

A-386

Interview number A-0386 in the Southern Oral History Program Collection (#4007) at The Southern Historical Collection, The Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, UNC-Chapel Hill.

Interview

with

PATRICIA STANFORD LOVE

November 7, 1995

by Joseph Mosnier

Indexed by Joseph Mosiner

The Southern Oral History Program
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

~~Original transcript on deposit at~~
~~The Southern Historical Collection~~
~~Louis Round Wilson Library~~

Citation of this interview should be as follows:
"Southern Oral History Program,
in the Southern Historical Collection Manuscripts Department,
Wilson Library,
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill"

Copyright © 1996 The University of North Carolina

SOHP Series: The North Carolina Politics Project**TAPE LOG -- HON. PATRICIA STANFORD "Trish" LOVE**

Interviewee: HON. PATRICIA ["Trish"] STANFORD LOVE
 Maiden name: Patricia Denning. Widow of Donald M. Stanford (d. 1970) and Thomas M. Hunt (d. 1989); married George Corpening Love Jr., 1992. Hence she has been known variously as Patricia "Trish" Stanford; Patricia "Trish" Stanford Hunt; and since 1992 as Patricia "Trish" Stanford Love.

Interviewer: Joseph Mosnier

Interview Date: Nov. 7, 1995

Location: Her home, Chapel Hill, NC

Tape No.: 11.7.95-PL (cassette 1 of 1)
 (approximate total length 90 minutes)

Topic: An oral history of Patricia Stanford Love, who has been an important figure in North Carolina women's political history. Born June 9, 1928, near Dunn, Harnett County, NC, Love moved as a child to Florida, where she attended public schools and graduated from Coral Gables High School in 1946. Love attended Sweet Briar College from 1946 to 1948 and UNC-Chapel Hill thereafter, graduating in 1950. She married in 1947 and, in the 1950s, had four children and taught in the public schools. In 1965 her husband, Donald M. Stanford, entered the NC House. Upon his death in 1970, Love was appointed by Gov. Bob Scott to complete her husband's third House term. In Nov. 1972, Love was elected to the first of five consecutive House terms. She earned a law degree from UNC in 1978, and thereafter joined a Chapel Hill law firm while also serving in the House. In Nov. 1981, Gov. Jim Hunt appointed Love to a judgeship on the district court bench in District 15-B, and Love won reelection to this post in 1982, 1986, and 1990, before retiring in late 1994.

Substantively, the interview was organized around several themes: a brief outline of her personal biographical history; her earliest political involvements; the evolution of women's political activity in NC, particularly during the 1970s; and certain aspects of the party dealignment-realignment during the 1970s and thereafter. As is the case with all interviews I have done for this series, every effort is made to explore, through the lens of the interviewee's particular range of experiences, the following overarching themes: (a) the dealignment/realignment in NC party politics and the Republican reemergence; (b) the evolution of African American political activity in NC since the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; (c) the evolution of women's political activity in NC in the same period; and (d) the centrality of cultural/social politics in the state's political contests and debates during these three decades.

See Also: For further discussion of Love's biographical history see the interview conducted for the Law School Oral History Project, University of North Carolina Law

Subject School (copy and transcript on deposit at the Southern Historical Collection, UNC-Chapel Hill).

Headings: North Carolina Politics & Government; Women in North Carolina Politics; North Carolina Democratic Party; North Carolina Republican Party; the Equal Rights Amendment; Abortion; Carl Stewart; Liston Ramsey; Jim Hunt.

Comments: Only text in quotation marks is verbatim; all other text is paraphrased, including the interviewer's questions.

TAPE INDEX

Counter Index Topic

[Cassette 1 of 1, Side A -- Tape No. 11.7.95-PL]

- 001 [Opening announcement.]
- 005 Brief biographical sketch: childhood and education, marriage, birth of children, college and MA, law school.
- 032 Earliest political involvements: interest in politics as a child; husband's political involvements; her work as leader of professional teaching association as a springboard to later political service, and extensive efforts to improve salaries and work rules for teachers.
- 087 President of the Orange County Democratic Women in the late 1950s and work on various local campaigns, including her husband's; death of her first husband Donald Stanford in 1970, her appointment to fill out the remainder of her husband's term, and her subsequent decision to run for the seat in 1972 when a political ally opened the way for her to run by choosing to run for the Senate.
- 136 Further details of her work on behalf of teachers: the economic vulnerability of teachers in NC; tensions related to her outspokenness while married to a member of the House.
- 164 Recollections of school desegregation in the Chapel Hill schools and her husband's commitment to keeping their children in the public schools.
- 186 How the tumult of the 1960s shifted her politics and opened her eyes to racial inequalities in education and otherwise.
- 231 Her decision to run for the House in 1972: soliciting the support of teachers with whom she had worked extensively; teachers' enthusiasm at the thought of a teacher in the legislature; Dot Cansler served as her campaign manager; pay inequality as a spur to activism.

- 297 The political culture in the NC General Assembly ca. 1972: very chivalrous views of women; "they didn't really take us [women members] seriously"; divisions among the women members; the beginnings of the Women's Legislative Caucus, which caused some worry among the men; NC Supreme Court Chief Justice Susie Sharpe's effort to work with the Women's Legislative Caucus to make rape a capital crime.
- 375 Men she particularly admired in the legislature: her respect for Carl Stewart on account of his intelligence and command of the legislative process; also for Al Adams, Herbert Hyde, and Jack Stevens; anecdotes regarding these individuals.
- 464 Gendered character of the political culture: the ERA debate in the House; condescending attitudes and treatment; her sense that most men simply did not believe women were as capable.
- 535 Her leadership in the House on ERA: close loss during an early round when a Senator abandoned his promise of support; her efforts to encourage certain women's groups not to push too aggressively for fear of scaring off potential supporters; how her reputation as a rousing speechmaker led to her appearance at an ERA fundraiser in Philadelphia.
- 624 Ramifications of her support for ERA on her personal social contacts: how women in her second husband's social circle, who were older than she, did not understand her support for ERA; disagreements with her mother over the issue.
- 657 [End of Side A.]

[Cassette 1 of 1, Side B -- Tape No. 11.7.95-PL]

- 007 Root causes of the failure of ERA in NC: "it had become such an issue" and was opposed by many groups, and many fence-sitting legislators could not be motivated to support the Act in such a heated climate.
- 022 ERA served as a great rallying point for NC women.
- 033 Other legislative efforts to improve the status of women: the Equitable Distribution of [Marital] Property Act and the fight for its passage; support of the Attorney General, Rufus Edmisten; support of House Speaker Carl Stewart and of key leaders in the Senate and details of the final legislative maneuverings.
- 118 The abortion funding issue in the early 1980s: the support of some legislators who thought funding abortions of poor women saved the state money in the long run; how male members frequently assailed her pro-choice views as incompatible with her status as a woman and a Christian.
- 150 Her work with NC Senator Kathy Sebo to identify and change gendered statutory language that worked to the disadvantage women; they generally prevailed in these efforts.

- 193 Her criticisms of certain House practices upon her resignation in 1981 to take a judgeship, most of them related to her opposition to multiple terms for the Speaker; how what she believed was an off-the-record conversation with a reporter ended up in the newspaper, including her criticisms of key House leaders.
- 275 Her assessment of how well the legislature was functioning upon her departure: perhaps the interests of the state as an entity suffered as against more parochial regional interests; examples in the cases of transportation, education, and prison funding.
- 352 Political dealignment/realignment over the last two decades: views of Republican Gov. Jim Holshouser; her belief that the GOP's gains in NC relate largely to the its ability to offer younger people a chance to advance to top leadership positions; Jim Hunt's passion for serving as governor and his willingness to shift his stances as times changed to stay in power and the wider Democratic Party ossification as older leaders began to serve multiple terms closed off chances for younger Democrats.
- 443 Her assessment of the power of cultural issues in state political affairs: the capacity of political pressure groups to influence legislators, who infrequently follow their consciences; her views of several debates with cultural aspects: educational approaches for African American students, etc.
- 557 Final thoughts: her efforts to decriminalize suicide and the tremendous support of certain legislators who had lost a family member to suicide.
- 630 [End of Side B. End of interview.]