

Chapter Four

Spreading the News

The National Clergy Consultation Service on Abortion

The Clergy Consultation Service on Abortion began as a local organization designed to give New York City women an alternative to the enormous risks and terrible indignities of underworld abortion. The clergy hoped their efforts would increase the pressure on the state legislature to reform New York's cruel and antiquated abortion law. Yet abortion was a national concern, a point that was clearly illustrated for the New York clergy when women in need of abortion referrals called from all over the country in the Service's very first week of operation. Though a few of the clergy in the Service were members of national abortion rights organizations, the New York CCS itself did not intend to make its contribution to the abortion rights movement on a national scale. "It is important to understand," Carmen and Moody wrote, "that back in the spring of 1967 we did not establish the New York Clergy Consultation Service with any plans, hopes, or designs (conscious or unconscious) for expanding into what ultimately and accidentally became—a nationwide effort. . . ."¹

The expansion of the New York CCS into a national organization was not the clergy's original intention, but it must have become a consideration immediately after the launching of the Service. National press coverage of the New York CCS caught the attention of not only women in other states, but clergy as well. Three days after the New York CCS went public in May 1967, *The New York Times* reported, "Clergymen in many parts of the country, impressed by the establishment of an abortion service here . . . are making plans to set up similar organizations in their own areas." Moody told the *Times* that clergy had been calling from states

¹ Carmen and Moody, *Abortion Counseling*, 47.

all over the country, including Michigan, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, and California. "The interest of the clergy in other sections is very encouraging," he said. "We can't possibly take on the national problem [ourselves]." The *Times* reported the New York CCS would offer "as much help as it could" to clergy seeking to organize services in other parts of the country.²

Despite the early signs of interest by clergy in other parts of the country, the New York CCS made no apparent efforts to expand until 1968. This delay, however, was probably not a result of dawdling. Moody had a reputation for being a very careful organizer, and his writing is rife with admonitions toward activists who resolved to conquer the world in a day. In the Service's first months of operation, the clergy discovered that even local operation was a more formidable and complicated task than they had anticipated. Expansion was simply not part of the original plan.

In the preface to *Abortion Counseling and Social Change*, Carmen and Moody noted that "change happens sometimes *because* of its champions but more often *in spite* of them."³ So it was with the Clergy Consultation Service, which was not intended to be a national organization, but nevertheless became one. In retrospect, the expansion of the CCS can be broken down into three fairly distinct phases of growth. The first phase required virtually no deliberate effort by the New York CCS. It was not an expansion so much as a spin-off.

In late 1967, Rev. J. Hugh Anwyl of Los Angeles' Mount Hollywood Congregational Church came to New York City to meet with Carmen and Moody. Anwyl's visit was at the behest of the California Committee on Therapeutic Abortion (CCTA), a moderate abortion rights organization consisting of doctors, lawyers, and other professionals committed to educating the public about abortion. The CCTA asked Anwyl to establish a clergy referral service in Los Angeles and probably funded his trip to New York. Carmen and Moody shared

² "More Clerics Plan Abortion Advice," *The New York Times*, 26 May 1967, sec A.

³ Carmen and Moody, *Abortion Counseling*, preface.

their experiences with the CCS and offered Anwyl some advice. The following spring, Anwyl launched the Los Angeles Clergy Consultation Service on Problem Pregnancies. Carmen and Moody claimed that the Los Angeles CCS was "with minor modifications . . . a facsimile of the New York CCS."⁴ If the Los Angeles service began as a close copy of the New York CCS, however, it did not remain one. Though it would eventually be included on the roster of National Clergy Consultation Service chapters, it was more a cousin of the New York CCS than its progeny.⁵

The essential purpose of the Los Angeles CCS was the same as the New York CCS, but it appears that Anwyl ran his service in a more businesslike manner. According to one report, Anwyl's leadership of the Los Angeles CCS cost him his parish, leading him to devote himself to operating the referral service full-time. At some point in the Los Angeles Service's operation it established formal offices in the same Wilshire district building occupied by the Planned Parenthood-World Population offices. The Service office was staffed by a full-time receptionist, and the telephone line for women seeking assistance was answered not by an electronic answering machine with a list of available clergy, but by a live clergyman who went through a pre-counseling procedure with each woman on the telephone. Each woman was instructed to verify her pregnancy by having a pelvic examination and pregnancy test at Planned Parenthood in the same building. Once her pregnancy was confirmed, a woman would make an appointment at the CCS office to meet with a counselor and discuss her options. Unlike the New York CCS, where legal concerns required the counselling role to be limited strictly to ordained clergy, about half of the counselors in the Los Angeles CCS were graduate students in psychology and social work. The other half were a rotating group of over one hundred

⁴ *Ibid.*, 47-48.

⁵ The information about the Los Angeles CCS is compiled here from a small number of sources. There may be a great deal of materials available on the Los Angeles CCS, but the subject is so broad that it would merit a chapter or even a thesis of its own.

affiliated clergy.⁶

The Los Angeles CCS was not dependent on illegal referrals to out-of-state doctors, and this and other digressions from the New York service's procedures were possible because of California's reformed abortion law. The Therapeutic Abortion Act, which went into effect in November 1967, allowed a woman to receive a legal abortion in California provided that her pregnancy posed a risk to her physical or mental health, and that the abortion was approved by two physicians. Abortions were restricted to hospitals and could not be performed after the twentieth week of pregnancy. On the surface, the law appeared to be fairly stringent, but in practice it created a radically different climate for abortion referral. Most states only permitted abortion when there was a substantial risk to the *life* of the mother, not simply to her physical or mental health. With thousands of abortions legally performed in California each year, law enforcement officials were far less likely to prosecute clergy for making abortion referrals. Consequently, the Los Angeles CCS did not need to be decentralized, and its counselors did not need the legal protection of churches and synagogues. Anwyl further took advantage of the relaxed legal climate by arranging legal abortions for over half of the women who came to the clergy for help. Using the provision in the law that allowed an abortion in the ambiguous case of a threat to a woman's mental health, Anwyl found doctors who would routinely approve abortion applications and legally perform the procedure in local hospitals. Though violating the spirit of the law, no doctor was ever prosecuted for performing a therapeutic abortion in a hospital, no matter how dubious the claim that the woman's mental health was in danger. By 1972, the price of a legal first-trimester abortion arranged through the Los Angeles CCS was only \$150. The Service made the medical arrangements and provided counseling during and after the procedure as needed. In direct violation of New York CCS policy, the Los Angeles CCS

⁶ Lader, *Abortion II*, 50; Charles and Bonnie Remsberg, "Abortion? Two Views of One of the Most Perplexing Ethical and Practical Problems a Young Woman Can Face," *Seventeen*, September 1972.

requested a voluntary ten dollar donation for its services.⁷

Carmen and Moody were tolerant of the Los Angeles service's divergences, though Anwyl's was probably the only chapter that was afforded such independence. "Hugh ran his own shop out on the West Coast," recalls Moody. "He was semi-cooperative, but [Los Angeles] was too far [for us to supervise closely]." Anwyl's "shop" counselled over one thousand women per month, making it the largest clergy service in the country. Its autonomy did not exclude it from the national organization of clergy services, but it was not typical. The expansion of the Clergy Consultation Service in other parts of the country progressed in a very different manner.⁸

"If we were to single out the major force which led to the mushrooming of CCS groups around the country," Carmen and Moody wrote in 1973, "we would have to attribute it to a growing awareness of the number of women who needed help."⁹ This is an understatement. As noted in the previous chapter, by the spring of 1968 the New York CCS was forced to limit its services to women from in-state, since the total number of women seeking assistance from the Service were more than could be managed by three dozen clergy volunteers with other full-time jobs. The harsh reality of turning away women in need was the driving force of the next phase of CCS expansion. The New York clergy were not simply aware of the number of women needing help; they were aware that they *couldn't* help many of the women who were contacting them.

The second stage of CCS expansion was effected through friends and associates of Judson, whom Carmen called "our people." Rev. Bob Pierce, a Judson member and close friend of Moody's, recounts that in this stage of expansion, "We had a national connection to people

⁷ Charles and Bonnie Remsberg, "Abortion?"

⁸ Moody, interview, 27 November 1997; Lader, *Abortion II*, 50.

⁹ Carmen and Moody, *Abortion Counseling*, 48.

we knew and could trust. We built on who we knew."¹⁰ When it became clear in 1968 that the New York CCS could not handle the growing number of women seeking assistance, Moody called on friends in regions which were sending a heavy volume of women to New York. Moody recalls,

All these women were coming up from Philadelphia, so we said, "Jesus, this shouldn't be. Where are the ministers down there?" So I called up Alan Hinand in Wayne, Pennsylvania and said, "Look Al, all these women coming up from Philadelphia is really a shame. You ought to do something about that!" I leaned on him and he got organized.¹¹

Moody held similar conversations with ministers in several other states, and his goading quickly began to bear fruit. "Although we encouraged them [clergy friends in other states] to develop local Clergy Services, we never consciously put undue pressure on them," wrote Moody with Carmen. What constitutes "undue" pressure is not exactly clear. "Howard [Moody] called me and said, 'This is ridiculous, starting in about two months I'm going to tell these [Pennsylvania] women to call you!'" recalls Hinand with a laugh. "That was an incentive!" Moody's peers speak of him with such respect and admiration that a call to action from him may have been very difficult to ignore. By the same token, his excellent reputation as an activist and leader undoubtedly encouraged his clergy friends to follow his lead. Charles Straut, the leader of the New Jersey CCS, once remarked, "We just kind of put our trust in Howard Moody and God, in that order."¹²

In the late spring of 1968, clergy referral services began to form in Pennsylvania and New

¹⁰ Pierce, interview.

¹¹ Moody, interview, 13 October 1997.

¹² Carmen and Moody, *Abortion Counseling and Social Change*, 50; Alan Hinand, telephone interview by author, tape recording, 16 February 1998; Straut is quoted in Gorney, "Once Upon a Time in America."

Jersey. Unlike the Los Angeles CCS, these new clergy services were not spin-offs from the New York CCS, but more closely affiliated partner organizations. The formation of the Pennsylvania CCS is an excellent example of this second phase of expansion. Pressured by conversations with Moody, Hinand began to organize the Pennsylvania CCS with the help of a women's ecumenical group that provided a catalyst. The women's group had been heavily involved in the civil rights movement. Hinand was a member of the organization, which was led in part by Barbara Krassner of King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. Krassner was also a friend of Moody's, and her husband, Dr. David Krassner, had been the first substantial benefactor of the New York CCS prior to its launching in 1967. "They gathered a group of clergy together and I was among them," remembers Hinand. "They asked us if we would consider actually starting a Clergy Consultation Service fashioned after the one in New York City. . . . The actual prompting of women who said, 'We'll help you set it up' made it very easy to do." Hinand pulled together a group of ten clergy from the ecumenical group and other activist groups he was associated with in North Philadelphia, and in the summer of 1968 they began a training process very similar to the one employed by the New York CCS in 1967. Women from the group worked with the clergy each step of the way. They performed a role similar to Carmen's by seeking out abortionists and screening their practices and credentials. In November 1968, the Pennsylvania Clergy Consultation Service on Problem Pregnancies was formally launched. The *Philadelphia Enquirer* carried a story remarkably similar to the *New York Times* piece that announced the launching of the New York CCS eighteen months before. Hinand claims that, in the development and launching of the Pennsylvania CCS, "the New York CCS was the model all the way through."¹³

While the Pennsylvania Clergy Consultation Service geared up for its public launching, a New Jersey Clergy Consultation Service was also in the works. The second phase of clergy service expansion was not limited to these formal organizations, however. In April 1968,

¹³ Hinand, interview.

Moody made an arrangement with Rev. Henry Ramsey in Boston. Ramsey would personally counsel the Massachusetts women whom the New York CCS was forced to turn away. A similar arrangement was made with a Connecticut minister. By 1970, both states would have formal clergy services, but in the interim Moody called on his friends to fill the void. Not all of them were immediately moved to act. In early 1968, Moody approached Rev. Spencer Parsons, an old friend and Dean of the Rockefeller Chapel at the University of Chicago. Moody told Parsons, "You've really got to get involved in this abortion thing." Parsons had been involved in the birth control fight in Massachusetts in the 1950s, and by 1968 he had co-founded the Illinois Citizens for the Medical Control of Abortion. Though he respected Moody's clergy referral efforts, he had no experience with abortion referral himself and he limited his involvement with the CCS to sending women with problem pregnancies to Moody in New York. A year would pass before Moody's prodding inspired Parsons to develop a clergy referral service in Chicago.¹⁴

When the New Jersey and Pennsylvania Clergy Consultation Services formally opened in November 1968, a new organization was launched with them: the National Clergy Consultation Service on Abortion. During the summer of 1968, Carmen and Moody decided to form a paper organization that would serve as an umbrella group for the clergy referral services in development across the country. The goal of the National CCS would be to spread the model provided by the New York CCS to other cities and states. "We had a model, a paradigm here in this city of what we'd done and how we did it," explains Moody. "We'd just pass that on." Though the paradigm was remarkably simple, passing it on was not. Carmen and Moody were so paranoid about legal threats that they tried to avoid committing any details of their operation to writing. Distributing a handbook on how to operate a clergy referral service was out of the question. Instead, Moody had to travel to wherever a new referral service was in the

¹⁴ Memorandum by Howard Moody, 29 April 1968, CCS Archive; Laura Kaplan, *The Story of Jane*, 61-62.

works and teach the CCS's methods and principles in person. The National CCS was established primarily to pay for Moody's sojourns.¹⁵

By November 1968, the National CCS had received seed grants totalling possibly as much as ten thousand dollars from Stewart Mott, the heir to the fortune of General Motors, and Mrs. Harvey McClintock.¹⁶ This was more than enough money to launch the National CCS, since travel expenses were virtually its only cost. Judson Memorial Church was already paying the salaries of Carmen and Moody and the office staff, and it would bear the increased administrative burden of the National CCS as well. "I resisted the idea of having a [paid] national coordinator," remembers Moody. "Then you get empire building and institution building. When you no longer need the institution, you have to justify it to keep all your employees and all that." Such a self-serving, self-perpetuating organization was unacceptable to Carmen and Moody, who felt that clergy counselling should only be an interim step in the campaign for abortion rights. The letterhead of the National CCS listed Judson Church's address and phone number, but no changes were made in the Judson office to convert it into national headquarters. "I was the coordinator," recalls Moody, "but nothing was ever very official in this organization. The looseness of National was what made it very difficult for people to get you."¹⁷

The affiliation between local clergy services and the National CCS was loose and

¹⁵ Moody, interview, 27 November 1997; Carmen and Moody, *Abortion Counseling*, 51.

¹⁶ In *Abortion Counseling*, Carmen and Moody mention a grant of half this size but do not identify the donor. They do, however, thank Mrs. Harvey McClintock in their acknowledgements for "generosity and encouragement" that allowed them "to grow and expand." Mott is identified as donating \$10,000 for the start of the National CCS in Brownmiller, "Abortion Counseling: Service Beyond Sermons." Moody more recently says that they didn't need a grant to go national, but this conflicts with correspondence from 1968. Moody agrees that Mott gave them a grant at some time, but does not recall when or how much.

¹⁷ Both quotes are from Moody, interview, 27 November 1997; Carmen and Moody, *Abortion Counseling*, 52.

voluntary, but member clergy services were strictly required to adhere to three minimum requirements. The first was that women were not to be charged any kind of fee for counseling or referral. The essential purpose of this proscription was two-fold. First, if they levied a fee, the clergy would endanger their legal protection, which relied upon the sanctity and confidentiality of the relationship between a clergyman and his conferee. Charging women for abortion counseling would make it difficult for clergy to argue in court that their role was strictly pastoral. Second, exacting a fee for assisting women undermined one of the primary purposes of the CCS, which was to help women in need. "I do not believe that any counseling that's part of the ministry of the church ought to be paid for by the recipient except voluntarily," wrote Moody. If the clergy charged for their services, even if their real purpose was to improve the availability of counseling, they would be preying upon women's misfortunes and even publicly perceived as selling indulgences.¹⁸ The official penalty for violation of this rule was expulsion from the National CCS, and over time several individual counselors who asked women for payment were censured accordingly. Except for the Los Angeles CCS, which was a member of the National CCS but beyond Carmen and Moody's reach, no CCS ever charged women for referrals. When the Detroit Area Counseling Service considered charging a fee in 1971, Moody wrote to them an impassioned plea, "It is my hope that you will look for other alternatives to charging fees to women on the grounds that I think it is inimical to the work done by the Clergy Services and the reputation they have received. Thirty other Services have been carrying on under the same pressures and needs . . . but none have seen fit to violate this principle."¹⁹

The second requirement for membership in the National CCS was that the clergy perform their counseling in person. This regulation was not rigorously enforced, but few services

¹⁸ Howard Moody to Detroit Area Clergy Counseling Service, 27 September 1971, CCS Archive.

¹⁹ Moody to Detroit Area CCS, 27 September 1971.

deviated from a one-on-one, face-to-face counseling format.²⁰

The third regulation was the most important and the most difficult to enforce: "No Clergy Service affiliated with National would have among its members any counselors who referred to non-approved resources." There were several reasons for this edict, but the most important one was safety. The experience of the New York CCS had clearly shown that allowing clergy to refer to doctors who had not been thoroughly checked out could be disastrous. The increasing numbers of clergy and doctors involved in the Service created a greater risk of mishap, and Carmen and Moody were uncompromising, insisting that clergy stick to the rules. Moody explains, "A clergy would call [Arlene Carmen] and say, 'Look we found this doctor and we don't know if he has credentials or anything.' And we'd say, 'No. If you use your own doctors, . . . that's it, we're out of it.'" Carmen had a reputation for being extremely hard-nosed, though in reality she was usually implementing decisions that she and Moody had made jointly. "She'd take a lot of shit [from disgruntled clergy]," remembers Moody, "but everybody was very respectful because she'd already put her life on the line in so many ways." Alan Hinand remembered that Carmen would have a fit when clergy referred to unapproved resources. But, he explains, "We all would [have a fit], because we really needed to deal with doctors who were both sympathetic and knew what they were doing. Most of the ministers were from hierarchical church structures, so they paid attention [to orders]."²¹

If the third regulation was violated on a larger scale than isolated activities by individual clergy counselors, Carmen and Moody never heard about it. Carmen kept a watchful eye on minor infractions, but clergy tended to resort to unapproved resources only when the approved resources were overloaded, too expensive, or too far away to be used in a particular case. When a clergyman broke the rules, Carmen and Moody would assess the situation and then usually

²⁰ Carmen and Moody, *Abortion Counseling*, 53.

²¹ Carmen and Moody, *Abortion Counseling*, 53; Moody, interview, 27 November 1997; Hinand, interview.

ask the local chapter coordinator to take disciplinary action. Some chapters expelled members for refusing to comply with regulations, while others would limit discipline to a verbal rebuke or the omission of the offending clergyman's name from the duty roster. The policy of the New York CCS was to make expulsion judgements by group vote, but this threat was never really carried out. In the single case where the ejection of a clergy member actually came to a vote, the offending party was ambivalent about his counseling and retired from the group by mutual accord.²²

The three regulations for clergy participating in the National CCS were essential to the operation, but they were never formally recorded or distributed. In the spring of 1969, the leaders of a dozen clergy services in operation or in planning met at Judson Memorial Church. "We came together that first time to hammer out a policy concerning the relationship between National CCS and local groups, and the relationship of local groups to one another," wrote Carmen and Moody. The clergy arrived at a compact in the same way that the New York clergy had agreed on their own principles in 1967: by discussion and consensus, with nothing written down. By the end of the meeting, however, the relationship between local clergy services was neither formalized nor "clearly articulated."²³ The agreed relationship between the National CCS and local clergy services was later recorded by Carmen and Moody:

National CCS would be a loose federation of Clergy Services, each with local autonomy. While National might on occasion make recommendations, all final policy decisions would be made locally. National would be a provider and enabler, and at times a persuader, but never a dictator of policies.²⁴

²² Moody, telephone conversation, 21 February 1998; Carmen and Moody, *Abortion Counseling*, 55

²³ Carmen and Moody, *Abortion Counseling*, 52, 55, 52.

²⁴ Carmen and Moody, *Abortion Counseling*, 52.

This may be a somewhat euphemistic description of National CCS decision-making. It did not dictate policy because local services only cooperated voluntarily, but the National CCS wasn't a very democratic organization. Most of the decisions were made in the front office at Judson. "We ran a tight ship," explained Moody. "There are people out there . . . [who] will say, 'They were a bunch of dictators there [at Judson].'" Nevertheless, the clergy in the National CCS apparently held a strong respect for Carmen and Moody's leadership, and they understood the need for tough policies in an organization that was illegal in most of the states where it operated.²⁵

The growth of the National CCS in 1969 is difficult to ascertain. Carmen and Moody did not record any details about national expansion after the launching of the Pennsylvania and New Jersey services in November 1968. There are no surviving documents or correspondence in the Clergy Consultation Service Archives that shed any light on the launchings of other services in 1969. It is reasonable to assume, however, that expansion in 1969 was a continuation of the second phase of expansion begun in 1968. For example, according to Rev. Richard Unsworth of Smith College, a clergy service in Massachusetts began to operate informally in late 1968 and was formally launched in 1969. "We got involved because there were people who were . . . calling New York from Boston and it was stupid to be going to New York when all the counseling could be done right here," remembers Unsworth. "So we picked up the thread and sort of replicated the system." The Massachusetts service followed the standard pattern of expansion: associates of Moody privately began referrals and then formalized their activities according to the paradigm established by the New York CCS. Spencer Parsons followed a similar course in Chicago in 1969. Finally persuaded by Moody to get involved, Parsons and several of his friends performed some five hundred referrals in 1969 before publicly announcing the Chicago CCS in an article in the *Chicago Sun Times* on December 14. Other services launched

²⁵ Moody interview, 27 November 1998.

or developing in 1969 probably included Connecticut, Ohio, Michigan, Florida, and North Carolina.²⁶

The benefits of working with a national organization accrued very quickly for the local services. The National CCS partially saved developing services from the arduous process of finding medical resources for abortions by providing a list of approved doctors throughout the country and in London, Puerto Rico, and Tokyo. An emerging referral service could use National's list of resources until it developed approved abortion sources of its own. Furthermore, the National CCS kept a negative list of abortionists who had either been investigated and refused or used and then dropped for inappropriate conduct. A listing of which services used which resources was also kept by the National CCS. This prevented local services from inadvertently overlapping and potentially overusing a particular doctor in a way that might sacrifice the quality of his service. Doctors were frequently used by more than one service, but each additional service had to ask permission of the service that found the resource before making referrals. There was apparently no National CCS policy that clergy services only make referrals across state lines, but the success of the New York CCS in avoiding legal trouble by adhering to this strategy probably encouraged other services to follow suit. Exchanges between local clergy services became common. For example, the New York CCS had information about New York resources that it would not use because of the legal risk of in-state referrals, but this information was passed on to the Pennsylvania CCS, which could make use of it. Likewise, the Pennsylvania CCS found safe abortion resources in Philadelphia that could be used by the New York CCS.²⁷

²⁶ Richard Unsworth, interview by author, tape recording, Northampton, Mass., 30 October 1997; "Clergy Consultation Service on Abortion Newsletter," Vol. 1, No. 1, February 1970, CCS Archive. Further information about expansion of the Service in 1969 could be gathered by searching for members of each of the chapters and by combing through regional newspapers in search of announcement articles. This exhausting task was unfortunately beyond the scope of this thesis.

²⁷ Carmen and Moody, *Abortion Counseling*, 51; Hinand, interview.

By 1970, however, clergy referral services throughout the United States were making abortion referrals to abortion providers within their states. This change in tactics was made possible by weak or reformed abortion laws in many states and by the growing sympathy of the medical community. Like the Los Angeles CCS, the Pennsylvania CCS took advantage of the "danger to mental health" provision in Pennsylvania's abortion law, referring eighty percent of the women it counseled for abortions in Philadelphia hospitals. "We had a process whereby we had a number of therapists who would meet with a woman for about fifteen minutes and give her a recommendation for an abortion," remembers Alan Hinand. The Chicago CCS found a thoracic surgeon who agreed to do four abortions in a Chicago hotel every Wednesday night. The Service was very discrete about using this doctor, who was an elder at an area Presbyterian Church.²⁸

The risks of operating a larger national organization also made themselves felt almost immediately. In the spring of 1969, Rev. Bob Hare of the Cleveland CCS was arrested after a woman he referred to Massachusetts physician Pierre Brunelle experienced complications. On her drive to the airfield, the woman suffered severe cramping and sought assistance. "In one of those strange quirks of fate, the [first] building [she came to] happened to be the headquarters of the highway patrol," wrote Carmen and Moody. The police refused to provide medical assistance until the woman reported the details of her abortion. It is not clear whether the police obtained Hare's name from the testimony of the woman or through a search of Brunelle's office, but Hare was indicted by a grand jury in Middlesex County, Massachusetts on the charge of aiding and abetting criminal abortion. "The ironic fact is that I've never met Dr. Brunelle, and have never been in the state of Massachusetts in my life," noted Hare. The National CCS made efforts to raise money for Hare's legal counsel, and the Presbytery of Cleveland came to his defense. "Any further prosecution in the case at hand should be carried out against the

²⁸ National CCS Newsletter, February 1970; Hinand, interview; Spencer Parsons, telephone interview by author, tape recording, 21 February 1998.

Presbytery also," stated a resolution by the Presbytery. "We further affirm that Mr. Hare was acting on the basis of his ordination vows and confessional position of the church." Almost a year passed before Hare had his day in court. His attorney argued Hare's right to freedom of speech and right to ministerial counseling had been violated, and on March 27, 1970, the charges were dismissed.²⁹

A far more threatening case arose in January 1970. On the recommendation of the Michigan CCS, the Chicago CCS had been making referrals to a Detroit physician named Dr. Jesse Ketchum. Unbeknownst to either service, Ketchum was under surveillance by the Detroit Police Department. Nine days after the Chicago CCS went public, an undercover police detective made an appointment to see Rabbi Max Ticktin, director of Hillel at the University of Chicago. Posing as a pregnant woman, the detective asked Ticktin for a local referral, and he gave her Dr. Ketchum's name. The Detroit police arrested Ketchum and his wife at the motel where he was performing abortions. Ticktin was travelling in Israel when Chicago police raided his office in cooperation with the Detroit police. His files were confiscated. The prosecutor in the case, Thomas F. Plunkett, made headlines by announcing he had uncovered an "international system of abortion referrals involving many clergymen and many doctors around the nation."³⁰ Spencer Parsons rushed to Ketchum's defense. He told Ketchum's attorney, "Don't go try to defend Dr. Ketchum on some technical ground. Go after the law itself, go after the unconstitutionality of the law in Michigan which is a violation of doctors' rights, of patients' rights, of women's rights, and the right of clergy to counsel." When the Ketchum trial closed on Good Friday, the judge declared the Michigan law unconstitutional. "He was not a prominent judge," remembers Spencer Parsons, "but it did make a difference in Michigan. So Ketchum was released and we went back to working with him." The case increased support for the clergy

²⁹ Lader, *Abortion II*, 75; Carmen and Moody, *Abortion Counseling*, 55.

³⁰ Lader, *Abortion II*, 76; "Abortion Counseling in Legal Trouble," *The Christian Century*, 21 Jan 1970; Plunkett is quoted in Lader, *Abortion II*, 77.

service and for the repeal of Michigan's abortion law, and Ticktin returned to the University of Chicago to find himself a local hero. Plunkett decided not to seek his extradition. "[Policies] do not call for the expenditure of funds to underwrite extraditions in this type of case," explained Plunkett. "The reason why Rabbi Ticktin was charged to begin with, even though we know he acted in the highest humanitarian tradition, was that it was an offense and it should be treated as an offense. If it is a wrong law, it should be changed." Moody noted, "Parsons['] . . . public statements undoubtedly increased the reluctance of the authorities to engage in open warfare with the church."³¹

The legal threats to the Service did not in any way curtail the spread of the clergy referral concept. By 1970, what had started as a local operation had expanded into a national movement. The third phase of the expansion of the National CCS began near the end of 1969 and overlapped with the end of the second phase. It was marked, however, by a critical change in character. The third phase of CCS expansion was not the product of Moody's goading and pressuring to the same extent as the earlier the expansion, and the new clergy services were not necessarily founded by Moody's friends and associates. Instead, the new services were founded through the expanding network of clergy involved in the growing abortion rights movement. Clergy referral had grown beyond Moody and his compatriots.

The proliferation of clergy services across the country increased rapidly. In March 1970, there were eleven clergy services with eight more in development. By November of the same year, there were twenty-six referral services in operation in twenty states, with "others on the verge of opening." In June, the National CCS annual conference was held in Chicago with a far greater number of participants than the dozen ministers who met in New York in 1969. By April of 1971, the National CCS roster included thirty-four official chapters in twenty-five different

³¹ Parsons, interview; Plunkett and Moody are quoted in National CCS Newsletter, February 1970; Lader, *Abortion II*, 76.

states.³² That spring, leaders of the local clergy services held their annual conference in New York. They estimated the number of clergy involved in the National CCS to be approximately two thousand,³³ and the number of national referrals were "conservatively estimated at between 125,000 and 150,000 annually."³⁴ The national conference of 1971 would be the last one held in a single location; by 1972 the group had grown so large that three regional meetings were held instead.

As noted above, the third phase of clergy expansion was inspired by Moody and the New York CCS, but Moody's personal encouragement was no longer the primary source of new services. Instead, clergymen who were aware of the work of clergy services around the country sought to start their own chapters. Though they were less closely-related to the New York CCS,

³² National Clergy Consultation Service Newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 2., November, 1970, CCS Archive; National Clergy Consultation Service Roster, April, 1971, CCS Archive.

³³ Herein lies a great mystery. These figures are reported by Carmen and Moody, who by Moody's admission, frequently made estimates that were "not scientific." How they arrived at this figure is unclear. There is no information in the CCS Archive about the number of counselors in each CCS chapter. Other sources suggest that N.Y., Philadelphia, and Chicago combined for over a hundred, the Michigan Service had over three hundred, and the Los Angeles Service had over a hundred and possibly more. Still it is difficult to get this figure to add up to 2,000, or fifty-nine counselors per local chapter. The figure of 1,400 is cited in some other sources, but it appears to have no better basis than the 2,000 figure. I believe that while 2,000 may be an overestimate in 1971, it is probably a fair estimate for the total number of clergy involved over the entire life-span of the National CCS. The source of the 2,000 figure is the National Clergy Consultation Service Newsletter, Vol. 2, No. 1, July, 1971.

³⁴ This figure is also a source of much controversy. Secondary sources and news accounts frequently credit the CCS with 100,000 or 200,000 referrals *total*. These are definitely underestimates. Tom Davis of Planned Parenthood has benignly given this underestimate to more than one writer, and once on the record these underestimates are hard to dispel. There may be credence in Moody's estimate of 125,000 annual referrals. Women's Services (see Chapter Five) performed over 30,000 abortions annually. The Los Angeles Service was referring upwards of 15,000 women a year to its own resources. From what I know of other major abortion centers in other states and the increase in in-state, semi-legal "therapeutic" abortions, it is easily possible that the 45,000 in New York and California was equalled by the other states. Despite Moody's claim that 125,000 to 150,000 annually is a "conservative" estimate, my conservative estimate is 100,000 referrals per year in 1970-1972, and an average of around half that number annually in 1968 and 1969. Thus, I would estimate a total of 350,000 to 450,000 *total* clergy referrals between June 1967 and December 1972.

most of the clergy services that started in late 1969 and onward still bore the indelible mark of Carmen, Moody, and the group of New York clergy who developed the CCS model. The reason for this was the direct involvement of the National CCS in the founding of new chapters. Moody or an associate travelled to any state where clergy intended to launch a new service. An advertisement in the end of the semi-annual National CCS newsletter read: "Any clergy wanting to organize counseling services in their localities are encouraged to do so. The National Clergy Consultation Service will be happy to send a consultant to meet with any local group without charge." There is no record of who was sent as a consultant to each new referral service, but is likely that Moody served as ambassador in many of the cases. "I wish I could be there for your next meeting," he wrote to the Detroit clergy in 1971, "but [I] will be organizing new Services in Oklahoma and Kansas at that time." When Moody was unavailable to meet with a group forming a new service, he sent a close associate in his stead. "Howard Moody sent me down to South Carolina," remembers Alan Hinand, "and I started the CCS down there." In a case that was probably typical of the third phase of clergy service expansion, Hinand instructed fourteen clergymen in Greenville who had contacted the National CCS for assistance in starting a state chapter. He met with them in the early summer of 1970, and the South Carolina CCS was publicly launched several months later, assumedly following the training period that was characteristic of clergy referral services.³⁵

The reasons behind the rapid proliferation of the national clergy referral movement are really two-fold. In one sense, clergy referral developed out of the vacuum created by the failure of the legal and medical communities to address the horrors and indignities of underworld abortion. When Moody and his cadre began making referrals in 1967, as noted in Chapter One, only a handful of individuals were publicly challenging the laws and medical guidelines that drove a million women a year to seek illegal abortions at great personal and legal risk. The

³⁵ National CCS Newsletter, November 1970; Moody to Detroit Area Clergy Counseling Service, 27 September 1971; Hinand interview.

sociologist Nanette Davis, who studied the clergy referral service in Michigan, argued that the “emergence of a clergy problem-pregnancy counseling service was one outcome of . . . ‘structural contradictions.’ These are shifts in public values and morality that give rise to new social demands in a constraining environment.”³⁶ When events of the early 1960s like the Finkbine case and the rubella epidemic gave the abortion crisis greater public exposure, the “new social demand” was for an amelioration of the existing constraints on abortion. Clergy came into the abortion rights movement because the medical community and legislatures across the nation failed to act. The clergy filled the vacuum.

On the other hand, the network itself, the massive group of clergy working together to serve as an institution of social change, did not arise out of a vacuum at all. The proliferation of the National CCS, first through associates of Moody and then through groups across the country, was not a happy accident. Instead, the clergy referral movement was rooted in a long tradition of Protestant activism. Moreover, the growth of clergy referral from local social action to national movement may be attributed to a powerful clergy movement of the preceding decade: civil rights. The connection was not usually direct (though there are some cases in which groups went directly from working for civil rights to working for abortion rights, like the women’s ecumenical group that spawned the Philadelphia CCS), but it is definitely discernible. To properly understand the clergy referral movement in this historical context, it is first necessary to consider the factors that motivated the clergy to enter the abortion rights movement.

There were over two thousand clergy involved in the National CCS, and each brought his own personal reasons for joining the movement. Through all these different motivations, however, three basic concerns were repeated time and time again and may be distilled from the multitude. The distinctions are artificial, since each clergy had multiple reasons for participating

³⁶ Davis, *From Crime to Choice*, 139.

and the reasons overlapped, but for clarity's sake it is useful to divide them.

The first impetus for the clergy referral movement was to fulfill a need. Davis writes, "Almost all of the clergy involved believed that the Service was indispensable. Perception of this 'need' entailed a complex set of religious obligations. . . ." Davis is correct in asserting that the clergymen believed their work was indispensable, but the clergy's perception of a "need" did not require a deep theological basis. The clergy perceived the Service as indispensable largely because, before Planned Parenthood and Women's Liberation offered significant abortion services, and before the medical and legislative climate on abortion began to warm, the CCS provided the best or *only* abortion option for hundreds of thousands of women.

A few of the clergy entered the abortion rights movement because of an experience with abortion in their ministry. For example, Finley Schaefer was approached for help by a woman and her daughter in his congregation after the daughter had been raped by her father. "I was brokenhearted," remembered Schaefer. "This was clearly a situation where the need to terminate a pregnancy was both immediate and morally justified. But it was just clear that I could be of no assistance." Moody's commitment to the abortion rights movement began with his first nearly disastrous attempt to help a woman find a safe, illegal abortion. In cases like these, the "need" for abortion reform was essentially pastoral; as long as abortion was unsafe and illegal, ministers could not assist the women who came to them for help.³⁷

Most of the clergy, however, envisioned the "need" for a solution to the abortion crisis in a much broader sense than providing pastoral care for the women who approached them. Once they became aware of the evils of underworld abortion, the clergy hoped to meet the needs of society at large. It is important to note that the first step in recognizing this need, both on a micro and macro level, was to accept the morality of abortion. "Abortion itself is something you have to make your mind up about," explains Rev. Unsworth. Each clergyman had to make some

³⁷ Finley Schaefer to supporters of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, January 1998.

decision on a personal and theological level about the morality of abortion. The Protestant church did not embrace the Catholic doctrine of instant animation, and though some denominations had historically condemned abortion, they did not employ the Catholic Church's rhetoric of infanticide. The New York CCS statement of purpose asserted, "We affirm there is a period during gestation when, although there may be *embryo* life in the fetus, there is no living *child* upon whom the crime of murder can be committed." The theological basis for this position was complicated. Unlike an issue like male homosexuality, whose express proscription in Scripture is dismissed by many faiths as anachronistic, abortion is not clearly prohibited in the Bible. Instead, both sides of the abortion debate argue over the correct interpretation of the several veiled or metaphorical references to abortion, often using the same passages to justify opposing positions. Thus, as Unsworth suggests, Protestant clergy simply had to make up their mind about abortion.³⁸

Furthermore, many clergy supported abortion along a sort of moral continuum. Clergy who approved of abortion before quickening did not necessarily believe abortion should be allowed in the later part of the pregnancy. "When you get to late abortions, I have a problem but so does everyone else," Moody admitted to a reporter. "On the continuum line, from conception to birth, everyone becomes antiabortion."³⁹

The Reform Jewish tradition held a similar theological viewpoint based largely on the same Scripture. Unlike the Christian church, however, non-Orthodox Jewish sects did not have a history of condemning abortion. "It's quite clear [that] both the Bible and the Rabbinic material . . . allow for abortion and are also pro-choice!" explains Rabbi Balfour Brickner of the

³⁸ Unsworth, interview; "Clergy Statement on Abortion Law Reform and Consultation Service on Abortion," CCS Archive.

³⁹ Gorney, "Once Upon a Time in America." When pressed on this issue by other reporters, Moody has vowed, "If I'm pushed on it religiously, [I say] the breath of life is when life begins." Howard Moody, interview by Barbara Whitaker, (New York) *Newsday*, 13 July 1989.

New York CCS. "We've got a Biblical and rabbinic tradition which for two thousand years has recognized women's rights and reproductive rights."⁴⁰

Once the clergy had accepted abortion as essentially moral, they were free to challenge the morality of the legal system that forced women to turn to the dangerous abortion underworld. "Belief in the sanctity of human life certainly demands helpfulness and sympathy to women in trouble and concern for living children, many of whom today, are deprived of their mothers, who die following self-induced abortions or those performed under sub-medical standards," argued the CCS's statement of purpose. The clergy embarked on a social crusade to save women from the inadequacies of the medical system and abortion legislation that put their lives in danger. Many of the clergy articulated this crusade as fulfilling women's needs. "There was a very clear and obvious need that had to be filled," remembers Brickner. "There was no reason for young women not to be able to get safe abortions." Spencer Parsons recalls that he was moved by "the simple plight of women." When helping women who sought abortions became a question of meeting human needs instead of a question of dubious morality, many clergy recognized a clear call to action. "I just felt [helping women] *was* necessary," remembered Lyle Guttu. "I obviously wasn't alone. The need did not appear to be an ambiguous thing." Unsworth recognized a similar call. "When you're called on, when someone . . . says 'we need you,' you go. That's a no-brainer. You figure out how to give them help," he explained. When the New York CCS was originally created, the pastoral requirement to assist women in need was a focal point of their discussion. "Howard [Moody] and Arlene [Carmen] had a vision, they saw a need," remembered Bob Pierce. "They articulated that need in the context of faith."⁴¹

Another common way for clergy to articulate their motivation for entering the abortion

⁴⁰ Balfour Brickner, interview by author, tape recording, New York, NY, 18 November 1997.

⁴¹ "CCS Statement of Purpose," May 1967; Brickner, interview; Parsons, interview; Lyle Guttu, telephone interview by author, notes, 13 February 1998; Unsworth, interview; Pierce, interview.

rights movement was to consider abortion an issue of justice. "We were disposed to take a really hard look at public justice issues in general," remembers Unsworth. The justice argument was generally articulated in two ways. The first was by arguing that abortion restrictions were legally unjust, since they turned a justifiable medical procedure into a crime and labelled women seeking it as criminals. The clergy considered abortion laws to be archaic and dangerous to women. In an article published in 1967, Moody argued that Protestant attempts to enforce morality were the cause for the nineteenth-century abortion legislation that was still on the books in the 1960s. "As . . . Protestants who are basically responsible for the beginnings of the law as it now stands," he wrote, "we have a theological and moral imperative to correct this heartless and inequitable law against women by calling for its repeal." This argument is historically flawed. The developing medical community was the primary force behind nineteenth-century abortion restrictions, though Protestant moralizing exacerbated the situation. Nevertheless, arguing that Protestants were responsible for abortion laws undoubtedly provided a strong justification for action.⁴²

Another way of viewing abortion as a justice issue was to consider it a violation of women's rights. "It was the old story of what men do to women: treat them like chattel slaves and own their bodies," explains Unsworth. Moody wrote, "The control of a fetal appendage in the body of a woman . . . by civil law can only be viewed as an infamous invasion of individual privacy and denial of the freedom of choice." The argument that abortion rights violated women's rights coincided well with similar rhetoric in the growing women's liberation movement. Beyond helping women and defending their right to control their bodies, however, the clergy services were not closely related to the women's movement. "It was not the women's movement that guided [the clergy's] efforts, but the mandate for religious institutions to mediate

⁴² Unsworth, interview; Howard Moody, "Man's Vengeance on Women," *Renewal*, February 1967.

in issues of life and death," writes Davis.⁴³

The clergy referral movement was part of a "world mission" theology that holds that one serves God by serving humankind. By fighting injustice and easing people's suffering, Christians fulfill the mission of Jesus Christ. Unsworth explains, "Social change is not the primary issue [for clergy], but preaching the Gospel is done in two ways. One is verbally, and the other is by what you do and [who] you are." In this case, preaching the Gospel entailed saving women from underworld abortion and fighting the injustice of the legal restrictions that deprived them of the control of their bodies. Davis argues that the CCS was meeting a theological demand to perform a "world mission." She wrote, "The 'world mission' demanded precisely this entrepreneurial spirit: a willingness to take risks and organize and manage moral crusades." The theologian Beverly Wildung Harrison suggests that taking moral action is not only a religious requirement, but a religious experience. "When, through courageous moral action, we anticipate an alternative, historically liberating mode of being in the world, a new sense of God's living presence unfolds. Out of a moral struggle to embody deeper patterns of human community, freshly empowering visions of God are born," she writes.⁴⁴

It is critical to note that this discussion of theological imperatives to take moral action, ease suffering, and fight injustice did not apply solely to abortion. In fact, in 1967 the clergy were well-attuned to "world mission" theology because many of them had been employing it for years in the struggle for civil rights. In this case, the same kinds of moral issues were at stake: clergy sought to fight the injustice of segregation and ease the sufferings it created. The clergy in the abortion rights movement who were too young to be involved in the civil rights movement made their decisions to enter the ministry fully aware of clergy activity against

⁴³ Unsworth, interview; Moody, "Man's Vengeance on Women." Davis, *From Crime to Choice*, 131.

⁴⁴ Unsworth, interview; Davis, *From Crime to Choice*, 129; Beverly Wildung Harrison, *Our Right to Choose* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983), 91.

segregation. The civil rights movement and the abortion rights movement shared the same sense of fighting for a higher morality. "In its early phase, the civil rights movement concentrated on revealing the discrepancies between American values and actions with respect to racial practices," writes political scientist Harold Quinley. "Clergy were well suited to serve as moral spokesmen on such matters and to participate in the symbolic acts of protest that became a major tactic of the movement." The same is true in the abortion rights movement. American values on the subject of abortion were deeply mired in hypocrisy, and the clergy could speak against this moral inconsistency. Furthermore, the clergy were indulged by the public in both the civil rights movement and the abortion rights movement because many Americans were willing to accept the clergy's role as prophetic; the clergy were free to act in advance of the status quo. "The clergy should be doing things that are ahead of the times," explained Unsworth. "You know an issue of justice is out there so you do it and let society catch up with it."⁴⁵

The influence of the civil rights movement on the clergy referral movement extended far beyond the theological basis for clergy involvement and the language of morality they used to articulate their cause. Perhaps the most important contribution of the civil rights movement to the clergy referral movement was the personal connections among activists that the civil rights movement had created. When the civil rights movement crested in the early 1960s, it left in its wake a network of clergy who had worked together, marched together, and even gone to jail together. The civil rights connection is clear in all three stages of national clergy expansion. In the first two stages, which both involved mostly friends and associates of Moody, all of the clergy interviewed for this thesis had been involved in the civil rights movement, and many believed that this was where they had first met Moody. Most of the clergy spoke of their association with Moody through civil rights as though such a connection should be self-evident. "I knew Howard [Moody] very well," Hinand remarks off-handedly. "Howard and I had done things in

⁴⁵ Harold E. Quinley, *The Prophetic Clergy: Social Activism Among Protestant Ministers* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1974), 4; Unsworth, interview.

civil rights and so forth." Lyle Guttu was too young to be involved in the civil rights movement in a major way, but that did not mean he had no contact with participants. "I was peripheral to civil rights work because I was in seminary," he recalls. "I was close to people spending the summer in Mississippi, and I marched on Washington, but that was a one-day affair!" Even one-day demonstrations were a place to make connections, however. "We always found each other," Brickner remembered of the liberal clergy in the early 1960s. "Same people! Same cast of characters! The people I was with in the South in the early '60s I was on the barricades with here in New York in the late '60s and '70s." Unsworth shared a similar sentiment: "It used to be if you went to Washington for one or another of these [demonstrations] it was a seminary reunion in front of the White House!"⁴⁶

When the New York CCS was launched, clergy were invited to join on the basis of their involvement in other activities that might suggest an interest in entering the abortion rights movement. On a local level, Moody and his peers probably did not depend on associations made at demonstrations in Mississippi. But each time the clergy movement expanded, associations had to have been less dependent on networks of local clergy interaction. As Unsworth suggested, many clergy had seminary experiences in common. During regional and national clergy service expansion, however, it is likely that clergy relied heavily on contacts they had made during their activities in the civil rights movement. Brickner suggested connections between clergy were "inevitable." "We were immersed in the same struggles together."⁴⁷

The effects of the civil rights movement made themselves clearly felt not only in the networking among clergy, but in the attitude the clergy held about the illegality of clergy referral. Civil disobedience was one of the primary methods employed in desegregation efforts. Even clergy who had not travelled to Southern states frequently had experience with civil

⁴⁶ Hinand, interview; Guttu, interview; Brickner, interview; Unsworth, interview.

⁴⁷ Brickner, interview.

disobedience in local desegregation efforts. For example, Bob Pierce, who worked with Moody in school desegregation in New York, remembered being arrested trying to integrate a park in Baltimore. Unsworth explains the legal concern was

... a threshold issue for all of us. We all did counseling all the time, but we hadn't been asked to step across a legal threshold [in counseling]. Well, we had in the civil rights movement, we'd had a lot of experience stepping across that kind of threshold, so this didn't seem like a big deal. Sure it was illegal and all that, but we'd done that. We knew how that felt and how to deal with that.⁴⁸

Unsworth was not alone in feeling that the legal threshold had already been crossed. "Sure we knew it was illegal!" remembers Rabbi Brickner. "Whatcha' gonna' do? Put me in jail?! So put me in jail, I've been to jail already! What are you going to keep me in jail for a week? Two weeks? I couldn't have cared less, none of us could!" Not all the clergy treated the threat of imprisonment with the same nonchalance as Brickner claims he did, but his feeling that jail was not enough of a threat to stop him from following his conscience was widely shared.⁴⁹

The clergy justified their support of the violation of abortion laws by arguing that they answered to a higher law than that of the state. The "Clergy Consultation Service Statement of Purpose" noted, "there are higher laws and moral obligations transcending legal codes. . . ." This notion of obedience to a "higher law" was common in the vocabulary of the CCS. One CCS member told his congregation in a sermon that if his daughter had unintentionally become pregnant, he "would have moved heaven and earth to find a respectable physician who took such work, as his obedience to the promise of God that man is meant for a community of love, in the family and in the world, and this act would be an act of obedience to a higher law."⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Unsworth, interview.

⁴⁹ Brickner, interview.

⁵⁰ "CCS Statement of Purpose," May 1967; J. Claude Evans is quoted in Gorney, *Articles of Faith*, 68.

In 1968, the National Council of Churches approved a policy statement that not only upheld the clergy's civil disobedience, but encouraged it in certain situations. One part of the statement read:

Civil disobedience is a *violation of a law deemed to be unjust* in obedience to conscience or a higher law. It is usually entered into by those who feel they have no choice but to disobey—as Luther put it, “Here I stand, God help me. *I can do no other.*” The authority appealed to beyond civil statutes may be conscience, God’s commandments, the moral law, natural law, the good of mankind or some other norm of conscience for which one is willing, even compelled, to risk offending civil authorities and public opinion.⁵¹

This statement’s powerful affirmation of the clergy’s right and responsibility to violate unjust laws grew out of a venerable Christian tradition and, more immediately, out of the civil rights’ movement.

The civil rights movement and similar issues of social justice also may have helped to prepare the clergy in the referral services for coping with the stresses of their task. “The nearly infinite commitment to ‘alleviate human suffering in our time’ undoubtedly staggered the imagination,” writes Davis. “This unbounded commitment explains in part why many early organizers devoted as much as sixty to one hundred hours a week to abortion-related activities. . . .” How many hours a clergy counselled each week varied enormously. One factor was geography. While the Western Massachusetts CCS counselled three or four women a week, the New York CCS counseled twenty-five or thirty women a day. Though there were more counselors available in New York than Massachusetts, the burden was still substantial. Within the New York CCS, the load was not evenly shared. While Brickner remembers counseling half a dozen women in three years and Schaefer remembers make sixty or seventy referrals, Tilda Norberg estimates she counseled somewhere between 700 and 900 women in the same time

⁵¹ “Religious Obedience and Civil Disobedience”, policy statement of the National Council of the Churches of Christ, June 7, 1968, as recorded in *Moral Issues and the Christian Response*, edited by Paul T. Jersild and Dale A. Johnson (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 349.

period. The reason for the uneven counseling loads is not exactly clear. Although he was on the roster officially, Brickner was not always in the rotation, and another rabbi did not remember him as being "fully involved." Clergy who did not have a full-time parish, like Norberg, had more time available for counseling. Nevertheless, some of the disproportionate counseling load may have been the result of some clergy shirking their duties. Since women were given the numbers of several clergymen to call, if one clergy refused to answer his calls, the other clergy had to pick up the slack. "This week . . . I have talked to sixty-five women," complained Rev. Lee Ball in a letter to Moody. "Again I kept the Service going single-handed. Our people told me repeatedly that I was the only one [on duty] answering the phone!" Moody admitted to Ball that the service had some real "goldbrickers" who weren't carrying their load. "Some guys think they've carried a load if they see ten girls in a week," Moody wrote to Ball.⁵²

Despite the enormous time commitment the Service required of counselors, many found their work to be extremely rewarding. In a survey of sixty CCS members in Michigan, Davis found that sixty-seven percent felt their counseling had offered them "psychological" or "experiential" gains in both a personal and professional sense. Davis writes that counselors developed an "enhanced sensitivity. . . . Other by-products included new counseling techniques, increased status with colleagues, and an enlarged network of professional contacts." For many clergy, the opportunity to be involved in such an exciting movement and to have such a direct impact on the lives of people in need would not occur again in their ministries. Moody remembers, "I had a lot of ministers tell me in years gone by that there wasn't any period in their ministry that was more exciting . . . than that period when they were counseling." One counselor agreed, "I must honestly say the counselling experience has been one of the meaningful

⁵² Davis, *From Crime to Choice*, 136; Brickner interview; Schaefer interview; Norberg interview; Lewis Bogage, telephone interview by author, tape recording, 20 February 1998; Lee Ball to Howard Moody, 16 August 1969, CCS Archive; Howard Moody to Lee Ball, 27 August 1969, CCS Archive.

parts of my ministry. . . ."⁵³

Many of the clergy found that their ideological motivations for participating in the CCS were reinforced by their experiences in counseling. Women came to them in desperation, and most of the time the clergy were able to offer them relief. Each time a counselor assisted a woman, he was rewarded with a sense that he was playing a vital role in her life. Bob Pierce still remembers the first woman he counseled: "She was a very matronly woman, quite centered, and pregnant by her husband. Her *sister* was a doctor and she couldn't talk to her! I was interested in her story."⁵⁴ In an article *Redbook*, Larry Lader described a poignant scene between a woman and Finley Schaeff:

"I have to tell you that I didn't want to come at first," [the woman] said to Schaeff. "I thought you'd just lecture me like all the others. The doctors, the clinics, they just tell you that you have made a mistake, so now you have to take the consequences, even if it kills you." She reached out and touched his arm. "It made a difference, coming here. I feel better already."⁵⁵

This type of scene was undoubtedly repeated many times in the experiences of the clergy counselors. There could be no question for most counselors that what they were doing was having a powerful effect in women's lives.

Nonetheless, many of the clergy became exhausted from the exertion, and at least some eventually became disillusioned with their work. Davis found that two-thirds of the clergy she surveyed "experienced personal conflicts ranging from minor irritations to serious moral dilemmas." Some of the clergy expressed concern over the flippancy of some of the women they counseled. Unsworth remembers, "There were cases of people who you just knew didn't get it

⁵³ Davis, *From Crime to Choice*, 133-134; Moody, interview, 13 October 1997; Richard Ittner to Howard Moody, 11 September 1969, CCS Archive.

⁵⁴ Pierce, interview.

⁵⁵ Larry Lader, "The Woman Who Chose Abortion," February, 1968.

and were going to go right out and make the same mistake again. . . . Those were hard because you just knew it wasn't going to turn out right." Ironically some clergy felt that their sense of worth as pastors actually suffered from abortion counseling. A one-hour session with a woman from outside the parish made some clergy feel as though they were more a cog in a machine than a professional counselor. "A lot of [the counseling] was kind of pro forma, because the women had pretty much made up their minds by the time they got to us," remembers Norberg. A number of clergy expressed reservations that they were simply making abortion easier, an outcome that some abortion advocates undoubtedly considered positive. Few of the clergy left the Service for these reasons, however. Davis discovered that most of the counselors found ways to adjust and to be "nonjudgmental, nondirective, and empathetic, removing the burden of personal responsibility for the decision." Moody can remember only one counselor who left the New York CCS because of ambivalence about the Service's work.⁵⁶

Exhaustion was probably the most common cause for clergy to leave the Service. All three of the letters of resignation on file in the CCS Archive cite time constraints and fatigue as the primary reasons for retirement. "It seems that I cannot really handle my fair share of cases," lamented one clergyman. "Even the ten or so that I do see in any one week severely interrupt my local responsibilities. As a consequence I do neither [my full-time or volunteer] job well, and worst of all, I don't get a day off."⁵⁷

This clergyman's sentiments were undoubtedly shared by many of the two thousand clergy in CCS chapters across the country. Despite all its ideological significance and personal benefits, abortion counseling was a consuming endeavor for clergy with other full-time jobs. The movement needed not only to expand, but to progress.

⁵⁶ Davis, *From Crime to Choice*, 135; Unsworth, interview; Norberg, interview.

⁵⁷ [Name omitted] to Howard Moody, 15 October 1969, CCS Archive.