “State of Oregon Voter's Pamphlet General Election November 7, 1972,” State of Oregon Voter's Pamphlet General Election November 7, 1972 § (1972), 90.

Chapter Two: The Class of 1973: Whiting and Women Legislators in Salem

As has already been suggested in this thesis, placing Patricia Carpio Whiting as a politician in Oregon is beset with challenges. The scholarly literature tends to frame U.S. politics in “black” and “white”; these were not categories Carpio Whiting attached herself to, either privately or publicly; nor did she hold herself out in headline-ready terms as either a “first” or a “feminist.” The environmental issues she cared about involved science, but that conversation was not predominantly scientific in Oregon in the early 1970s. Activism by feminists in Oregon was dominated by middle-class white women who proudly and boldly championed equality with men precisely as Carpio Whiting sought a spot on the electoral ballot. While this feminist activism might have passively accrued to her advantage in the electoral realm, “equality” was not a strong word in Carpio Whiting’s intellectual and social development nor in her emerging political persona. During college, she assimilated a service ethic characteristic of the modern professions and made a personal connection to nature. In Corvallis, that personal connection grew into a view of the natural environment as a public asset with democratic overtones. As in her petition drive and election campaign, Patricia Carpio Whiting was a learn-as-you-go Oregon legislator in Salem, active but difficult to place ideologically with much precision, especially in the early years.

This chapter will argue that Carpio Whiting developed a studious and, at times teacherly, good-government-oriented voice as a fledging legislator. She positioned herself as a “peoples’ candidate” but service-oriented rather than confrontational. She sought to represent everyone fairly and worked to increase access and accountability for all. When science came to the fore in consumer protection and environmental issue in

Salem, she was well prepared to wield it in the non-confrontational, logical kinds of arguments that she had developed in her speaking and writing. In Salem, Carpio Whiting sometimes found herself tapped for alliances concerning the emerging “women’s agenda” by female elected officials, notably concerning the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). While she leant such measures her support, it is equally striking that her “Capital Comments” column and her district “Newsletter ” have a civic-lesson-oriented flavor instead of a feminist stance. As this thesis will show in chapter 3, the reputation and trust she established early in her first term served her well when environmentalism came more to the fore in 1975. At that point, she stepped into a more pointed leadership role in bills involving anti-smoking and fluorocarbon regulation.

Pieces of a puzzle

Whiting positioned herself as a legislator for all her constituents. In a press report after her election, Carpio Whiting stated: “I consider myself the people’s candidate and walked my district to get elected.”¹⁴⁷ While some observers tagged her as a “female first,” she seems to have accepted a moniker but did little to expand it. There are no extant voting advertisements I could find that perpetuate the idea that she was the first woman elected in her district and no mentions by her or anyone else at the time of her as “first Filipina.” Initially, the press commented on Carpio Whiting’s appearance and size rather than her agenda. In the *Oregonian*, she was referred to as “petite” or “dark-haired” or “tiny” representative.¹⁴⁸ These descriptions compare strikingly to those of male

¹⁴⁷ Ellen Emry, “Together, Women Legislators Weigh Environmental Issues,” *Oregonian*, April 11, 1973, p. 59.

¹⁴⁸ Emry, “Together, Women Legislators Weigh Environmental Issues,” *Oregonian*, April 11, 1973, p. 59, Rosebraugh, “Care, Concern for People Her Byword,” *Statesman Journal*, February 28, 1975, p. 21.

legislators at the time, who rarely had their physical size or hair noted. Also, the census of 1970 does a poor job of capturing details and nuance of identity. Oregon's total population was 2,266,000 people, almost half of today's population.¹⁴⁹ Carpio Whiting's District 7 consisted included Tigard, Tualatin, King City, Sherwood, and Metzger areas.¹⁵⁰ Washington County had a population of around 189,400 citizens at the same time.¹⁵¹ The 1970 United States Census only had three main race categories—"white," "black," and "other"—the latter including American Indian, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Korean, Aleut, and Eskimo.¹⁵² In 1970, according to Census User Guide, individuals who did not self-identify according to the list above were absorbed into the "other" category.¹⁵³ A challenge for my research was determining how Carpio Whiting identified herself before and after her marriage to Vincent Whiting. The Census Bureau could have assigned her "Filipino" status since their policy was to classify people according to the father's "race" and matched one of the pre-determined categories.¹⁵⁴ Unfortunately, the Washington County Elections Division could not provide me with any detailed information.¹⁵⁵

Carpio Whiting's door-to-door canvassing put her in touch with some people she likely already knew through volunteering. Vincent Whiting's oral history pointed

¹⁴⁹ Berylalee Winningham, ed., *Oregon Blue Book* (Salem, OR: Clay Meyers, Secretary of State, 1975), p.207.

¹⁵⁰ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 10-2-2019. Time Stamp 12:46.

¹⁵¹ Berylalee Winningham, ed., *Oregon Blue Book* (Salem, OR: Clay Meyers, Secretary of State, 1975), p.205.

¹⁵² U.S. Bureau of the Census, *1970 Census Users' Dictionary*; U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1970, p. 95.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 96.

¹⁵⁵ Kim Andrews. Letter to Mark Paquette. *Demographics*, May 18, 2021. Saved in Author's file

especially to King City. He stated: “She had King City in her district, which was a retirement community and very, very, very conservative. But she won tons of it. She actually won, every year, she won the King City district.”¹⁵⁶ King City was a planned adult community with only residents over 50 and no children under 18.¹⁵⁷ Carpio Whiting was a committee member for the Loaves and Fishes Organization, which aided the elderly, and she supported Meals on Wheels and other programs which benefited older residents.¹⁵⁸ She served as the chair of the Citizen’s Participation Organization (CPO), which promoted the health and welfare of the Metzger area. She also volunteered on the Board of Eastmoreland General Hospital.¹⁵⁹ While these are only a few examples of Carpio Whiting’s volunteerism, it suggests how she served her community as a neighbor and citizen and not just as a “politician.”

This neighborliness and spirit of volunteerism facilitated outreach and cooperation beyond party lines. Vincent Whiting described his wife’s relationships with other politically active women. “Nancie Faledey was one, from Eugene. Norma Paulus on the Republican side was another powerhouse. It was a real good time,” he explained. “And they were given a fertile field to work in because of Tom McCall.”¹⁶⁰ Carpio Whiting earned the endorsement of the AFL-CIO for three consecutive terms and praised for her stance against the “inequalities of the cost of living to working families.”¹⁶¹ Her

¹⁵⁶ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 54:01.

¹⁵⁷ Gordon Oliver, “King City Charts Future,” *Oregonian*, November 9, 1976, p. 19.

¹⁵⁸ “Pat Whiting Resume of Qualifications” (unpublished Resume, Pat Whiting Collection, Courtesy of Five Oaks Museum).

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 26:25.

¹⁶¹ “Machinists Hear Straub, Whiting,” *Oregon Labor Press*, September 20, 1973, 75, no. 34 edition, p. 1.

husband also noted Carpio Whiting’s cooperative spirit and willingness to “give a little leeway” to work with others.¹⁶² Yet by the end of her term in office, she was known as a fighter. Robert Davis, the executive assistant to the Office of the Governor in 1973, wrote to Whiting and expressed his admiration: “Your willingness to stand up and be counted on the tough issues for the benefit of the people rather than vested interests was particularly impressive.”¹⁶³ In a 1975 letter, Senator Walter Brown, a Democrat, wrote to Whiting and thanked her for her “wonderful ideas, bounce, optimism, vim, vigor, and fight” about SB 771, the chlorofluorocarbons ban.¹⁶⁴

The 1973 Legislative Session

As already noted, the 1973 legislative session was a high point in Oregon politics, noted for the passage of a group of bills in the interest of women’s rights, many of which were sponsored and championed by women legislators. Locating Patricia Carpio Whiting in this group is challenging given the nature of the archive and her non-confrontational approach to politics. A few contextual features of that time and session deserve note. Governor McCall's leadership made some political space for women. In 1969, McCall appointed a former New Yorker to the Multnomah County District Court. Mercedes Lopez Deiz had a background in labor organizing and migrated to Portland in 1948. She encountered racial segregation in public places and, in response, Deiz joined the Urban League and the NAACP to support anti-discrimination activism. She also married and

¹⁶² Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 1:21:28.

¹⁶³ Robert Davis. Letter to Pat Whiting. “Robert G. Davis Office of the Governor.” Portland, Oregon: Five Oaks Museum, July 12, 1973. Box 18, Pat Whiting Collection, Courtesy of Five Oaks Museum

¹⁶⁴ Walter Brown. Letter to Pat Whiting. “From the Desk of Walter F. Brown Oregon State Senate.” Portland, Oregon: Five Oaks Museum, May 27, 1975. Box 18, Pat Whiting Collection, Courtesy of Five Oaks Museum

raised a family while working as a legal secretary. Eventually, she attended Lewis Clark Law School and, in 1960, became the first Black woman admitted to the Oregon bar association. After her appointment to District Court by McCall, she won the position outright and held it until her retirement in 1992.¹⁶⁵

Betty Roberts stands out of the eleven women elected (or re-elected) in the 1973 session, and her memoir provides an essential perspective on that period. Roberts ran for a seat in the Oregon Legislature in 1964 and became an Oregon Senator in 1968, where she was the only woman in the body that year. In her memoir, she appraised 1973 as especially promising to move on a women's equality agenda. The Democrats earned a majority in the Oregon Senate and House legislators. Democrats numbered eighteen of thirty members in the Senate, and a Democrat, Jason Boe of Reedsport, was Senate president. The Democrats had control of the House in a thirty-three to twenty-seven split. There also existed a large number of Republican moderates and a youthful dynamic within both houses. Second-term Republican governor Tom McCall worked well with the Democrats. In his opening speech on Monday, January 8, 1973, McCall pushed for livable legislation in the state. According to Roberts, the phrase "livable legislation" seemed to include work on equality and human rights. The Republican Party historically supported the ERA to the U.S. Constitution. McCall's speech continued: "you will need no special message from me to act upon the Women's Rights Amendment to the Federal Constitution. I urge you to ratify this Amendment as your first order of business in this

¹⁶⁵ Sylvia Tucker, *Pioneer Women of the Northwest : Profiles of Our Unsung Heroines Vol. I* (San Marcos, Ca: True North Publications , 2011). Diane Rynerson, "Mercedes Deiz (1917–2005)," Oregon Encyclopedia (Oregon Historical Society, April 22, 2021), Accessed September 23, 2021.

session and as a continuation of our mutual respect for human rights.”¹⁶⁶ Together, these elements created an atmosphere of energetic change and hopefulness in the 1973 session.

McCall’s words moved Betty Roberts so much that she recorded them in her memoir. She noted his statement: “Oregon is an inspiration. Whether you come to it or are born to it, you become entranced by our state’s beauty, the opportunities she affords, and the independent spirit of her citizens.”¹⁶⁷ He then celebrated the Willamette River’s cleanup effort and reminded the legislature to continue to support the bottle bill. Here is the idea of nature and a well-cared-for natural environment as part of a democratic heritage, an idea that held meaning for Betty Roberts (another transplant to Oregon, from Kansas) and would have struck a powerful chord with her newcomer colleague from Tigard, Patricia Carpio Whiting.

As Roberts tells it, the ERA’s passage created the momentum for the passage of subsequent gender-sensitive bills (totaling 11). Not much of Carpio Whiting’s thinking on SB 25, SB 148, or HB 2116 exists in the record. It is possible that Carpio Whiting did not want to be at the forefront of these bills. It was a period in time when divorce was on the rise, the use of Ms. was in view, and some women wanted to keep their maiden names upon marriage. In light of these social changes, Carpio Whiting seems not to have courted controversy and used her married name. SB 25 allowed for the sale of condoms outside pharmacies and vending machines, made the purchase (rather than just the solicitation) of a sexual act criminally liable, and redressed discriminatory policies in housing, credit, insurance, and trade schools. HB 2925, which would have allowed a

¹⁶⁶ Betty Roberts, *With Grit and by Grace: Breaking Trails in Politics and Law, A Memoir*, 147.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

divorced woman to keep her married name, failed in the Senate, but SB 74, which created a commission in the Department of Human Resources to help low-income working women offset the cost of childcare, did become law. The legislative record shows that Carpio Whiting was one of the sponsors for SB 25 and SB 148. SB 555 and SB 2354 supported affirmative action and updated discriminatory practices. Together these bills addressed many longstanding discriminatory laws and practices in Oregon and upheld the feminist ideals of creating equality between the genders.¹⁶⁸ However, a more profound record of Patricia Carpio Whiting's thinking on these bills or the feminist agenda in Salem is simply not in evidence.

The ERA earned most of the headlines at the time and was a highlight of Roberts's retrospective telling. Roberts and Norma Paulus planned with great care for the passage of the ERA. They decided to form a "women's caucus" and approached the newly elected women legislators in the House, such as Patricia Carpio Whiting, Peg Dereli, Nancie Fadeley, and others.¹⁶⁹ Carpio Whiting likely joined this women's caucus because it offered a mutually beneficial relationship. By inviting Carpio Whiting into the caucus, Senator Roberts increased the caucus's size, projected female solidarity, and included someone who perhaps embodied "minority" representation. Carpio Whiting likely joined because she already believed in equal rights and saw that the caucus could offer guidance from senior legislators and future networking opportunities.

¹⁶⁸Tara Watson and Melody Rose, "She Flies with Her Own Wings: Women in the 1973 Oregon Legislative Session," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 111, no. 1 (2010), 38.

¹⁶⁹Betty Roberts, *With Grit and by Grace: Breaking Trails in Politics and Law, A Memoir*, 148.

Under the lead of Senator Roberts, the women's caucus thoroughly prepared for the ratification process of the ERA. She noted that their strong group of female legislators were ready to "give a logical, compelling reason for ratification" and were equally prepared to counteract the opposition.¹⁷⁰ Ratification reached the Senate floor on February 1, 1973. There were not enough women senators to carry the vote.¹⁷¹ Roberts recalled: "I observed the ensuing debate among my male colleagues with admiration, for they had not been taken in by the scare tactics of the opposition and were truly interested in the need for the ERA."¹⁷² The Senate passed the ERA amendment with bi-partisan support from both sexes. While it is difficult to tell precisely how Carpio Whiting fit into this group of women, her commitment to birth control likely played a part in her support. It is also possible that as a first-time representative, Carpio Whiting was looking for a way to fit in with the other female legislators, notably a big win with national significance.

The House also passed ERA legislation in early February 1973, adding Oregon to the number of states that ratified it. While it is difficult to determine how much work Carpio Whiting did for ratification, it is more apparent that she endorsed abortion rights, family planning, and birth control. The *Salem Statesmen* reported that Carpio Whiting "declares herself for family planning" and believed laws restricting birth control were devastating for families and led to "unhappy adults."¹⁷³ Like her work on Zero Population Growth, Carpio Whiting believed that if there was a logical and safe way to

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 152.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 153.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ Isabel Rosebraugh, "Care, Concern for People Her Byword," *Statesman Journal*, February 28, 1975, p. 21.

fix something, it was worth spending time achieving it.¹⁷⁴ The ERA provided momentum for her family planning and population control interests and created networking opportunities in Salem.

In preparing for her first session in office, Carpio Whiting was careful to survey her district. This survey covered taxation, school finance, health care problems, campaign spending, alternate forms of transportation, and environmental problems. She followed her introductory remarks to the survey with a listing of bills. The survey results identified problems with insurance claims. Carpio Whiting noted that different “insurance companies each require a different form which indirectly causes an increase in medical costs and also complicates insurance claim filing.”¹⁷⁵ In order to create a more systematic filing process in Oregon, Whiting co-sponsored SB 406, which set up “uniform health insurance claim forms for Oregonians.”¹⁷⁶ It was passed and signed into law on June 8, 1973.¹⁷⁷ Carpio Whiting also worked to create a more informative voter’s pamphlet. “Many voters drew my attention to the inadequacies of the voter’s pamphlet regarding information, polling addresses, voting difficulties, and the need for district boundary line maps,” Whiting wrote in her newsletter. As a result, she sponsored HB 2810, which would require “the voter’s pamphlet to include more extensive information

¹⁷⁴ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 12-2-2019. Time Stamp 19:09.

¹⁷⁵ Pat Whiting, “Newsletter,” 1973, 2.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ *Journals and Calendars of the Senate and House Fifty-Seventh Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon* (Salem, OR: Fifty-Seventh Legislature, 1973), p. C-134

for the voters.” HB 2810 was passed by the legislators and signed into law on July 7, 1973.¹⁷⁸

In her district newsletter, Carpio Whiting addressed one of the biggest concerns of her constituents: the McCall tax reform plan. In her breakdown of McCall’s plan, Carpio Whiting’s ability to effectively explain complex issues shines. She wrote: “Your responses explain why I, as your state representative, believe that your voice has been heard and answered.” Whiting explained: “It is estimated that 80% to 85% of taxpaying Oregonians will see tax relief.” Next, Whiting put the projected savings for voters into capital letters. “Generally, if you are a typical OREGON HOMEOWNER making less than \$16,000 a year you WILL BE PAYING LESS OVER-ALL TAXES; If you are a typical OREGON RENTER making less than \$12,000 a year YOU WLL PAY LESS OVER-ALL TAXES.” It is important to note that Whiting does not specify who a “typical” Oregon homeowner was, exactly. However, based on census data, a typical Oregonian was white and male with an income of \$15,000-\$24,000.¹⁷⁹ Whiting endorsed McCall’s plan, suggesting it offered more than just tax savings. It could foster financial security and “control over their own affairs” for the schools. Ultimately, the McCall plan did not pass into law.¹⁸⁰ However, Carpio Whiting may have made a reasonable calculation. It made sense to support a popular governor who was good at working in bipartisan ways while appealing to pocket-book interests in her district. There seemed to be no political downside to endorsing Governor McCall’s tax plan. Avel Gordly did

¹⁷⁸ *Journals and Calendars of the Senate and House Fifty-Seventh Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon* (Salem, OR: Fifty-Seventh Legislature, 1973), p. C-547.

¹⁷⁹ Pat Whiting, “Newsletter,” 1973, 2.

¹⁸⁰ Todd Engdahl, “Reason Vary for Tax Plan Loss,” *Oregonian*, May 3, 1973, 16.

something similar in 1992 as a new representative in Salem, speaking in genuine support of newly elected Governor Barbara Robert's tax reform agenda on the House floor, only to see that process derailed in the Democratic caucus.¹⁸¹

Using Her Voice

Roberts and some of her Portland-metro-based women allies in the Legislature worked in community groups that were distinct from those on Carpio Whiting's resume. Roberts benefitted from the organizational strength of activist organizations such as the Equal Rights Alliance, the Oregon Women's Caucus, and the National Organization for Women. By contrast, Carpio Whiting's commitments were to service organizations that were gender-inclusive; nor did she belong to race-conscious civil rights organizations as did Mercedes Deiz or Avel Gordly. Reviewing her transformation from a private citizen to a public official, Betty Roberts commented that "it just seemed to fall into place."¹⁸² While a political career may have seemed "to fall into place" in her case, it is important to note that white women with social connections and law degrees like Roberts were especially well-positioned to take advantage of political opportunity when it arose.

Despite being only a "minority in both houses" and "50 percent of the population," Roberts openly and actively advocated for equality through several women-first bills.¹⁸³ Carpio Whiting leaned into democratic thinking but with less of a corrective edge. She developed this style of argumentation over time and through different communication tools; some have survived as part of her archive. These include

¹⁸¹ Gordly, *Remembering the Power of Words*, pp. 138-40.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 42.

¹⁸³ Betty Roberts, *With Grit and by Grace: Breaking Trails in Politics and Law, A Memoir*, 159.

newspaper articles, her “Capital Commentary” series in the *Tigard Times*, and her constituent newsletter. From these sources and the occasional interview or news item in the press, the outlines of her political voice and evolving agenda are visible.

During her first term, Carpio Whiting tended to use the language of warning, improvement, progress, and fairness on whatever topic she deemed necessary, especially when it came to protecting the environment of Oregon. The phrase “I don’t want it here” became her call for action.¹⁸⁴ She also couched specific claims, whether those for women or the environment, in terms of their benefit to the overall welfare of the people. This approach is captured well in a letter to Senator Robert Packwood dated December 17, 1973. Carpio Whiting used her official Legislature stationery to draw his attention to the Hells Canyon and Middle Snake River area in eastern Oregon:

It is up to the leaders elected by the people of this nation to take the initiative to enact quality legislation for the health, welfare, and benefit of the individual and the nation as a whole. It behooves us to look for the future with knowledge of past actions and to expand the meaning of progress.¹⁸⁵

In these encompassing frameworks, Carpio likely drew on the vision advanced by the environmental clubs she belonged to like the Sierra Club and Izaak Walton League.¹⁸⁶ This framework also marked her campaign literature. In a campaign ad in the *Tigard*

¹⁸⁴ Isabel Rosebraugh, “Care, Concern for People Her Byword,” *Statesman Journal*, February 28, 1975, p. 21.

¹⁸⁵ Pat Whiting, Letter to Senator Robert Packwood. “S. 2233- Hells Canyon & Middle Snake River Proposal.” Portland, Oregon: Five Oakes Museum (Formerly known as Washington County Museum), December 17, 1973.

¹⁸⁶ The Izaak Walton League is one of America’s oldest and most successful conservation organizations. The League has a member-driven bottom-up governance goal of protecting outdoor America in communities across the country.

Times, she stated: “I pledge to you to work for the best interests of the people of District 7.”¹⁸⁷ There is little argument that could be made against such a general declaration.

As an evolving public figure, Carpio Whiting’s marital status and her use of her married name, Whiting, had a normalizing, assimilative effect. These aspects of her public identity could help her pass as “white” or at least as “not black” and avoid overt discrimination. It is helpful to recall the model minority stereotype emerging at this time. This stereotype was a media and sociological label which labeled Asian Americans as special immigrants who desired to appear American, democratic, and loyal to the United States.¹⁸⁸ Leading scholars of Asian American history have found that Asian Americans are perceived as diligent, frugal, and willing to sacrifice to live in the U.S. Additionally, these scholars identified tokenism who were successful at assimilation and achieved with little discomfort in white society.¹⁸⁹ While it is difficult to determine if this stereotype was a driving force in Whiting’s life, some elements of her biography deserve consideration. She earned a college education which allowed her to enter and maintain a middle-class status. Knowing that men of that period complained that women and their clothes were too distracting for the seriousness of business or political environments, Carpio Whiting always dressed professionally or “conservatively,” with high necked blouses or with a jacket and hair styled nicely. Unlike Gretchen Kafoury, an activist elected to Oregon house in 1977, there are no photographs that show Carpio Whiting

¹⁸⁷ Pat Whiting, “Tuesday, Nov. 7 -Elect Pat Whiting,” *Tigard Times*, November 2, 1972.

¹⁸⁸ Shirley Hune and Gail Nomura, eds., *Asian/Pacific Islander American Women: A Historical Anthology* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2003), 190.

¹⁸⁹ David Crystal, “Asian Americans and the Myth of the Model Minority,” *Social Casework: The Journal of Contemporary Social Work* 70, no. 7 (Sept. 1989), 405.

dressed up in costumes and acting in street theater protesting in front of the all-male City Club in Portland.¹⁹⁰

Carpio Whiting may also have drawn on the social expectation that a woman's proper role was to care for others.¹⁹¹ Though not a mother herself, Carpio Whiting became a good legislator by being a good caretaker of her district. In her first year in office, Carpio Whiting created a program where she mentored and encouraged Tigard High School students to engage with the government through legislative internships. These students engaged with legislators, helped with research, and attended meetings in these internships.¹⁹² Having been a symbolic "daughter" to Dr. Carl Duncan, Carpio Whiting knew that the "dutiful daughter" role could permit a certain kind of access to knowledge and authority. Her youthfulness, charm, and beauty were also tactful ways of making alliances. By positioning herself as a caring and approachable legislator, she created a way to enter herself into Oregon's white, male-dominated political genre without a feminist label.

In a newsletter dated September 1973, Whiting updated her constituents by reviewing the passed bills. She described every committee assignment and explained what each did to improve the lives of Oregonians. Whiting discussed improvements for the older residents of her district in a section entitled "Health Care and the Protection of Our Elderly."¹⁹³ She described "dozens of improved new regulations" that were now

¹⁹⁰ Milly Wohler, "Women's Equality Groups Unite to Intensify City Club Campaign," *Oregonian*, March 29, 1972, p. 3M.

¹⁹¹ Carolyn Merchant, *Earthcare: Women and the Environment*. (Routledge: New York, 1995), 109.

¹⁹² "Pat Whiting's Intern Says 'It's a Complicated Life!,'" *Tigard Times*, March 8, 1973, p. 11.

¹⁹³ Pat Whiting, "Newsletter," n.d.

law. “Health care and care of our elderly are very important and very basic to our life activity.” Such “quality of life conditions” could only be achieved by “working together and understanding the scope of problems related to health and happiness.”¹⁹⁴ Particularly notable is her use of “our” instead of “the” in the piece’s title. By using the word “our,” she places the responsibility of care on everyone, including herself. Notably, Carpio Whiting’s newsletter has no reference to the women’s first block of legislation or any mention that she supported any bills in that block. This decision could indicate that the women’s agenda was too controversial for her district or that it raised issues that were not vetted and tested in her constituent survey.¹⁹⁵

Instead, her writings from 1973, mostly in the *Tigard Times* “Capital Commentary,” focused on the legislative process, which she was learning about in person. Carpio Whiting explained the process of bill creation. First, the House gives each request its “due consideration.” Next, the issue becomes a bill and is given a “brief sketch” determining which committee discussed the bill. The committee revised the bill as needed. If the bill passes the House, “it then goes to the Senate (vice-versa if it was introduced in the Senate).” Finally, if it passes both houses, the bill “goes to the Governor for signing.” Whiting added that a bill could be stalled and “voted down or vetoed by the Governor at any time.” After this procedural information, she added that a new telephone “hotline” allowed anyone in Oregon to reach their representative or comment on a bill.¹⁹⁶ Dick Eymann, a Democrat, and Senator Jason Boe, Speaker of the House, initiated this

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ *Journals and Calendars of the Senate and House Fifty-Seventh Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon* (Salem, OR: Fifty-Seventh Legislature, 1973), C-11 and C-56.

¹⁹⁶ Whiting, “Capitol Commentary,” *Tigard Times*, January 18, 1973. p.3

hotline. Whiting listed the number and encouraged her readers to use it. She ended by giving her House of Representative address and phone number.

Being a “peoples’ candidate” took its toll in the early days. In his oral history, Vincent Whiting told a story about what happened after his wife gave out their home phone number to the public.

One time we sent out one of the first, being novices, we sent out a card that had our phone number on it, okay? And at three o’clock in the morning, I get this call from this guy whose being held in the Washington County Drunk Tank, and he was slurring his words and everything else. ‘Hey, I want to talk to my representative,’ [he said] at 3 in the morning. I said, ‘Well, you know, maybe you should talk to your lawyer.’ And he said ‘Oh, that guy. He’s gonna tell my wife.’ So those things always happen and so we learned not to put our personal address and phone number on stuff after that.¹⁹⁷

That particular individual ended up staying in jail overnight, and the scenario taught Carpio Whiting a lesson about the limits to being the “peoples” candidate.

Whiting did not have a network in place in the capital to guide her decision-making processes, unlike more established legislators. As a result, she worked incredibly long hours to research and formulate her agenda and spent a great deal of time away from her husband to accomplish all her legislative work. An *Oregonian* article discussed her long schedule, noting that she worked from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. while commuting or staying in a Salem apartment.¹⁹⁸ It made no mention of her husband or staff. Vincent Whiting occasionally helped with the physical work of setting up lawn signs for campaigning, making copies, and sending out letters. However, his primary role was supportive:

¹⁹⁷ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 1:04:11.

¹⁹⁸ Ellen Emry, “Together, Women Legislators Weigh Environmental Issues,” *Oregonian*, April 11, 1973, p. 59.

financing the household expenses and providing security for the future.¹⁹⁹ The impression from the record and oral histories suggests that the couple lived as equals rather than as “patriarch” and submissive wife. Mr. Whiting was a political partner and marriage partner.

Shifting Gears

Patricia Carpio Whiting worked on various committees as she moved forward in her legislative career. Starting in 1973, she served on the Education, Environment and Land Use, and Local Government and Urban Affairs committees.²⁰⁰ In 1973, The Speaker of the House, Richard Eymann, was elected speaker. In addition to presiding over deliberations and deciding questions of order in the chamber, the speaker appoints chairs, adds members to committees, and refers measures to appropriate committees according to the provisions of the rules of the House.²⁰¹ Carpio Whiting worked in the Education/School Finance committee and vice-chaired the Environment/Energy committee in 1975.²⁰² She continued on the Environment and Energy committee in her final legislative year of 1977, where she also chaired the Transportation Committee.²⁰³ Carpio Whiting fared well in this process. Evidence of Eymann’s political calculations with appointments is absent in the archives. However, a recommendation letter from

¹⁹⁹ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 12-2-2019. Time Stamp 156:46.

²⁰⁰ *Journals and Calendars of the Senate and House Fifty-Seventh Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon* (Salem, OR: Fifty-Seventh Legislature, 1973), p. xvi.

²⁰¹ “Oregon Secretary of State,” State of Oregon: Blue Book - About Oregon's Legislative Assembly, accessed August 5, 2021, <https://sos.oregon.gov/blue-book/Pages/state/legislative/about.aspx>.

²⁰² *Journals and Calendars of the Senate and House Fifty-Eight Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon* (Salem, OR: President of the Senate, 1975), p. 19.

²⁰³ *Journals and Calendars of the Senate and House Fifty-Ninth Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon* (Salem, OR: President of the Senate, 1977), p. 14.

Phillip Lang, Speaker of the House in 1975 and 1977, sheds some light on Carpio

Whiting's success in committee work. Lang wrote:

In January 1975, when I first became Speaker of the House, I appointed Pat as Vice Chairman of the important Environment and energy committee in recognition of her ability, objectivity and sensitivity for handling issues of public concern. Then in January 1977, when I was re-elected Speaker of the House, I appointed Pat as Chairman of the Transportation Committee. Under her leadership the committee considered some of the most difficult, emotional and important issues of the 1977 legislative session. In all of my contacts with Pat I have found her to be capable, creative and effective in dealing with any endeavor which she undertook. She has always been well organized and dedicated to her responsibilities.²⁰⁴

In reviewing these committee assignments, I saw a pattern form demonstrating Carpio Whiting's most significant concern: the environment. While the form of the environmental concerns differed, the framework was consistent. She took the safety and welfare of all humans very seriously in her district and, eventually, beyond it.

Whiting's work for her constituents remains characterized by her actions to protect their interests, not only on the floor but also in community projects and programming. In a 1975 *Statesman Journal* article, Whiting stated, "I am determined that the government responds to the general public's concern!"²⁰⁵ This statement serves as her clarion call and intended to cover a large cross-section of Washington County. The phrase "general public" had the virtue of naming everyone and no one in particular. However, her process orientation earned positive press coverage, especially her coffees, surveys, and care for the elderly.²⁰⁶ Carpio Whiting also wanted to protect small-farm

²⁰⁴ Lang, Phillip. Letter to To Whom It May Concern. "Phillip D. Lang," Portland, Oregon: Five Oaks Musuem, October 12, 1979.

²⁰⁵ Rosebraugh, "Care, Concern for People Her Byword," *Statesman Journal*, February 28, 1975, p. 21.

²⁰⁶ "Pat Whiting Speaks Out," *Tigard Times*, November 2, 1972, p. 3; Rosebraugh, "Care, Concern for People Her Byword," *Statesman Journal*, February 28, 1975, p. 21.

owners from being “taxed out of existence.”²⁰⁷ Carpio Whiting tended to these groups because she felt mainstream politics or previous candidates did not represent them. While environmental issues were her particular interest, Carpio Whiting also worked on “care” bills, notably touching on birth control and nursing homes.²⁰⁸ These “care” bills could resonate with a “women’s agenda,” however quietly, while Carpio Whiting accented her service ethic with her constituents, especially the older people in her district whom she declared were sometimes “forgotten by society.”²⁰⁹

The next legislative session, however, put issues more sharply, especially feminist ones. A 1975 *Statesman Journal* article explained Carpio’s position more clearly and in terms that stand out compared to her mild-mannered constituent newsletter. The paper reported her position against those laws or customs that make it difficult or embarrassing to purchase birth control, leading to “unwanted children.”²¹⁰ It is worth noting that the article offered Carpio Whiting an escape from dealing with the abortion issue by sidestepping the controversy altogether. Carpio Whiting discussed her difficulties obtaining birth control and, in this article, described how a doctor asked her to produce her marriage certificate.²¹¹ Carpio Whiting continued: “And if it bothers someone like me, think about those shy people who seem unable to talk back!” Carpio Whiting considered herself an extrovert who felt she must speak for others who could not speak for themselves. She was motivated by her own authentic experiences and letters from her constituents, from “people who say they were unwanted infants and have become

²⁰⁷ “Pat Whiting Speaks Out,” *Tigard Times*, November 2, 1972, p. 3.

²⁰⁸ Rosebraugh, “Care, Concern for People Her Byword,” *Statesman Journal*, February 28, 1975, p. 21.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

unhappy adults.”²¹² As noted above, she co-sponsored SB 148 (criminalizing the purchase of sexual services). Vera Katz congratulated Carpio Whiting for her work on this bill and invited her to stand for a photograph when Governor McCall signed the bill on May 17, 1973.²¹³ Vera Katz probably invited Carpio Whiting to take the photo because it legitimized the bill as one for all people. It also celebrated the expansion of the feminist agenda of equality under the law and showcased their joint efforts on the Environment and Land Use Committee, where the hearings on the bill took place.²¹⁴

Reviewing her first session’s accomplishments for her constituents, Carpio Whiting described the 1973 legislative session as “gratifyingly successful.”²¹⁵ Les AuCoin, Majority Leader in the House of Representatives and guide to Carpio Whiting, noted that the 1973 legislature was “the busiest, most productive session in Oregon’s history.”²¹⁶ He continued:

It seems like we were in Salem a long time, Pat, but when I add up what’s been done this session, I believe it was worth the time we took. I deeply appreciate your work in this session, in this caucus, and with me personally. It’s been a memorable experience and I look forward to working with you in the future.²¹⁷

Despite the headline-worthy feminist agenda at the time, it is interesting to note that little remains in Carpio Whiting’s archives about the issues involved. There are more artifacts from Les AuCoin, Jason Boe, and Phillip Lang than from the women of the legislative

²¹² *Ibid.*

²¹³ Katz, Vera. Letter to Pat Whiting. “Vera Katz State Representative.” Portland, Oregon: Box 18, Pat Whiting Collection, Five Oaks Museum, May 1973.

²¹⁴ “House Rejects Bid to Move Vets’ Day,” *Statesman Journal*, April 20, 1973, p. 1

²¹⁵ Pat Whiting, n.d.

²¹⁶ AuCoin, Les. Letter to The Honorable Pat Whiting. “Majority Leader House of Representatives Salem, Oregon 97310.” Portland, Oregon: Box 18, Pat Whiting Collection, Five Oaks Museum, July 11, 1973.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

“class” of 1973, suggesting that Carpio Whiting may have distanced herself from the more controversial (and explicitly feminist) members such as Vera Katz or Betty Roberts.

Looking ahead, Carpio Whiting informed her constituents of several bills that were part of the following 1975 legislative agenda. One of the most extensive bills was HB 2022, which helped streamline and update the Oregon Voter’s Pamphlet. Some of the revisions included “the full text of each ballot measure would no longer be printed in the pamphlet, saving the state an estimated \$100, 000,” but voters could get copies of entire bills if they desired.²¹⁸ Whiting continued that in HB 2022, “information on all candidates would be included in a single edition,” eliminating the state’s expense of preparing separate voting pamphlets for each party.²¹⁹ HB 2022 required a Voter’s Pamphlet to be sent to “every residential address,” saving about \$40,000 for the state.²²⁰ HB 2022 passed into law on September 13, 1975.²²¹

Carpio Whiting also discussed several other bills that affected the Voter’s Pamphlet. HB 2396 would make a Voter’s Pamphlet available for Spanish-speaking citizens. HB 2065, sponsored by Carpio Whiting, would have required the Secretary of State to make an audio version of the pamphlet for those who needed it.²²² HB 2296, if passed, would have allowed employees to take two-hour leave to vote. Whiting also discussed how HB 2189 would create a “day of a general election” as a state holiday to

²¹⁸ Pat Whiting, “Capitol Commentary,” *Tigard Times*, March 20, 1975, p. 4.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

²²¹ *Journals and Calendars of the Senate and House Fifty-Eight Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon* (Salem, OR: President of the Senate, 1975) p.H-5.

²²² Pat Whiting, “Capitol Commentary,” *Tigard Times*, March 20, 1975, p. 4.

ensure maximum voter turnout.²²³ House Joint Resolution 10, which changed the voting age from 21 to 18, was successful and passed in June 1975.²²⁴ Overall, these bills were an attempt to expedite and ease the voting process. However, few of these election bills were passed and signed into law, including Carpio Whiting's bills. The legislative journals do not address why a bill does not pass or leave a committee, nor are the newspapers thorough in their bill coverage. However, as revealed in her regular writings, Carpio Whiting consistently championed a more responsive, accessible, and accountable government.²²⁵

In addition to her newsletters and her "Capitol Commentary" column, Carpio Whiting took on the occasional role of an investigator to evaluate the welfare of some of her older constituents. Under the health and quality of life frameworks, Carpio Whiting went on several Washington County nursing home tours with the health department to inspect the premises and staff. According to a *Statesmen Journal* article, Whiting claimed that they found

serious problems relating to cleanliness, staffing, and space. At one, an open cesspool line was stuffed with rags. The county law enforcement personnel. If these homes were closed, where would the patients go? In one nursing home, medications were readily accessible to staff although only one registered nurse on that staff was qualified to give such medications.²²⁶

Whiting complained about the "great emphasis on balancing the budget" in the Legislature and not enough emphasis on "quality legislation dealing with health, human

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ *Journals and Calendars of the Senate and House Fifty-Eight Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon* (Salem, OR: President of the Senate, 1975) p.H-194.

²²⁵ Due to Covid-19 restrictions, libraries and museums that are closed, archives that are closed, and limited online sources, further examples of Whiting's 1977 Capitol Commentaries proved difficult to find.

²²⁶ Rosebraugh, "Care, Concern for People Her Byword," *Statesman Journal*, February 28, 1975, p. 21.

resources, and the environment!”²²⁷ The use of an exclamation point is telling. It evokes emphasis and emotion. Carpio Whiting, motivated by her findings from the tour, sponsored two house bills that dealt directly with seniors and their wellbeing. She sponsored HB 2332, which prohibited “Public Welfare from adopting rules specifying drugs to be prescribed,” thereby alleviating the prescribing doctor the extra burden and “frustration when he cannot prescribe a needed drug.”²²⁸ HB 2333 addressed the problem of those individuals in commercial, industrial, or high-density residential zones on “fixed incomes” and their ability to remain in their residences without being “taxed into selling.”²²⁹ Only HB 2333 passed into law, but the bills represent Carpio Whiting’s desire to serve the elderly. Limited coverage of HB 2333 in the press suggests that these were not controversial bills. But through them, Carpio Whiting advanced the idea that bills protecting vulnerable citizens were a good investment of legislative attention and resources. This approach became a signature of her leadership.

Towards an Environmental Voice

By 1975, Carpio Whiting had successfully burnished rather than broken out of her service ethos to her constituents, and her message stayed consistent when directed at her district. Carpio Whiting offered collegial but not particularly ideological support of most of the women’s agenda in her more Salem-based networking. Her “Capitol Commentary” in the *Tigard Times* and constituent newsletter functioned as instruments of accountability and, seemingly, very welcome ones compared to the career of her

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ *Journals and Calendars of the Senate and House Fifty-Eight Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon* (Salem, OR: President of the Senate, 1975) p. 112 and 147.

predecessor Nyberg. Over time, Carpio Whiting began to stretch her agenda and voice toward the environment via some consumer protection projects for the next legislative session. Using the voice of warning, Carpio Whiting announced that all consumers, including herself, were “riding an economic roller coaster. Prices rise, and the value of the dollar continues to drop.” She continued: “Only Congress has the power to control the ups and downs, but the Oregon Legislature can deal effectively with many of the curves.” Carpio Whiting supported the idea of the Oregon Legislature doing what it could to protect the consumer from market swings and “deceptive business practices.” Some of these new protections included “warranties on consumer goods, age dating [on] perishable foods and civil penalties for violations of consumer law.”²³⁰

Carpio Whiting did not stop there. She continued to inform her readers about upcoming bills and consumer protections. One such upcoming bill was HB 2086, which required grocery stores to adopt unit pricing. While unit pricing is typical today, in 1975, it was sporadic and left many consumers wondering what the best price was for an item. She also identified food labeling and misleading descriptions of ingredients as requiring attention. She backed HB 2269 in 1975, which would have lowered drug prices by allowing pharmacists to dispense the more economical version of a drug in stock. While some female legislators waved the banner of equality and confronted men in power about their privilege, Carpio Whiting instead chose a more moderate path, keeping her grassroots message non-controversial and non-confrontational to ensure that she maintained the confidence of the broadest cross-section of her voters. As the next

²³⁰ Pat Whiting, “Capitol Commentary,” *Tigard Times*, March 6, 1975, p. 4.

chapter will describe, Patricia Carpio Whiting's style and skill with science found their most powerful moment as the next round of environmental legislation took shape in the Oregon legislature.

Chapter Three: Carpio Whiting's Advocacy and Scientific Style: SB 508 and 771

Patricia Carpio Whiting's skill with science took center stage in her second term in the Oregon Legislature. In the 1975 session, her two most notable environmental bills, SB 508 and SB 771, passed into law. These laws involved smoking in public places and a ban on chlorofluorocarbons used in aerosol cans, respectively. The smoking bill involved issues of human health and public spaces; it involved the built "environment" as opposed to the natural one and accented peoples' physical health. The aerosols bill was more abstract and involved the atmospheric "environment." Unlike cigarette smoke, the damage involved was harder to "see" and feel in immediate and everyday life. In this latter bill, Carpio Whiting's skill as a translator of expert and scientific work was important. Her reputation as a caring legislator also served her well in making SB 771 appear necessary to Oregonians, and she further saw the bill as a way for the state to assume leadership on an issue of national, even global importance. It could be argued that as one of the few women involved in the debates surrounding SB 771, Carpio Whiting was somewhat tokenized politically. However, it seems more salient to suggest that she was a humanizing presence. She gave credibility to the preliminary scientific studies that she championed as significant predictors and protectors of the earth's environmental "health" and, by extension, of human health. Interestingly, Carpio Whiting's skill with "objective" scientific arguments may have obscured her imprint and legacy as an advocate of these important bills. In other words, by defending the health of "everybody" no one group, in particular, seemed to remember or credit Carpio Whiting's work retrospectively.

Anti-Smoking and Senate Bill 508

In 1964, the U.S. Surgeon General came out with a significant report linking smoking to cancer. This report had far-reaching consequences and was a catalyst for activism, notably by consumer protection groups, leading to new legislation at the state and federal levels. The report served as a wake-up call for the tobacco industry to increase its public relations and legal departments.²³¹ Smoking became a national health issue, and though cigarettes had been a consumer item for decades, they were now “news.” Individuals, activist social networks, and health professionals, especially the American Medical Association, played crucial roles in what scholars label the Tobacco Control Movement.²³² Though personally attracted to green space, forestry, and land use issues, Carpio Whiting moved enthusiastically into the smoking issue, partly in response to her district’s stated interest in limiting cigarette use in public spaces. Her role in the Environment and Land Use committee proved to be a practical arena to advocate for new legislation.

As it happened, Patricia Carpio Whiting was herself allergic to cigarette smoke, and people—notably women in her district—had made their health concerns around smoking known to her.²³³ She signed on as a co-sponsor with Senator Bill Stevenson, Democrat from Multnomah County, to the proposed bill. SB 508 banned “smoking of tobacco in any form at any public body meeting,” and Carpio Whiting’s statement noted a “concern for the health of the individual who must attend a meeting within a closed

²³¹ Mark Wolfson, *The Fight Against Big Tobacco: The Movement, the State, and the Public's Health* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2001), 21.

²³² Wolfson, *The Fight Against Big Tobacco: The Movement, the State, and the Public's Health*, 101-102.

²³³ *Journals and Calendars of the Senate and House Fifty-Seventh Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon* (Salem, OR: Fifty-Seventh Legislature, 1973), p. xvi.

room” and who should not suffer the unwanted consequences.²³⁴ Working together, Carpio Whiting and Stevenson focused their legislative testimony on the issue of “freedom of choice” and the idea that a person had a right to “smokeless air.”²³⁵ Stevenson defined his position on freedom of choice as meaning that clean air should exist for all parties and that this right should be enforceable.²³⁶ In effect, SB 508 allowed for the rights of all persons to be respected, and such a framing resonated with Carpio Whiting’s approach to serving “everyone’s” interests. Bringing the issue directly into their workplace, these two legislators described how smoking infiltrated the operation of the capital itself, potentially jeopardizing the proper function of government, and touching the welfare of all public employees, from janitors to governors.²³⁷

In her arguments to the House, Carpio Whiting also stressed public meetings and public process issues in keeping with her responsive government ethos.²³⁸ She described how the bill involved public bodies as “any group of person meeting to exercise any legislative, executive or administrative power about governmental management in Oregon.”²³⁹ She then quoted a series of reports that established the benefits of non-

²³⁴ *Statement from Representative Pat Whiting to Oregon House of Representatives on S.B. 508 Before the State and Local Environment and Land Use Committee, 1973 Leg., 57th Sess. 1-3 (Or. 1973)* (Statement of Rep. Pat Whiting, Environment & Land Use Committee).

²³⁵ *Statement from Senator Bill Stevenson to Oregon State Senate on S.B. 508 Before the State Local Government & Urban Affairs Committee, 1973 Leg., 57th Sess. 1-3 (Or. 1973)* (Statement of Senator Bill Stevenson, Member, Human Resources).

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

²³⁷ Statement of Senator Bill Stevenson, March 15, 1973.

²³⁸ *Testimony from Representative Pat Whiting to Oregon State Senate on S.B. 508 Before the State and Local Environment and Land Use Committee, 1973 Leg. 57 Sess. 4-7 (Or. 1973)* (Testimony of Rep. Pat Whiting, member, Environment & Land Use Committee).

²³⁹ *Testimony from Representative Pat Whiting to Oregon House of Representatives on S.B. 508 Before the House State and Local Environment and Land Use Committee, 1973 Leg. 57 Sess. 4-7 (Or. 1973)* (Testimony of Rep. Pat Whiting, member, Environment & Land Use Committee). (Reel 57-H-3, Accessed at Lewis and Clark, Roll #102.)

smoking areas in other parts of the nation. She highlighted the work in Washington D.C. by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and its effort to “prohibit smoking in conference rooms and parts of [the] cafeteria.”²⁴⁰ Carpio Whiting stated: “I think we should have enough responsibility and astuteness to be considerate of the air our neighbor is breathing.”²⁴¹ Here she sounded a moral, community-minded note that individuals should care for one another. Citing the Oregon Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association's findings, she further pointed out that secondhand smoke increased the heart rate and blood pressure in a non-smoker and also increased the amount of carbon monoxide in the blood.²⁴² Carpio Whiting explained that people with heart problems were especially vulnerable since smoke could “lower the oxygen intake to a dangerously low level. [...] Smoke-filled rooms often range from 20 to 80 parts per million.”²⁴³ Using non-technical language to explain a study from the University of Cincinnati, Carpio Whiting detailed how researchers linked secondhand smoke to cadmium build-up in the body, which harmed the kidneys and could cause cancer.²⁴⁴ Finally, she asserted that smokers became responsible for the “unintentional harm” to others.²⁴⁵ Carpio Whiting emphasized human interconnectedness and the fragility of human life.

Carpio Whiting’s approach was also multi-faceted. Her approach encompassed in-depth reliance on scientific evidence and included comments and letters from her constituents. In a letter from 1973, KGW-TV Producer Dick Klinger encouraged her to

²⁴⁰ Testimony of Rep. Pat Whiting, April 30, 1973.

²⁴¹ Jean Anderson, “Freshman Fights Smoking,” *Corvallis Gazette-Times*, January 22, 1973, p. 6.

²⁴² Testimony of Rep. Pat Whiting, April 30, 1973.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁵ Pat Whiting, “Cigarette Smoke and the Non-Smoker” (Unpublished manuscript, February 23, 1973), PDF. (Reel 57-H-3, Accessed at Lewis and Clark, Roll #102).

continue her efforts and get smoking “banned from all public places.”²⁴⁶ Klinger then reinforced Carpio Whiting’s stance about the hazards of smoking by stating, “No one has that right to pollute another person’s respiratory system.”²⁴⁷ As mentioned earlier in this thesis, Jean Wilkinson of Portland focused on schools and smoking. “We are remiss in our education responsibilities by allowing this kind of an example” in front of children, she wrote.²⁴⁸

Carpio Whiting was not afraid of criticism or opposing viewpoints. Instead, she felt it was necessary to have both sides in view to better educate the voters. In a handwritten memo, Zane Kemler of MacDonald Candy, a wholesale distributor of candy and tobacco products, asked that the legislature postpone SB 508 because of its current description of areas of non-smoking as “vague and unduly widespread.”²⁴⁹ Opposition to the bill was also present in the legislative body. Senator Betty Browne, Democrat from Oakridge, was a smoker who believed the bill attempted to “legislate morals” and unsuccessfully attempted to send it back to the committee.²⁵⁰ According to the *Oregonian*, Senator William Holmstrom, Democrat from Gearhart, complained that the smoking ban might impede business flow. Holmstrom asked, “Does this mean if I call my secretary into my office to dictate a letter that I can’t smoke?” Stevenson replied: “Definitely not,” reinforcing the ban’s coverage of public meeting places. Holmstrom

²⁴⁶ Letter from Dick Klinger, Host/Producer, KGW-TV to Pat Whiting, Co-sponsor, State Representative (Feb 1, 1973) (Reel 57-H-3, Accessed at Lewis and Clark, Roll #102).

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁸ Letter from Jean Wilkerson to Representative Pat Whiting, (Feb 1, 1973) (Reel 57-H-3, Accessed at Lewis and Clark, Roll #102).

²⁴⁹ Letter from Zane Kemler, Voter, Member of Tobacco Industry, to Nancie Fadeley, Representative, OR House of Representatives (April 1973) (Reel 57-H-3, Accessed at Lewis and Clark, Roll #102.)

²⁵⁰ “Bill to Outlaw Smoking in Meetings Approved,” *Statesmen Journal*, April 5, 1973, p. 1.

was not convinced and shot back: “I’m not so sure.”²⁵¹ While some legal interpretation problems existed, Governor McCall hoped that objections could be solved or “avoided through cooperation.”²⁵² Representative William Markham, a Republican from Riddle, warned that the bill was “going to inconvenience a lot more people than it’s going to help,” which represented the opposition’s main argument.²⁵³

Despite these criticisms, Governor McCall signed SB 508 into law on June 27th, 1973. Implementation, however, proved to be somewhat mixed. Bill enforcement was plagued by weak punishments and poor educational efforts, which made the law vulnerable to ridicule in the media.²⁵⁴ In retrospect, it might be easy to view SB 508 as a softball issue, but it was critical for Carpio Whiting as a responsive, caring legislator and a translator of science into everyday terms. In the long term, her effort to remove smoking from public institutions has proved more successful than SB 508’s immediate results. Currently, smoking remains prohibited in restaurants, schools, hospitals, and almost every enclosed space within the state or nation. A 2017 Gallup poll found that 57% of Americans believed in entirely smoke-free restaurants. Attitudes toward the smoking ban are also non-partisan, with equal proportions of Republicans (57%) and Democrats (59%) saying smoking in public should be illegal.²⁵⁵ Carpio Whiting was

²⁵¹ “Senate Backs Smoking Ban at Meetings,” *Oregonian*, April 5, 1973, p. 57.

²⁵² Harry Bodine, “Senate sends drink-age bill to voters; smoke ban OKd” *Oregonian* June 28, 1973, p. 19.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁴ Craig Walker, “Nobody enforces smoking ban,” *Oregonian*, Sept. 19, 1976, p. B10.

²⁵⁵ “Support for Banning Public Smoking Holding Steady” Gallop Poll, Last modified July 24, 2017 <http://news.gallup.com/poll/214373/support-banning-public-smoking-holding-steady.aspx> Accessed on Jan. 23, 2020.

proud of the work she did to ban smoking and counted this success as an “achievement in the area of public health.”²⁵⁶

Chlorofluorocarbons and the Aerosol Issue

Carpio Whiting had a solid ally Senator Bill Stevenson in the win of SB 508 of 1973; she set her ambitions higher when she took on the chlorofluorocarbon ban, which involved a sterner opposition and a body of scientific knowledge that was not accessible to the average voter. Carpio Whiting chose to create change while the science was still new on how to protect the future. She did not wait until the science of chlorofluorocarbons was wholly settled. Unlike SB 508, there were no Surgeon General’s findings as a backstop. Instead, innovative scientific experts had center stage, primarily based on predictions and warnings. For Carpio Whiting, the idea of warning, planning ahead, and her “I don’t want it here” ethos resonated in the forward-thinking orientation of SB 771. As a familiar, trusted and described below, an increasingly authoritative voice on this issue, she helped persuade the Legislature to support the bill.

Chlorofluorocarbons, or CFCs, are nontoxic, nonflammable chemicals containing atoms of carbon, chlorine, and fluorine.²⁵⁷ After World War II, CFCs came into increased production and were part of daily use items such as bug sprays, hair conditioners, and other healthcare products.²⁵⁸ By the 1970s, their usage expanded to

²⁵⁶ Pat Whiting, n.d.

²⁵⁷ James W. Elkins, "Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)," National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, April 2000, Accessed February 01, 2018, <https://www.esrl.noaa.gov/gmd/hats/publicitn/elkins/cfcs.html>.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

lubricants, refrigerants, and fire-extinguishing agents, including a chlorofluorocarbon coolant under the brand name Freon, made by DuPont.²⁵⁹

Scientists initially believed that CFCs were safe because they remained inert in the lower atmosphere until a 1974 study by two University of California chemists, Professor F. Sherwood Rowland and Dr. Mario Molina, demonstrated that CFCs posed a significant problem by increasing the decomposition rate of the stratosphere by UV radiation. The ozone depletion created harmful effects like skin cancer, deficient food production, and changes in the earth's average temperature.²⁶⁰ In 1995, Rowland and Molina shared the Nobel prize in Chemistry. However, at the time of the Oregon bill, their work was new and scientific bodies were still a few years away from measuring the earth's ozone by satellite imaging, which began in 1979. As part of her environmental reading and research, Carpio Whiting came across a study suggesting that a hole in the ozone allowed increased ultra-violet light to reach the earth and created high cancer rates in South America.²⁶¹ After reviewing other scientific reports and research from Molina and Rowland, Patricia Carpio Whiting became one of the first state legislators who recognized and created legislation to address this issue.

Highly motivated by her findings, Carpio Whiting pursued the issue further. It seemed ripe for a proactive response, an approach that fit her general approach to legislation and care for her constituents. Carpio Whiting urged legislators to take a "first step in addressing a most scientifically complex, economically profitable,

²⁵⁹ William Lanouette, "Scientists Fear Spray Cans Will Be the Death of Mankind" *National Observer*, March 15, 1974, p. 4.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁶¹ "Extra Tidbit Questions," *Extra Tidbit Questions*, June 28, 2021.

environmentally harmful, and potentially hazardous health problem.”²⁶² She also invited the key scientists to comment on the issue of banning CFCs, making a stronger statement in the push to eradicate CFCs than she did in SB 508.

Together with Senator Walt Brown and Rep. Jim Chrest, both Democrats, Carpio Whiting sponsored a bill to ban “the sale of aerosol spray cans” and propellants that contained environmentally dangerous chemicals, such as CFCs.²⁶³ In her arguments, Carpio Whiting got out in front of objections, acknowledging that no one as yet had a final answer to the issue. However, action was needed to avoid skin cancer, damage to food crops, compromise of “oxygen-producing photoplankton,” and other irreversible global climatic changes in the future.²⁶⁴ Carpio Whiting also acknowledged the short-term economic impacts that the bill might entail since the economy was still reeling from the 1973 recession.²⁶⁵ However, in her view, the long-term effects of CFCs outweighed the short-term economic adjustment. Carpio Whiting stated that without the ban, the ozone could decrease in size by as much as “40% by 2014.”²⁶⁶ Adding a protective note to those of warning, Carpio Whiting pointed out that aerosols “have been the cause of at least ten deaths” among teens who use the propellant to “get high.”²⁶⁷

²⁶² *Testimony from Representative Pat Whiting to House of Representatives on S.B. 771, Before the House Committee on Environment and Energy Committee, 1975 Leg. 58 Sess. 1-4 (Or. 1975)* (Testimony of Rep. Pat Whiting, Member, Environment & Energy Committee) (Reel 58-H-5, Accessed at Lewis and Clark, Roll #135.).

²⁶³ “Straub signs bill banning cans using fluorocarbon propellant” *Oregonian*, June 17, 1975.

²⁶⁴ *Testimony from Representative Pat Whiting to Oregon Legislature on S.B. 771, Before the House Committee on Environment and Energy Committee, 1975 Leg. 58 Sess. 1-4 (Or. 1975)* (Testimony of Rep. Pat Whiting, Member, Environment & Energy Committee) (Reel 58-H-5, Accessed at Lewis and Clark, Roll #135.).

²⁶⁵ Testimony of Rep. Pat Whiting’s, May 19, 1975.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

From the archives, it is not entirely clear how Carpio Whiting made successful contact with the leading scientists in this emerging field for her legislative agenda. There seems to have been no scholarly meeting that might have brought Rowland or Molina from California to Oregon, nor, of course, were they paid to testify.²⁶⁸ The main scientific evidence was provided by Harold Johnston, a professor of chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley, Mario Molina, then an assistant professor of chemistry at Berkeley, Robert O'Brien, assistant professor of chemistry and environmental science at Portland State University, and OSU professor of chemistry Richard Noyes, of the French Pete advocacy effort mentioned earlier in this thesis. The youthfulness of these scientists is worth noting, as is the experience with local advocacy from Dr. Noyes.

Dr. Johnson presented a published scholarly paper from this emerging field of atmospheric environmental science. His presentation in Salem, entitled "The Application of Newly Obtained Data from Studies of Supersonic Transports to the Chlorofluorocarbon Problem," supported the banning of CFCs. Johnston's work analyzed the actual chemical compounds of ozone, solar radiation, nitrogen, and their interaction within the stratosphere. He argued that propellants would break down to form "active ozone-destroying catalysts." Johnston continued that if "no other removal process exists" for these propellants, then science could expect to see a "0.5 megaton per year of pollutants released at the ground," which would have the same destructive power as a megaton of naturally occurring nitrous dioxide over a few years. In other words, Johnson

²⁶⁸ Brian McKinley. Letter to Kim Andrews. "Invited Scientists That Testify-For These Individuals, Who Pays for the Hotel Stays?" *Salem, Oregon: On file with author*, October 18, 2021.

claimed that if the ozone propellants continued, then by 1974, according to the Department of Transportation (DOT) and National Academy of Science (NAS), one could expect to see a “16 percent and 41 percent reduction [of ozone] near high traffic areas.” Also, the DOT and NAS reported that a one percent decrease in the ozone “leads to a two percent increase in skin cancer,” adding “8000 to 10,000 skin cancers a year” to already high numbers. As in Carpio Whiting’s “warning” approach to the issue, Johnston stated that the real “controversy” involved how long the world would allow chlorofluorocarbons to build up in the atmosphere.²⁶⁹

Dr. Molina testified about his study on aerosols and CFCs. He began his statement by updating his audience on his work with Dr. Rowland. “From this work, we concluded that the chlorofluoromethanes would be destroyed in the stratosphere.... As a consequence, substantial quantities of the protective ozone layer ... might be affected in the future.”²⁷⁰ Testimony from Robert O’Brien concurred with this view, concluding: “Chlorofluorocarbons should be banned for sale in Oregon because of the genuine threat.”²⁷¹ This ban represented more than a “far-flung ‘theory,’” he stated, arguing affirmatively that these compounds “will partially destroy the ozone layer.” As a local

²⁶⁹ *Testimony from Harold Johnston, Professor of Chemistry, University of California, Berkeley, to the House of Representatives on S.B. 771, Before the House Committee on Environment and Energy Committee, 1975 Leg. 58 Sess. 1-10 (Or. 1975)* (Testimony of Harold Johnston, Professor of Chemistry, University of California, Berkeley) (Reel 58-H-5, Accessed at Lewis and Clark, Roll #135.).

²⁷⁰ *Testimony from Dr. Mario Molina, Professor of Chemistry, University of California, Irvine, to the House of Representatives on S.B. 771, Before the House Committee on Environment and Energy Committee, 1975 Leg. 58 Sess. 82-84 (Or. 1975)* (Testimony of Mario Molina, Professor of Chemistry, University of California, Berkeley) (Reel 58-H-5, Accessed at Lewis and Clark, Roll #135.).

²⁷¹ *Testimony from Robert O’Brien, Professor of Chemistry, Portland State University, to the House of Representatives on S.B. 771, Before the House Committee on Environment and Energy Committee, 1975 Leg. 58 Sess. 101 (Or. 1975)* (Testimony of Robert O’Brien, Professor of Chemistry, Portland State University) (Reel 58-H-5, Accessed at Lewis and Clark, Roll #135.)

voice from Oregon, O'Brian agreed with Carpio Whiting that Oregon's SB 771 would help "lead the way" for other states and future.²⁷² Though he did not testify in person, Dr. Noyes added his voice to this consensus. Contacting his local representative, Nancie Fadeley (and Carpio Whiting) by letter, Noyes wrote: "There can be no doubt that the freons will react in the stratosphere."²⁷³ Like his fellow Oregonians, Noyes believed Oregon could be a leader if the state started the ban now, and he closed his letter by requesting that his letter be added to the official record.²⁷⁴

Carpio Whiting had a significant ally in the House Environment and Land Use Committee chair: Representative Nancie Fadeley (D). Fadeley was also a champion of SB 771. In her remarks on the bill, Carpio Whiting drew from a 1974 *Consumer Reports* article demonstrating the dangers of aerosols in the home.²⁷⁵ Carpio Whiting quoted Fadeley's article to bring the abstract issue of ozone into the home: "There are 12,000 injuries associated with aerosol use every year" since the form of the aerosol is in everyday items such as "solvents, perfumes...shaving cream...snack foods...deodorants and hairsprays." One of the first problems associated with aerosols in the home is that the "millions of tiny droplets," in the form of fluorocarbons, are smaller than blood cells and offer easy access to the body, potentially causing cardiac arrest. Asthma problems caused by those harmful substances had also led to the "sudden death of aerosol-sniffing

²⁷² *Ibid.*

²⁷³ Letter from Richard Noyes, Professor of Chemistry, University of Oregon, to Nancie Fadeley, Chairman of Environment and Energy Committee, OR State House of Representatives (May 1975) (Reel 57-H-5, Accessed at Lewis and Clark Law Library, Roll #135.).

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁵ Interestingly, Fadeley, while encouraging Carpio Whiting to promote SB 771, did not vote for the bill on the first committee vote but then continued to vote for the bill in consecutive votes until it passed into law.

youths.”²⁷⁶ The consumer angle was not the only prominent one available to advocates of the ban in the spring of 1975. The *National Observer* also discussed the debate about CFCs and their effect on the ozone and increase in skin cancer.²⁷⁷ *The New England Journal of Medicine* (NEJM) also brought a scientific study on CFCs to the nation’s attention. The *Journal* reported on a study that found that “certain pathology residents were experiencing repeated episodes of palpitations severe enough to seek” medical attention. The article also discussed a need for reduced fluorocarbons and to “reassess their needs and seek suitable substitutes.”²⁷⁸

Opponents of the Oregon bill also had a certain amount of science on their side. R. A. Rasmussen, Professor of Environmental Engineering at Washington State University, was present at the House hearing and added his testimony to the opposing side. He explained that Professors Molina and Rowland's work was largely untested, as some of their conclusions were “based on mathematical projections.”²⁷⁹ Representatives Bill Ferguson and Ted Kulongoski, Democrats, and Senator Victor Atiyeh, Republican, and other opponents to the ban believed that the science was too inconclusive and that

²⁷⁶ “Aerosols: The Medical Cost of Convenience,” *Consumer Reports*, May 1974, p. 374.

²⁷⁷ William Lanouette, “Scientists Fear Spray Cans Will Be the Death of Mankind,” *National Observer*, March 15, 1974, p. 4.

²⁷⁸ Frank Speizer, David Wegman, and A. Ramirez, “Palpitation Rates Associated with Fluorocarbon Exposure in a Hospital Setting,” *New England Journal of Medicine* 292, no. 12 (March 29, 1975): pp. 624-626.

²⁷⁹ *Testimony from Professor Rasmussen, Professor of Engineering, Washington State University, to the House of Representatives on S.B. 771, Before the House Committee on Environment and Energy Committee, 1975 Leg. 58 Sess. 82-84 (Or. 1975)* (Testimony of Professor Rasmussen, Professor of Engineering, Washington State University) (Reel 58-H-5, Accessed at Lewis and Clark, Roll #135.).

scientists needed more time and data to determine the rate of change in the ozone layer.²⁸⁰

Oregon business also expressed opposition, notably from the crucial electronics and tech industry.²⁸¹ Dick Pavek, President of Tech Spray, offered written testimony in opposition to SB 771. According to Pavek, the bill did not “include all the fluorocarbons” used by the industry. Pavek also questioned the investigative process and accused the scientists of choosing their facts. He ended his letter calling SB 771 more of a “witch hunt” than a reasoned piece of legislation.”²⁸² Igor Sobolev of the Kaiser Aluminum & Chemical Corporation took a more conciliatory approach, suggesting a postponement of SB 771. Sobolev asked for more time to conclude the research, arguing that “we do not know enough...but we are determined to find out.” Like Pavek, Sobolev felt that the evidence about CFCs was “not convincing” enough. However, he offered a more balanced tone from Pavek’s allegation of a “witch hunt” and suggested expanding the Manufacturing Chemist Association’s research to make an appropriate determination.²⁸³

At first, the local media was skeptical. Before the House committee finished its information gathering, the *Corvallis Gazette-Times* condemned the process of banning

²⁸⁰ Larry Roby, “Texans Storms Legislature to Battle Aerosol Ban,” *The Capitol Journal*, May 20, 1975, p. 11.

²⁸¹ Gordon B. Dodds, Craig Wollner, and Marshall M. Lee, *The Silicon Forest: High Tech in the Portland Area, 1945-1986* (Portland, OR: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1990), 3.

²⁸² *Testimony from Dick Pavek, President, Tech Spray, to the House of Representatives on S.B. 771, Before the House Committee on Environment and Energy Committee, 1975 Leg. 58 Sess. 1-17 (Or. 1975)* (Testimony of Dick Pavek, President, Tech Spray).

²⁸³ *Testimony from Igor Sobolev, Head of Chemistry Section, Kaiser Aluminum & Chemical Corporation, to the House of Representatives on S.B. 771, Before the House Committee on Environment and Energy Committee, 1975 Leg. 58 Sess. 1-7 (Or. 1975)* (Testimony of Igor Sobolev, Head of Chemistry Section, Kaiser Aluminum & Chemical Corporation) (Reel 58-H-5, Accessed at Lewis and Clark Law Library, Roll #135.).

CFCs by the Oregon Senate as the “irrationality of a man caught up in an emotional, vainglorious exercise knows few bounds.” While the man in this instance is a placeholder, it is ironic that the *Gazette-Times* defaulted to the male gender even when women were instrumental in the work. The paper accented “a genuine difference of opinion among reputable scientists about this threat” and minimized the lethal quality of these chemicals, lightly analogizing the loss of life as equal to the number of auto accidents on a holiday weekend. The paper also endorsed a federal as opposed to a local approach.²⁸⁴ A sample of letters to the editor echoes concerns about the lack of conclusive scientific evidence and a preference for waiting for the federal government to evaluate the effects of fluorocarbons. However, some Oregonians did support the proactive nature of SB 771.²⁸⁵

Carpio Whiting was aware of the critiques, the science, and the economics. She did not discount or reject the opposition's point of view. Instead, she embraced it and reframed it:

It will be argued by some that the House should reject S.B. 771 for lack of scientific certainty that is it needed, but for this assembly must remember that there is no proof that this legislation is not needed, and indeed there is a possibility that it is essential to preserve life as we know it.²⁸⁶

In other words, Carpio Whiting was not openly negating the opposition. Instead, she approached the ban as something that should be proactively done. Accenting a consumer

²⁸⁴ “Let's Wait for Spray Can Facts,” *Corvallis Gazette-Times*, May 7, 1975, p. 4.

²⁸⁵ “Straub Eager to Sign Ban on Some Aerosols,” *Statesman Journal*, May 28, 1975, p. 24, Jefferson, Perry, “Read editorials from the Mailbox,” *Corvallis Gazette-Times*, May 16, 1975, p. 4, “Oregon's Aerosol Ban,” *Oregonian*, May 3, 1975, p. A16, “Let's Wait for Spray Can Facts,” *Corvallis Gazette-Times*, May 7, 1975, p. 4.

²⁸⁶ Testimony of Rep. Pat Whiting's, May 19, 1975.

protection note, she argued that the state should act before “potentially harmful substances” were sold to millions of people.²⁸⁷

Carpio Whiting brought the issue “home” to her district. She gathered responses from her constituents as part of her presentation to the 1975 Oregon State Legislature. Carpio Whiting canvassed her voters and accepted letters and statements that supported SB 771. John Massoglia of Eugene, Oregon, wrote to the House Environment and Energy Committee, of which Carpio Whiting was Vice-Chairperson, stating that he supported banning the sale of aerosol sprays and further supported increasing the “scientific evidence about their destructive influence.”²⁸⁸ Elsewhere, Oregon City doctor W. Leigh Campbell wrote to the House of Representatives and offered her opinion on SB 771. Much like Carpio Whiting, Campbell admitted that the science in this matter is still new but that until the issue was “resolved one way or another, the doubt weighs in favor of having fewer aerosol cans laying around.”²⁸⁹ Together, these letters supporting SB 771 demonstrated a growing concern by the public about the health and environment of Oregon. In the legislative record, over 465 individuals signed a petition urging “the Oregon State Legislature to pass” SB 771.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁷ Testimony of Rep. Pat Whiting’s, May 19, 1975.

²⁸⁸ Letter from John Massoglia, Citizen, Eugene, Oregon to “Friends”, Members of Environment and Energy Committee, OR State House of Representatives (May 1975) (Reel 57-H-5, Accessed at Lewis and Clark Law Library, Roll #135.).

²⁸⁹ Letter from W. Leigh Campbell M.D., Medical Doctor, Oregon City Eye Clinic to House Speaker Phil Lang, Member, OR State House of Representatives (May 1975) (Reel 57-H-5, Accessed at Lewis and Clark Law Library, Roll #135.).

²⁹⁰ The petition, included in the House Legislative Record, was the result of Portland’s Grant High School students who were concerned about their environment and wanted to weigh in on the S.B. 771 debate.

Primed by recent headline-worthy conservation activities in the Pacific Northwest, the chlorofluorocarbon ban activity in Oregon caught the national media's attention. A *New York Times* article described the bill and announced that "Gov. Robert W. Straub is expected to sign it." While not a hard-hitting article, it does explain that proponents of the law were concerned about ozone depletion and how the opponents were fearful that the Oregon law "would become a model for other states."²⁹¹ Governor Straub signed SB 771 on June 16th, 1975, with Representative Pat Carpio Whiting, Representative Jim Chrest, and Senator Walt Brown in attendance.²⁹² While Carpio Whiting helped get SB 771 passed, it is worth noting that she was the only woman in the signing photo despite there being other women legislators who helped with the bill, notably Nancie Faledey.

In July, Carpio Whiting spoke about the ozone depletion that would follow the continued use of aerosols with CFCs on NBC-TV's Today Show.²⁹³ Having seen the growing media coverage of CFC bans and the passage of one in Oregon, the producers of the Today Show invited Carpio Whiting to debate DuPont's Dr. Robert Schrow.²⁹⁴ Copies of this debate remain lost to the archives, but Mr. Whiting recalled his wife's acumen as a triumph against a seasoned scientist and corporate spokesperson.²⁹⁵ From this televised debate, Carpio Whiting received several letters of praise and thanks for her television appearance. One letter from State Senator Willis Whichard of North Carolina

²⁹¹ "Anti-Aerosol Bill Passed In Oregon," *The New York Times*, May 28, 1975, p. 21.

²⁹² "Straub signs bill banning cans using fluorocarbon propellant" *Oregonian*, June 17, 1975, p. 16.

²⁹³ Francis Murphy, "Behind the mike: Today show busy around Northwest," *Oregonian*, July 29, 1975, p. B7.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁵ Oral History Interview with Vince Whiting, by Kim Andrews, SR 1092, Oregon Historical Research Library. 7-1-2019. Time Stamp 22:25

stated: “I watched you on the Today Show, and I thought you handled yourself and your topic extremely well.”²⁹⁶ The Today Show marked the growth and progress of banning CFCs in which Carpio Whiting was instrumental.

After her success in Oregon, other state legislators sought out Carpio Whiting for guidance and advice. In November, she and Dr. Molina spoke at the Washington State House of Representatives about the effects of ozone-depleting fluorocarbons.²⁹⁷ In a letter to the Social and Health Services of Washington State, Carpio Whiting wrote that she supported Washington’s ban on fluorocarbons, as represented in Washington House Bill 1055, using the same evidence as Oregon’s SB 771.²⁹⁸ While Washington House Bill 1055 did not move past the Senate, this effort demonstrated Carpio Whiting’s commitment to making a better and healthier place to live.

The following year, the National Academy of Science issued a report affirming the destructive effects of CFCs on stratospheric ozone. United States Congressional hearings reached similar conclusions and prompted other states to explore bans on CFCs in aerosol cans. The chemical industry maintained that the CFCs and stratospheric ozone data were inconclusive and did not warrant drastic action.²⁹⁹ By 1978, the United States banned the nonessential use of CFCs as an aerosol propellant.³⁰⁰ In 1985, Peter

²⁹⁶ Willis Whichard, Letter to Pat Whiting. “North Carolina General Assembly State Chamber.” Portland, Oregon: Five Oaks Museum, August 14, 1975. Box 18, Pat Whiting Collection, Courtesy of Five Oaks Museum.

²⁹⁷ Press Release (Olympia, WA: House of Representatives, 1975).

²⁹⁸ Pat Whiting. Letter to Social and Health Services Committee Washington House of Representatives. “House Bill 1055 Supportive Testimony.” Portland, Oregon: Five Oaks Museum, November 7, 1975. Box 16-18, Pat Whiting Collection, Courtesy of Five Oaks Museum

²⁹⁹ “Chlorofluorocarbons and Ozone Depletion,” American Chemical Society National Historic Chemical Landmarks. Last Modified June 2017, Accessed Feb, 2018.

<http://www.acs.org/content/acs/en/education/whatischemistry/landmarks/cfcs-ozone.html>

³⁰⁰ Peter Morrisette, “The Evolution of Policy Responses to Stratospheric Ozone Depletion,” *Natural Resources Journal* 29, no. 3 (1989): pp. 805

Morrisette, a post-doctoral fellow at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, published an article in *Nature Resource Journal* announcing that stratospheric ozone over Antarctica was reduced by 40% in September, the end of the austral winter.³⁰¹ Once the scientific establishment embraced ozone defense with the endorsement of federal authorities, local initiatives such as that pioneered by Carpio Whiting seemed to fade into the background on the national scene.

Conclusion

Patricia Whiting's keen intelligence, education, and interest in protecting nature shaped her legislative zeal to better conditions for her fellow citizens. In her framework of health, service to all, and protection of the natural environment as a democratic heritage, Carpio Whiting navigated the legislature with considerable success in the mid-1970s, notably in the "mode" of science. Carpio Whiting allied herself with the policy issues of significant personal and professional interest, took the stands she wanted, and did excellent work on behalf of her constituents. She built a legislative record that anchored her reputation as an efficient and helpful public servant and laid a foundation of proactive environmentalism for Oregon and its generations to come. Her championing of the ban on aerosols and limiting smoking in public, grounded in scientific research, should have cemented her legacy in the history of Oregon and the nation. In the conclusion of this thesis, a few remarks on the relative obscurity of her accomplishment in local and state-wide memory are provided.

³⁰¹ *Ibid*, 799.

Conclusion

This study argues that as a member of the “She Flies with her own Wings” women’s legislative cohort, the accomplishments of Patricia Carpio Whiting remain hidden in the archive and public memory for a number of reasons. First, Carpio Whiting’s efforts to construct a viable public voice went forward in very general, civic-minded terms rather than based on headline-grabbing confrontation. As a newcomer to the state, she invested time and energy in her district, comprised significantly of white and older people, and she championed service rather than self. She did not attach herself to identity politics, either feminism or anti-discrimination, which would have anchored her in a specific demographic constituency. And, by championing “all people” and “the environment,” she deflected attention from herself. Though she was comfortable and effective in scientific “modes,” she was not a scientist herself. Instead, Carpio Whiting generally operated as a translator of other peoples’ knowledge, a needed role but one easily forgotten in retrospect. Molina and Rowland went on to international fame, but the state legislator from Oregon had little long-term memory in the form of publication, prizes, named institutes, and the like, which helped establish canons of scientific knowledge and prestige in society.

Thus Carpio Whiting’s scientific voice—objective and protective rather than power-seeking—emerged as a practical and effective way to be heard outside the typical identity categories during her time in office. These contextual features of her service intersected with an Oregon environmentalism dominated by the “heroic” mode for white men with white women as helpers and supporters. In terms of placing her biography in

more significant questions of immigration, place, and belonging, it seems that Carpio Whiting's upbringing assimilated her into the "white" society by learning the English language, taking her husband's last name, and, to some extent, leaving behind any racial or ethnic identification. As a result, she may have operated in public under a tokenism that meshed with the model minority stereotype about Asians during her lifetime.

In her adult years, Carpio Whiting's distanced herself from the social norms of motherhood by marrying only and not having children. Thus motherhood or bonding with other mothers around child-rearing was not particularly strong in her community or legislative work. Instead, she offered care to older citizens in her adoptive community, whom she claimed as "our elders." In these ways, Carpio Whiting and her work slip through the dominant scholarly and journalistic narratives of female empowerment in the United States. Carpio Whiting did not actively identify as "white" or "black" in terms of her identity. She was not a "powerful white woman" like Betty Roberts or Nancy Russell, nor was she a rights-oriented woman of color like Mercedes Lopez Deiz or Avel Gordly, who had to fight for access or suffer the consequences.

Given this ambiguity, my reading of the archival records, such as photographs, work materials, her diary, and the oral history interviews I conducted with Vincent Whiting, suggests that Carpio Whiting assimilated successfully. There was little evidence of ethnic clothes, traditions, or habits found in the archives in the limited number of photographs of Carpio Whiting's early years. As this thesis pointed out in chapter one, scholars of Filipino migration suggest this lack of traditional clothes and habits was a way to reject the Filipino ethnicity and assimilate into American culture

better. Additionally, Carpio Whiting went to James Lick High School in East San Jose. On the surface, this may not look like assimilation, but high school remains a rite of passage and a lifetime inflection point for many in American society. Carpio Whiting's college years also point to her assimilation through education. Attending San Jose State, Carpio Whiting saw the college path to have a more financially stable future in a career-based life.

Carpio Whiting continued this pattern of 'fitting in' during her time as a legislator. In the legislative and newspaper photographs found in the archives, Carpio Whiting made a concerted effort to dress professionally in high necked blouses and jackets, and her hair styled nicely, which left little room for society to ridicule her or mark her as *other*. Her professional dress also demonstrated to her fellow legislators that she was there for business which fit nicely with the male-dominated Oregon legislature. Carpio Whiting's work in the House of Representatives also reproduces conventional gender norms around her care for the health and welfare of the family and those in need; in this case, the predominantly elderly white and moderate-to-conservative voter constituency of District 7 of Washington County.

As fostered in her family of origin and under the mentorship of Carl Duncan, Patricia Carpio Whiting appeared to be socialized to be a dutiful daughter: helpful, competent, directive, and authoritative (a "lieutenant") when necessary but not self-seeking. Under this framework, science was a helpful tool in her toolbox. Despite men's general dominance in science and environmentalism, Carpio Whiting got significant intellectual traction on important environmental issues through her education and self-

directed research while in office. While she framed her work as being simply a “good legislator,” the fact remains that she was able to carve out authority in science and used it to protect the residents of her district and beyond.

Notable in her approach was a non-confrontational and encompassing framework: an attempt to defend “everyone” or “the people.” Carpio Whiting took on the smoking ban and framed it as protecting the rights of non-smokers to clean air rather than challenging the status quo of smokers’ rights to use tobacco. She supported SB 771 as a proactive investment in the future, encouraging those who might be disadvantaged in the short term to think bigger. Also, while all legislators generally sought sponsorships and alliances for their bills, Carpio Whiting’s relationships deserve mention here. Her two main bills, SB 508 and SB 771, both had male co-sponsors. While she enjoyed the collegial relationships with women legislators, Carpio Whiting’s tended to create alliances with men more often. While many of these colleagues acknowledged and praised her work, the fanfare then and subsequently fell to women with more outspoken and ambitious legislative agendas, as in the “feminist” class of 1973. Patricia Carpio Whiting had some obstacles to overcome, such as being a newcomer to Oregon or being tokenized and possibly read as racially “other,” she still managed to enter mainstream power structures to create change. In this effort, she channeled her energy, alliances, and science-based analysis into an approach that reformed rather than fundamentally challenged the status quo.

After leaving office, Patricia Carpio Whiting continued to work for various charities, including board members of Loaves and Fishes and Eastmoreland General

Hospital. She also continued to be an active member of the Sierra Club until her death. Also, she often participated in her local community through task forces, such as the Washington County's Olseson Road Improvement projects, Washington Square's development and impact on the local flood plains, and Tigard City Council and Planning commission meetings. In addition to all her community service, Carpio Whiting found time to go to Lewis and Clark and earn a master's degree in public administration in 1991. She also helped form and later reside over the Metzger Citizens Participation Organization until the late 2000s. Sadly, Carpio Whiting passed away from cancer in 2010. However, only two years later, the Metzger community memorialized her work to the area and state of Oregon by having an all-purpose building named after her with a small plaque. In some ways, her legacy and reputation are victims of her success. In having succeeded in passing important bills locally, her work was complete. As these state-level environmental issues became federal ones, well-placed and authoritative "national" and "international" figures took over those issues, leaving the local, the feminine, and the small first steps behind in a global story.

The accomplishments of Patricia Carpio Whiting are a starting point for future historians of how women or people of color navigate the structures of power within a larger society. Future historians may also wish to continue to explore the influences of immigration and assimilation. By studying Carpio Whiting's story, I learned how influential immigration social mores controlled the lives of individuals and their families. I also learned how some people of color alter their personalities, lives, and education to fit into a more extensive white society. Carpio Whiting's story helped me realize that she

was an active agent in her own life and people of color are more often active agents, despite societal prejudices.

The third term of her time in the legislature is another avenue that future historians may wish to explore. Due to the closing of museums and archives under Covid-19 restrictions, I could not research this area. However, I gleaned that Carpio Whiting lost her bid for the 1979 legislative year to Norman Smith, a Republican. Endorsed by the Oregonian and with experience from the U.S. Department of Interior, Smith may have appealed to a wider variety of voters. There are a variety of bills that she endorsed and sponsored, but I could not determine if there were any environmental or women-first leanings. Future historians could also explore if she continued her “Capitol Commentaries” and “Newsletters” and how that may have affected her re-election possibilities in 1977.

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