

# abortion counseling and social change

from illegal act to medical practice

THE STORY OF THE  
CLERGY CONSULTATION SERVICE  
ON ABORTION

ARLENE CARMEN  
and HOWARD MOODY



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**Judson Press, Valley Forge**

## ABORTION COUNSELING AND SOCIAL CHANGE

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DEDICATED TO  
The congregation of Judson Church  
without whose encouragement and  
forbearance this odyssey would  
have been impossible

## Preface

There is a great deal of difference between living *in* history and recalling history. We are attempting to set down here a living record of the birth and development of an organization not for itself but for what it might teach us of our attitudes, the changing of institutions, and the reform of laws.

The sources of information for this record are simply some documents and our memories. Those who believe that the memory operates on the model of a camera with an objective lens registering each event in one's past will be sorely disappointed in what must be a faulty "machine." But those who know, as we do, that the memory is far from being an accurate historical recorder but is, rather, a censor and editor of the past, selecting events which *our* biases and prejudices covet, will understand the gaps and omissions in this chronicle. Events, causative factors, and people's names are missing not because they were unimportant but because our view of what happened in the process was not total but partial and distorted. Others may have a different perspective and might want to tell the story in a different fashion.

Our hope is that this chronicle and its interpretation may enable others, as it enabled us, to see the complexity of change, how change happens sometimes *because* of its champions but more often *in spite* of them. This is not just a book about *abortion*, but it is about people, their laws, their prejudices, and what sometimes changes them.

ARLENE CARMEN  
HOWARD MOODY

## Acknowledgments

We would like especially to pay tribute to the enormous contribution of all the clergy and lay persons who for the past five years have given time and concern to women with unwanted pregnancies. Our special thanks to Joan Muyskens, secretary of Judson Church, who many times shared our work far beyond the call of duty; and to Mrs. Harvey McClintock, whose generosity and encouragement enabled the National Clergy Consultation Service to grow and expand its services.

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# abortion counseling and social change

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This book describes the work of the Clergy Consultation Service on Abortion, which aided women seeking safe, secure, and low-cost abortions long before they were legally available anywhere in the United States. During their years of involvement in this special ministry, the clergy have been educating themselves about what is needed to change the law.

With the liberalization of the New York State abortion law, a new set of problems emerged. In the absence of a medical delivery system geared to provide low-cost, quality abortions, clergy counselors quickly moved to fill the vacuum. In the process they challenged the hospital bureaucracy, which could not handle the volume of patients seeking abortions but which nevertheless insisted that it alone was competent to do so. The clergy found that changing the law is simple compared with the complexity of implementing it and making the change meaningful.

This book has far-reaching implications for all areas of social reform. The authors have included an extensive discussion of the lessons they learned which might be valuable guides for all persons interested in social change.

Both Arlene Carmen and Howard Moody were actively involved in the work of the Clergy Consultation Service on Abortion from its beginning in 1967 and are well qualified to write the history of this vital service. Arlene Carmen earned her B.A. degree from City College of New York and is now the Administrator of Judson Memorial Church in that city. Howard Moody is the Senior Minister of the Judson Memorial Church. He is the author of *THE FOURTH MAN*. He received his education from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and Yale University Divinity School.