no other gods before thee.

urself a carved image.

ne of the Lord your God in vain.

Sabbath day to keep it holy.

ther and your mother.

Clergy Misconduct in Modern America

BAD PASTORS

Edited by Anson Shupe, William A. Stacey, and Susan E. Darnell

With an Epilogue by Andrew M. Greeley

all not murder.

shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

hall not bear false witness.

ou shall not covet.

Bad Pastors

Bad Pastors

Clergy Misconduct in Modern America

EDITED BY

Anson Shupe, William A. Stacey,
and Susan E. Darnell

New York University Press
NEW YORK AND LONDON

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS
New York and London

© 2000 by New York University
All rights reserved

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Bad pastors : clergy misconduct in modern America / edited by
Anson Shupe, William A. Stacey, and Susan E. Darnell.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-8147-8147-0 (paperback) — ISBN 0-8147-8146-2 (cloth)
1. Clergy—Professional ethics—United States—Case studies.
2. Crime—Religious aspects—Christianity—Case studies.
I. Shupe, Anson D. II. Stacey, William A. III. Darnell, Susan E.
BV4811.5 .B33 2000
174'.1—dc21 00-009060

New York University Press books are printed on acid-free paper,
and their binding materials are chosen for strength and durability.

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

This volume is dedicated

To my parents, Anson and Elizabeth
—A. S.

To my sister, Edna Mae Hultz, and to my daughter,
Deborah Lynn Stacey
—W.A.S.

To my loving mother, Penny Nobuko Darnell, who taught me
the fine distinction between right and wrong
—S.E.D.

We are mindful of the actions of Father James Porter,
the Rev. Henry Lyons, Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker,
and a legion of lesser malfeasant rogues, whose
breach of faith made this volume necessary.

Contents

Acknowledgments *xi*

1 Introduction: Recognizing Clergy Malfeasance and Abrogation of Religious Authority 1
Anson Shupe, William A. Stacey, and Susan E. Darnell

PART I How Shall We Name It?

2 Issues in Conceptualizing Clergy Malfeasance 13
Anson Shupe and Peter Iadicola

3 Narratives of Sexual Danger: A Comparative Perspective on the Emergence of the Clergy Sexual Violation Scandal 39
David G. Bromley and Clinton H. Cress

4 Has the Silence Been Shattered or Does a Holy Hush Still Prevail? Defining Violence against Women within Christian Churches 69
Nancy Nason-Clark

5 Guide to Enlightenment of Strayed Shepherds? The Problems of Claimed Clergy Malfeasance in Interreligious Perspective 90
James V. Spickard

PART II Responding to Accusations of Clergy Malfeasance

6 Charisma, Male Entitlement, and the Abuse of Power 113
Janet L. Jacobs

7 The Politics of a Sexual Harassment Case 131
Ronald R. Stockton

8 Is Abuse about Truth or Story . . . or Both? One Intentional Community's Painful Experiences with False Accusations 155
Jon Trott

PART III Monitoring Clergy Malfeasance

9 How Much Clergy Malfeasance Is Really Out There? A Victimization Survey of Prevalence and Perceptions 187
William A. Stacey, Susan E. Darnell, and Anson Shupe

10 Clergy Malfeasance, Victimization, and National/Local Awareness: Their Effects on Church Attendance and Financial Giving 214
William A. Stacey, Anson Shupe, and Susan E. Darnell

PART IV Epilogue and Overview

11 Incidence and Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse 241
Andrew M. Greeley

12 The Future of Clergy Abuse/Malfeasance Research 249
Anson Shupe

Contributors *253*
Index *255*

Acknowledgments

We wish to thank several colleagues whose help was invaluable in the preparation of this volume: in Fort Wayne, Indiana—Shirley Champion, for monitoring, organizing, and reproducing various incarnations of the manuscript; in Portage, Indiana—Timothy Hall, for his assistance with the entry and coding of data on pedophiles compiled for the content analysis in chapter 9; in Arlington, Texas—Lonnie Roy, Field Director for the Dallas-Fort Worth Institutional Abuse Survey Project (chapters 9 and 10), and LaDorna Goff, for her care in data entry, coding, and field interviewing (chapters 9 and 10).

Chapter 1

Introduction

Recognizing Clergy Malfeasance and Abrogation of Religious Authority

Anson Shupe, William A. Stacey, and Susan E. Darnell

We expect something special of priests, ministers, rabbis, and even gurus, not just for their wisdom but also for their good intentions toward us as congregants and believers. At the very least we expect to be able to trust our religious leaders more than we trust, say, our politicians, corporate executives, or home builders.

But it is increasingly becoming clear that what lawyers term the *fiduciary* (or professional) nature of that trust from clients, patients, and religious followers can be violated by religious leaders. As editors, we generically refer to a group of the above as *bad pastors*. Bad pastors misuse trusting people; exploit them sexually and financially; and/or manipulate them with excessive demands grounded in spiritual authority. Bad pastors range from the tempted clergyman alone in a counseling session with a distraught, vulnerable woman to a pedophile priest to a reckless, high-living sociopath who ruins lives and even family fortunes through religiously based fraudulent investment schemes.

To better demonstrate this domain of religious deviance, consider the following pair of bad pastors who were indicted for malfeasance, stood trial in court, and eventually (and deservedly) found themselves in prison.

> "FATHER PORTER'S COMING, FATHER PORTER'S COMING." The warning flew down the quiet corridors of St. Mary's Grammar School

> whenever one of the girls saw the priest approaching. Then, as if on cue, dozens of girls in bobby socks and skirts that always covered their knees fled the center of the hallway for the walls, pressing their backs against the hard, cold tile. They knew that if you didn't turn your back to Porter, he couldn't sneak up and grab you from behind. If you didn't turn your back, he couldn't get his hands under your skirt. No one taught the polite parochial school girls the ruses; sixth graders didn't warn their younger sisters or cousins—they just knew, they learned from experience. (Burkett and Bruni 1993, 6)

Father James Porter, now resigned from the Roman Catholic priesthood, made his way from parish to parish in New England, Wisconsin, and the Great Lakes region, even to the southwest (where he was supposed to receive therapy at a Catholic Church–operated "therapeutic" retreat for pedophile priests located outside Albuquerque, New Mexico). Based on information from various sources, we estimate that Father Porter sexually molested more than two hundred boys and girls while a priest, committing behaviors ranging from masturbation (him on them, them on him) to vaginal and anal rape. Many children were abused by Porter dozens of times or more, often in church buildings and even in the children's homes. James Porter is now in prison, essentially for the rest of his life. (More details about the Porter case, and the case discussed below, can be found in Shupe 1998, 1995, and elsewhere in this volume.)

"The Rev. Henry Lyons says he'll go on preaching, though he'll do it behind bars" (Leisner 1999). Like the Rev. Jim Bakker of the PTL televangelist scandal of the late 1980s, Lyons, a St. Petersburg Baptist preacher and president of the National Baptist Church USA (the nation's largest black denomination), embezzled, looted, lied and perjured, committed adultery in a brazen fashion, and when finally caught hypocritically played the "race card," blaming his bad publicity on the biased "white press."

On February 27, 1999, Lyons was convicted in a Florida court of racketeering and grand theft of at least $4 million from companies to which he had sold fraudulent membership lists of his denomination for commercial purposes. He also pocketed thousands of dollars from Jewish groups donating to rebuild burned black churches in the South. He denied any wrongdoing right up to the end, even as he was swindling his denomination and other groups to finance a lavish lifestyle, with multiple homes, expensive cars, and several mistresses (Leisner 1999).

The end of Lyons's con came when he traveled on an overseas junket with a girlfriend (who herself had a felony record for embezzlement). At home, Lyons's wife went through his briefcase and found a deed for a second house that listed "the other woman" as the co-owner. In a drunken rage, she drove to the new house and set it on fire; then on her way home she crashed her car into a tree.

Lyons decided to plead guilty to five fraud charges; another forty-nine were dropped in the plea bargain. Among the charges he admitted to were failing to pay back taxes on $1.3 million in income, defrauding a bank, and cheating other financial and federal housing officials. Lyons was sentenced to five and a half years in prison (Leisner 1999).

The denominational officials who had staunchly (and naively) supported this clergy malfeasant were left with a lot of well-deserved egg on their faces. "Our credibility is shot," one denominational official told members. "We know our convention needs much healing," the new denominational president announced.

Incredibly, the National Baptist Church USA voted to continue Lyons's $100,000-per-year salary for the next five years, while he was to be in prison (Leisner 1999).

As a con artist, Lyons was relatively small change. During the late 1990s, for example, a pyramid (or Ponzi) scheme called The Foundation for New Era Philanthropy stole many millions from Protestant seminaries, colleges, and denominations by promising one hundred percent or more returns within a year on initial investments. This scheme was similar to what criminologists call *corporate crime*. New Era filed for bankruptcy in 1995, listing a massive $551 million in liabilities against assets of only $80 million—which soon disappeared (Shupe 1998, 54–56). Priscilla Peters, who concocted a scheme similar to New Era's, was described by a judge in Wichita, Kansas, as "a danger to any honest person," and as of 1998 faced massive fines and four years in prison for each of twelve counts in a $4.4 million fraud case (Fager 1999).

The problem of clergy malfeasance (i.e., the abuse and exploitation—whether sexual, financial, or authoritative—of religious congregants by their trusted leaders) has been recognized by journalists and social scientists mostly within the past two decades. There have been exceptions, but as Armand Mauss (1975) points out, widespread recognition of social problems often comes only as a result of social advocacy movements. And clergy abuse victims' movements are of relatively recent origin—no thanks to religious elites, who have often tried to deny, hide, or repress knowledge of such malfeasance.

In some ways clergy malfeasance resembles white-collar crime (no pun intended) and corporate crime. However, it is best understood under the umbrella concept of *elite deviance* (see Shupe 1998, 1995). Simon and Eitzen (1990) define elite deviance as comprising illegal *and* unethical actions committed by persons in the highest corporate and political strata of society, whether for personal advantage or to enhance the interests of their organizations. That the 1990 edition of their book *Elite Deviance* did not mention exploitive actions by clergy and other religious elites is not surprising, for clergy malfeasance began receiving extensive media coverage only during the late 1980s and early 1990s, and scholars of deviance and criminology have generally ignored the religious institution. Shupe (1995, 9), for example, reviewed forty-eight current sociology of deviance textbooks and anthologies (twenty-five texts, twenty-three anthologies) and found only eighteen mentions of so-called deviant religious practices—all involving exotic or nonmainstream practices (such as Pentecostal snake-handling, witchcraft, or UFO cults). The subdisciplines of the sociology of religion and criminology/deviance have barely begun to approach one another conceptually and empirically.

But simply calling clergy malfeasance a form of elite deviance is not sufficient. The elite deviance label is inclusive, but imprecise. The purpose of this volume is to move toward a better conceptual definition of clergy malfeasance as a real, pervasive, persistent phenomenon in modern society. This is not a temporary or ephemeral problem, as some have hoped (e.g., Jenkins 1996). Clergy malfeasance is not a few anomalous acts by a few "bad apples" in religious leadership; it is something systemic, resulting from power inequities in religious hierarchies. These power inequities render some persons (i.e., laity) more vulnerable than others to being taken advantage of. And, as the domestic violence literature has shown (e.g., Stacey, Hazlewood, and Shupe 1994), simply acknowledging a problem does not mean that we have adequately defined or understood it. The concept of woman-battering, for example, was once a narrowly defined feminist term that focused exclusively on women as victims of violence in the home. Only later did a more inclusive concept of individuals (e.g., spouses) as units within the family system, and the family as a subsystem within the community system, help us recognize children and even men as potential and sometimes actual victims of family or domestic violence.

We recruited each of the contributors to this volume for several reasons, even if we suspected in advance that we might not agree with their positions.

First, we knew that each had been working for some time in the area of exploitation and abuse of victims, whether sexual, familial, political, or clerical. All were familiar with the concept of violations of professional fiduciary responsibility.

Second, we wanted to invite representatives of a variety of perspectives: conflict theory, criminology, feminism, deconstructionism, constructionism, politics, theology, and descriptive empiricism.

Third, we wanted to create a forum for discussing social science understanding of what clergy malfeasance *is* (its forms, its boundaries) and what it *does*. For example, we felt our initial definition of clergy malfeasance (Shupe 1995) might benefit from an array of parallel developments in the anti–women-battering/domestic violence literature (as we alluded to above). Likewise, the conceptualization of clergy malfeasance in its broader cultural settings needs elaboration, as Peter Iadicola and Anson Shupe argue in their essay here.

These cultural settings span the institutions named above, and each contributor is an expert in the clergy malfeasance occurring therein. In the penultimate chapter of this book Andrew M. Greeley offers detailed commentary on the individual essays; here I will preview them only generally.

Shupe and Iadicola push institutional analyses of *how* churches and denominations respond to discovery of clergy malfeasance beyond those groups and traditions, to look at the communities and cultures in which they are embedded. How victimized congregants respond is as important as how elites and congregations react. The authors take as a case in point the example of Henry Lyons, an apparently philandering, corrupt black Florida Baptist minister.

Bromley and Cress employ a constructionist approach in discussing *why* we are hearing so much about clergy sexual malfeasance now, in the late twentieth century. Their reasoning returns to the classic polar urban-folk, *gemeinschaft-gesellschaft*, organic-mechanical dichotomies of early social science. They draw an important distinction regarding the nature of the individual's bonds of allegiance to religious groups: some are covenantal (or unlimited and emotional), and others are contractual (delimited and legal). Their analysis resembles that of Jenkins (1996), who downplays the true extent of clergy sexual malfeasance in the modern American Catholic Church, though Bromley and Cress are not concerned with debunking the true extent of the clergy malfeasance problem.

Nancy Nason-Clark has written extensively on family violence, and particularly its religious aspects. Here she examines the current emphasis in some religious communities on "strong" families and family survival, and considers how this emphasis may result in excessively idealistic efforts on the part of clergy to preserve marriages, and even in the belief that abusing husbands can easily be transformed into model partners within the church. Her chapter, pointed directly at the issue of violence against women but analogously relevant to clergy misconduct, argues that the naive conception of malfeasance as personal spiritual failure rather than hierarchical abuse is sociological folly.

James Spickard takes a deconstructionist stance on defining clergy malfeasance, and reaches a relativistic conclusion that is bound to displease self-perceived malfeasance victims, their family advocates and attorneys, and sociologist Andrew Greeley (our final commentator). Spickard argues that any standards of malfeasance are hopelessly located in specific eras and places, dooming any uniform, objective concept of clergy abuse. Of course, as one anthropological colleague remarked to me, the same could be said of rape—in some societies there is an abductive scenario akin to our ordinary notions of street rape, but it passes for courtship. At any rate, Spickard adds in a positive (though certainly not a positivist) way to the ferment of defining and conceptualizing the emerging notion of clergy malfeasance.

Janet Jacobs follows up the concept of hierarchical power and abuse by examining a variety of charismatic, male-dominated religious movements. Her article examines sanctions and isolation in authoritarian religious movements as means of of social control, and considers how aspects of authoritarian religious movements can undergird systemic exploitation of women and children by rapacious religious leaders.

Ronald Stockton presents a qualitative study of an intrachurch scenario similar to that chronicled in Marie M. Fortune's classic book *Is Nothing Sacred?* (1989). The two cases have much in common: a seemingly erring, if not sociopathic minister; the failure of congregational and denominational leaders inexperienced with malfeasance to act with discernment and accountability; schism within the congregation between those supporting the accusers and those supporting the accused; and the tragic disintegration of the church. Stockton, a political scientist, focuses not on motives but on political structures and policy decisions, which is likely where the future of the study of clergy malfeasance (except for psychotherapists) lies. Stockton also demonstrates the real-life, pragmatic decisions religious authorities have to make in dealing with accusations of clergy malfeasance.

Jon Trott, a Christian journalist, writes for the Christian investigative magazine *Cornerstone*. He is also one of the 900-odd members of a downtown Chicago congregation calling itself Jesus People USA. Founded in the early 1970s, JPUSA (its acronym) literally seeks to live its vision of First Century Christianity—members and families pool resources and live communally (though not in monastic poverty). They eat adequately and live comfortably, but they deliberately do not prosper individually. In the mid-1990s JPUSA leaders were accused of cultic, abusive treatment of some members. Most investigations have disputed the charges. Trott's contribution deals not so much with any specific charges of clergy malfeasance as with the difficulty of defending one's group once accusations are made anonymously.

The first Stacey/Darnell/Shupe chapter is a bold attempt to determine, outside of isolated, well-publicized studies of individual priest/pastor predators, how much sexual and other clergy malfeasance is actually "out there" in the general population. Knocking on doors in randomly selected neighborhoods, in other words, how much will researchers find reported? After citing a very few previous, suggestive studies, the article presents the first large random sample of citizens who self-report on their own (or their close friends' or relatives') experiences—and it challenges the assumption that such malfeasance is limited or rare.

The second Stacey/Shupe/Darnell article pursues the implication of direct and indirect experiences and awareness of clergy malfeasance. Using the same Texas sample as in their previous chapter, the authors examine patterns in church attendance and financial giving—two closely correlated (and fundamental) aspects of church religiosity—as dependent variables in the wake of clergy malfeasance.

Andrew Greeley offers some comments on each chapter, and also provides some current data on child abuse as background for many of the contributions in this volume. He is not uniformly approving of all contributions, but in its embryonic form the study of clergy malfeasance can use more than a little critical discernment.

Finally, Anson Shupe offers a vision of where the future of clergy abuse/malfeasance likely will (and should) go. There is still no cloture in this subdiscipline; the politics involved in studying it, and in reporting it, have yet to be fully explored.

Recent publications (though not all by sociologists) optimistically point to a growing data and theoretical base: continuing case studies and reflective analyses by self-reported victims of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon) church authorities (e.g., Anderson and Allred 1998); studies of sexual abuse of (young) believers by Roman Catholic priests (e.g., Rossetti 1990); and instructive works on how to prevent pastoral sexual abuse (e.g., Friberg and Laaser 1998) and how to heal a local congregation after clergy malfeasance has occurred and been revealed (e.g., Hopkins and Laaser 1995). Clergy malfeasance as an academic subject has already benefited from the rich literature in criminology/deviance, feminist sociology, counseling, and religious studies. What this volume hopes to accomplish is a similar cross-fertilization of subdisciplines and disciplines.

REFERENCES

Anderson, Lavina Fielding, and Janice Merrill Allred, eds. 1998. *Case Reports of the Mormon Alliance, 1997*. Vol. 3 (June). Salt Lake City, Utah: Mormon Alliance.

Burkett, Elinor, and Frank Bruni. 1993. *A Gospel of Shame*. New York: Viking.

Fager, Chuck. 1998. "100 Million Missing in Great Ministries Scandal." *Christianity Today*, 4 October, 29.

Fortune, Marie. 1989. *Is Nothing Sacred?* San Francisco: HarperCollins.

Friberg, Nils C., and Mark R. Laaser. 1998. *Before the Fall: Preventing Pastoral Sexual Abuse*. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press.

Hopkins, Nancy Myer, and Mark R. Laaser. 1995. *Restoring the Soul of a Church*. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press.

Jenkins, Philip. 1996. *Pedophiles and Priests: Anatomy of a Contemporary Crisis*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Leisner, Pat. 1999. "Lyons Resigns Post: Minister 'Repentant' as He Prepares for Hearing." *Tampa Herald-Tribune*, 17 March.

Mauss, Armand L. 1975. *Social Problems as Social Movements*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott.

Rossetti, Stephen J. 1996. *Slayer of the Soul: Child Sexual Abuse and the Catholic Church*. Mystic, Conn.: Twenty-Third Publications.

Shupe, Anson. 1995. *In the Name of All that's Holy: A Theory of Clergy Malfeasance.* Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

Shupe, Anson, ed. 1998. *Wolves within the Fold: Religious Leadership and Abuses of Power*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Simon, David R., and D. Stanley Eitzen, eds. 1990. *Elite Deviance*. 3d ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Stacey, William A., Lonnie R. Hazelwood, and Anson Shupe. 1994. *The Violent Couple*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

Part I

How Shall We Name It?

Chapter 2

Issues in Conceptualizing Clergy Malfeasance

Anson Shupe and Peter Iadicola

The issue of clergy malfeasance (i.e., abuse and exploitation of a religious body's congregants by its trusted leaders) has been reported in dramatic journalistic accounts (e.g., Burkett and Bruni 1993; Berry 1992). Not until recently, however, has it drawn interest among sociologists (e.g., Shupe 1998a, 1995; Jenkins 1996). At the same time, North Americans (and citizens of European countries) are witnessing what portends to be an ongoing and expanding social problem that cuts across denominations and religious traditions as well as back through time. If, as Mauss (1975) suggests, social problems are fundamentally the products of problematic definitions pressed into the public agenda by social movements, then how clergy malfeasance has come (and is coming) to be defined is worth examining, for both criminology/deviance and the sociology of religion.

To wax graphic, by "clergy malfeasance" we are referring to embezzlement of church/denominational funds; excessive exercise of clerical authority in the personal lives of congregants; and child molestation, vaginal and anal rape, fondling, and sexual seduction of congregants (and not only by males).

In this essay we consider how clergy malfeasance has recently been conceptualized, the limitations of that conceptualization, and potential directions for revision. We make two broad axiomatic assumptions derived from symbolic interaction theory and conflict theory, respectively. First, it matters what we, as symbol-creating, symbol-manipulating creatures, call things. How we define clergy malfeasance will necessarily delimit its universe of research. Second, religions and religious groups are understood to be hierarchies of power, with those in the rank and file (congregants) distinctly disadvantaged in terms of the likelihood of being victimized by leaders exploiting their own spiritual status.

Similarities of Clergy Malfeasance to Other Forms of Victimization

A number of writers have compared clergy malfeasance to other types of victimization. Cooper-White (1991, 196) sees an analogy to spousal abuse: "The many parallels between male pastoral sexual abuse and wife—or partner—battery have become increasingly clear, especially as the church is so often portrayed as family." One social worker has compared clerical sexual abuse in counseling situations to incest: "Because of a desire to please, children will tolerate abuses by their fathers much like counselees will submit to sexual exploitation in an effort to avoid displeasing the pastor" (Blanchard 1991, 239-40). Lebacqz and Barton (1991, 104) and Milgrim and Schoener (1987, 210) have also employed the incest analogy. Finally, Shupe (1995, 33) has drawn comparisons between published accounts of clerical sexual abuse of lay persons and the literature on sexual harassment of working women and female college students (e.g., Dziech and Weiner 1990; Farley 1980; Mackinnon 1979). We argue here that most such analogies are limited, because they rely on perceiving religious groups as closed systems without consideration of their larger sociocultural environments.

A Closed System Institutional Model of Clergy Malfeasance

Marie Fortune (1989) has presented clergy malfeasance as one particular example of a problem that appears with some regularity in an array of professions; she argues that instances of clergy malfeasance represent breakdowns in pastors' *fiduciary responsibilities* to their congregants. Ethically speaking, all professionals should agree that the trusting client ought not to have to expect a conflict of interest between his/her best interests and the professional's personal advantage. The fiduciary is supposed to safeguard the integrity of the client's interests above all else, whether these be the client's finances, emotional/physical well-being, or spiritual condition. Reneging on this responsibility is thus a violation of authority, trust, and vulnerability. This usage of the concept resonates well with the white-collar crime literature (see for example Shapiro 1987) as well as with other therapeutic profession critics (e.g., Rutter 1989). It also moves clergy malfeasance into the realm of what Simon and Eitzen (1990) call "elite deviance," a category not limited to illegal acts, but also including unethical acts (unethical in terms of the profession and context within which they are performed).

Building on Fortune's conceptualization of fiduciary responsibility, Shupe (1995) develops a theory of reactance (i.e., neither of positivist causation nor of individual motivation) to clergy malfeasance involving three audiences: (1) the abusive perpetrators, who realize as they engage in secondary deviance that they have indefinite opportunities for recidivism; (2) the elites (some perpetrators themselves), who must somehow manage, even contain and "neutralize" public awareness of the malfeasance; and (3) the victims (and their advocates), who often come to realize that the perpetrators are successful recidivists and that elites have put as much (or more) effort into "damage control" of the malfeasance's notoriety as into straightforward attempts to eliminate future opportunities for repetition of the deviance. Shupe advocated a "triangulation" of methods to define clergy malfeasance: first-person accounts and legal adjudication, standards of behavior as expressed in official group norms, and other independent sources.

Shupe considered a typology of three forms of clergy malfeasance (not always mutually exclusive in reality): sexual predation of vulnerable, trusting minors and women; economic fraud; and authoritative abuse by leaders. This third category is admittedly "slippery" in that it seems to depend on somewhat subjective viewpoints (Shupe 1995, 64–65). However, we can find in a document written by Mormon (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints) "victims" a clear definition of what they term, in that denomination's phraseology, "unrighteous dominion"—i.e., religious leaders using the "color" of authority to demand lay conformity to individual elite opinions. "Ecclesiastical abuse occurs when a Church officer acting in his official capacity and using the weight of his (less frequently her) office, coerces compliance, imposes his personal opinions or Church doctrines or policy, or resorts to such power ploys as threats, intimidation, and punishment to insure that his views prevail in a conflict of opinion" (Anderson and Allred 1997, xvi).

In Shupe's theory there are three pairs of inductive, "contrary" propositions concerning perpetrator/elite/victim reactions to exposure of malfeasance, respectively, within two different ideal types of religious polities: the *hierarchical* and the *congregational*. The distinguishing factor between polity types is the level of external accountability: in hierarchical groups local pastors (and churches) are accountable to authorities beyond the local congregation (e.g., a local Roman Catholic or United Methodist church); in congregational churches there is no such external accountability for pastors and elites (e.g., David Koresh and the Branch Davidians).

The three pairs of propositions in this closed system model (Shupe 1995, 49, 81, 119) are:

on perpetration:

1a. Hierarchical groups promote more long-term recidivism of clergy malfeasance than do congregational groups.
1b. Hierarchical groups ultimately do better in discouraging clergy malfeasance than do congregational groups.

on organization responses:

2a. Hierarchical groups provide greater opportunities for neutralization of clergy malfeasance than do congregational groups.
2b. Hierarchical groups ultimately are more likely to develop policies addressing clergy malfeasance than are congregational groups.

on victim responses:

3a. Victims in hierarchical groups tend to experience more ambivalence and reluctance to "blow the whistle" on their abuser than those in congregational groups.
3b. Victims in hierarchical groups are ultimately more likely to become empowered to focus their grievances on group-specific reforms than those in congregational groups.

There is a certain irony in each pair of propositions in the way polity is hypothetically supposed to affect the malfeasance—for example, hierarchy both promotes and eventually helps contain malfeasance. More importantly, however, we term this conceptualization of clergy malfeasance "closed system" because the wider culture and community are largely deemphasized. Important considerations are limited to denominational polities and the reactions of different actors within the groups. The larger institutional and organizational contexts of societal and international structures are not considered in the closed system model. The deviance is largely a historical and intragroup focus for analysis.

Toward an Inclusive, Open System Model of Clergy Malfeasance

Several studies of clergy malfeasance victimization have anticipated an open system definition of the phenomenon. For example, Nason-Clark (1998) examines the role community culture and parental encouragement played in the sexual abuse of children by Catholic priests in a Canadian scandal in Newfoundland. Jenkins (1998, 1996) thoroughly delineates how the dynamics of decentralized media ownership and Catholic Church/diocesan influence in local communities served for decades to suppress public awareness of incidences of priestly sexual malfeasance. Only with the gradual consolidation of media ownership (print as well as electronic) and the consequent waning of the Catholic hierarchy's ability to pressure or intimidate news editors has awareness of clergy malfeasance in that denomination come to the fore. Adumbrations, or conceptual anticipations in mid-twentieth century observations of religious groups, exist (see McLoughlin 1962; Blanshard 1958).

Iadicola (1998) calls for increased emphasis on "social context as it relates to organizational forces (structures and processes) that lead to, or facilitate, the commission of criminal action" with regard to clergy malfeasance, just as criminologists would focus on context in analyzing corporate crime in a monopolistic capitalist economy (Mokhiber 1988; Iadicola and Shupe 1998). Iadicola (1998) acknowledges that "criminology as a specialization has generally ignored crime by religious elites," but suggests that it might be helpful to examine such malfeasance in a way that distinguishes between individual and organizational crime. This open system model, which builds upon Shupe's original conceptualization, has five elements.

Expansion of the Definition of Clergy Malfeasance

The first element of this model is the expansion of the concept of clergy malfeasance beyond the legal definition to include violations of human rights that transcend societies' normative boundaries. Previously identified as such by those who have done research in this area are: sexual abuse, ritual abuse, and fraud. However, we would add two other areas of religious crime not originally considered by Shupe (1995): when religious organizations are involved in violent acts either in support of the state or in rebellion against the state. In the general context of clergy malfeasance, these categories have been the least studied. For example, what greater exploitation and abuse by religious organizations could there be than the historical practice, which continues today in many dependent capitalist nations, of cultural and physical genocide against indigenous populations (Tinker 1993; Gage 1991)?

There is a history of wedding religion to violence, and that is the history of conquest and imperialism. The history of the Catholic Church from the fourth to the seventeenth century is replete with examples of the use of torture and military violence against those deemed to be pagans or heretics. The Spanish Inquisition, the Crusades, and the conquest of the Americas were all part of this history of the use of violence and theft to acquire the property of dominated peoples. Religious elites played a central role in pursuing the violent conquest of peoples deemed less worthy than the Christians conquering them.

It would be difficult not to define the Spanish missionaries' role in the conquest of indigenous populations in the New World as that of accomplices to acts of murder or genocide—for example, when they gave the indigenous population whom the military were about to conquer the choice of conversion or death. Throughout history, the nature of this conquest and domination of indigenous peoples has taken two forms: the structural form, relating to regulation of access to (and scarcity of) resources like food (who gets what and why); and the ideological form. Conquest is never complete until both forms of control are established. Ultimately those who are dominated must learn a system of beliefs that reinforce or legitimate the system of domination that has been imposed on them. If not, the domination will be short-term, and maintaining it will require a great deal of military resources. Certainly the Aztecs' history of conquest indicates that they understood this, as did the early Christian churches and missionaries during the Crusades of conquest in the East, and the kings and conquistadors during the conquest of the Americas after their "discovery" by Europeans.

Tinker (1993) argues that Christian missionaries throughout North America were partners with the state in the genocide practiced against the indigenous populations. He contends that the missionaries were guilty of complicity in the destruction of Indian cultures and tribal social structures, and in the devastating impoverishment and death of the people to whom they preached. Focusing on several major missionary efforts in North America (John Eliot in colonial Massachusetts, Junipero Serra in California, Pierre-Jean De Smet in Missouri, and Henry Benjamin Whipple in Minnesota), Tinker documents the role their efforts played in the cultural, social, political, and economic destruction of the tribal groupings they were purportedly assimilating and converting to the European and Christian way of life. He concludes that the European colonial conquest of the Americas was fought on two distinct but symbiotically related fronts.

The first front "involved the political and military strategy that drove Indian peoples from their land to make room for the more civilized conqueror and worked to deprive Indian peoples of any continuing self-governance or self-determination" (Tinker 1993, 120). The second, just as decisive in the conquest of the Indian population, was the religious one pursued by missionaries of all denominations. Tinker notes that missionaries arrived first, to be followed in due course by the flag, armies, farmers, and merchants. But the missionaries for the most part stayed on, and continue to this day to exert a subtle social control over Indian communities.

In more recent times, many Latin American countries have seen examples of the established church working with the military in campaigns of terrorism against dissident populations. Especially in South American countries such as Paraguay, Bolivia, and Brazil, Protestant missionaries have succeeded the Catholic missionaries of an earlier era as representatives of the dominant imperial interests of Western capitalist countries. Investigating the missionary work in Paraguay, the German anthropologist Munzel found one particular mission run by U.S. fundamentalist missionaries where the minister himself engaged in "Indian hunts" for young children, who were then sold into slavery. Munzel notes that those not sold were herded into reservations, where they were subjected to psychological degradation to break their spirit to prepare them for assimilation.

> Fundamentalist missionaries have followed the official line of the Paraguayan Indian Affairs Department with greater cruelty than their predecessors; they have attempted and continue to attempt to secure the rapid cultural integration of the Ache at almost any cost. Their technique is "civilizing with a sledgehammer," in the words of the Director of the South American section of the Hamburg Ethnographic Museum, who discusses their "racist feeling of superiority" and suggests that their disdain for Indian culture may be the reason why they were selected by the government to run the reservation. Indians are forced to give up their names, customs, traditions, and taught to think "that anything connected with their own culture is shameful." (Munzel, quoted in Chomsky and Herman 1979, 112)

In Bolivia, Chomsky and Herman (1979) discuss the role of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) and the Wycliffe Bible Translators in missionizing the Indian population. Chomsky and Herman note that the SIL, possibly the richest and most powerful of the North American religious bodies devoted to missionary work in South America, is supported by the Bolivian government under the Ministry of Culture and Education.

> The standard missionary technique when an uncontacted group is found is to leave gifts along forest paths to draw the Indians to the mission compound, where "often at the end of a long journey, far from the Indian's source of food, his fish, his game, (the trail) comes abruptly to an end." The Indians are then taught that they must work for money on local farms and they agree, "when they realize that there's no going back," according to the head of SIL, an official of the Ministry of Culture and Education. (Chomsky and Herman 1979, 122)

According to Chomsky and Herman, North American missionaries have become the servants of right-wing military dictatorships in Bolivia and their allies to the north. Fundamentalist missionaries in Guatemala offered important support to General Rios Monte, a born-again Christian and member of the Church of the Word in California who conducted a campaign of terror against the Guatemalan poor that continued throughout the 1980s (Fried et al. 1983).

Wilson and Kvale (1994) describe how in the Central African Republic the Baaka people and their way of life are under threat from both the government and Catholic missionaries. These two groups are trying to force the Baaka to move from their villages deep in the forest to organized village settlements where they will be easier for the government and the church to control. Wilson and Kvale note that as part of this move the Baaka are encouraged to build wells and latrines, and to adopt domestic agricultural techniques in place of their traditional hunting and gathering lifestyle. Government officials and missionaries justify their actions by arguing that the Baaka "need to be brought into the modern age" in order to participate in the national culture and economy. But behind this supposed humanitarian concern are undeniable economic interests. According to Wilson and Kvale, the government wants to tax the Baaka, and wants a freer hand in granting timber-felling concessions to foreign companies in the forest where the Baaka currently live.

Fisher (1989) examines the church's complicity with the military in the extrajudicial executions of more than thirty thousand Argentineans during the government's dirty war. According to the testimony of Hebe de Bonafinil, one of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, "It was on the doors of the churches that we knocked most frequently. We believed the church would support us, that they, more than anyone else, would defend the right to life and the security of the family. They have a lot of power in Argentina. They could have used their influence to stop what was happening. If they had spoken out this would never have happened. The church is an accomplice in the genocide. They provided the priests to bless the weapons of the military, and they gave confessions to the torturers" (Fisher 1989, 111). The testimony Lisandro Raul Cubas gave to Amnesty International further illustrates the church's complicity with the military: "For Christmas 1976 some prisoners held at ESMA were taken to an improvised altar where a chaplain offered mass. We were hooded and handcuffed with shackles on our feet. It was a surreal situation, inexplicable, and more so because throughout the proceedings we could hear the screams of those being tortured. The chaplain (can he be called this?) asked which of us was going to confess" (Fisher 1989, 147).

Another well-known example of religious organizations supporting the state's criminal activity is the rise of Khomeini and the spread of Islamic fundamentalism by means of the *jihad* (holy war). In 1979, at Khomeini's instigation, more than two hundred Iranian "pilgrims" on the annual *hajj* (return) to the Grand Mosque in Mecca smuggled in automatic weapons, fired on a crowd of forty thousand worshipers, and briefly occupied the mosque. Only after nine days of intense house-to-house fighting with police were all the perpetrators killed or captured (Iadicola and Shupe 1998).

In October 1996 the United Nations International War Crimes Tribunal for Rwanda indicted Elizaphan Ntakirutimana, pastor of a Seventh-Day Adventist church in the Rwandan village of Mugonero, for genocide and crimes against humanity (Hammer and Mabry 1998). In April 1994, thousands of Tutsi who had sought refuge at the church died in one of the worst massacres in Rwanda. Ntakirutimana was known as a moderate Hutu; the church was also known to have provided shelter for the Tutsi during past eruptions of ethnic strife. However, on the morning of April 16, 1994, witnesses allege that Ntakirutimana led an army convoy to the complex, where eight thousand Tutsi were killed. He is also alleged to have led and participated in attacks on other churches, including one in Murambi. Ntakirutimana is currently residing in Laredo, Texas, with his son. Extradition proceedings were initially blocked when a federal judge in Laredo set him free, ruling that a 1996 U.S. law authorizing the handover of suspects to international courts was unconstitutional. The U.S. Justice Department is expected to refile the extradition request.

Have religious groups promoted violence against the state, or against minority populations contrary to state policy? In the United States, right-wing terrorist groups have at times aligned with, or cloaked themselves under the guise of, religious organizations. These principally targeted ethnic minorities or the government itself. According to the Klanwatch of the Southern Poverty Law Center, the Church of the Creator founded by Benjamin Klassen is a religion based on the worship of the white race (Southern Poverty Law Center 1993). The ideology of the Church of the Creator is crudely racist, targeting Jews in particular and all people of color in general. "Rahowa!" (for "racial holy war") is the rallying cry. According to Klanwatch, "the Church's longed-for world-wide white revolution seeks the elimination of Jews, blacks and other minorities" through "murder, treachery, lying, deceit, mass killings, whatever it takes to win" (Southern Poverty Law Center 1993, 2). The group has a few hundred members and chapters in about twenty states and several foreign countries. A sampling of the group's publications give an indication of the criminal nature of the organization: *The White Man's Bible, Rahowa!: The Planet is Ours*, and the church's newspaper, *Racial Loyalty*. Pontifex Maximus Rick McCarty, Ph.D., was chosen after two others who were in line to succeed Klassen were found guilty either of murder (in the case of George Loeb) or of conspiracy to bomb a Baltimore County police officer's home (in the case of Charles Edward Atvater).

A larger religious movement of churches called Identity Christianity is also tied very closely to hate groups including White Aryan Resistance (WAR) and various chapters of the Klu Klux Klan. According to Klanwatch, Robert Miles is one such Identity Church pastor who has intimate ties to the Aryan Nation Church in Hayden, Idaho. Miles was a keynote speaker at the 1986 Aryan World Congress in Hayden Lake, Idaho (Aho 1990). Aho describes the Christian Identity movement, the Aryan church, and assorted other right-wing churches as part of Idaho's patriot movement. He notes that the politics of righteousness has never been all violence. "The Lord's work requires a division of heroic labors. Some are called to petition, others to write, still others to pray. Some embark on campaigns of civil disobedience. Fewer don arms to do the truly nasty jobs of bombing, arson, and murder. While their extremity may be regretted by their fellow patriots, just as often it is 'understood'" (Aho 1990, 67). Such extremism is sanctioned for the same reasons that some members can sympathize with the presumed sentiments behind the planning of the Oklahoma City bombing.

The political right wing is not alone in involving churches in violence. The radicalization of Christianity was a force in the overthrow of the Somoza regime. In Esteli, Nicaragua, an area known for its radical dioceses, the clergy and nuns organized clandestine street committees, supplying arms and combatants during the insurrection against the Somoza regime. Several members of the clergy joined the Frente Sandinista. The bishops of Nicaragua issued a document condoning the armed struggle in June 1979 after Somoza began a campaign of shelling major cities and escalating the use of death squads against the poor. According to the bishops, violence could be used only as a last resort; however, they emphasized that violence is institutionalized in the Third World and in using violence to do away with violence, the good outweighs the bad.

Radical wings of the church have been identified and targeted by the military in several Latin American countries as aiding and abetting the enemy (i.e., the Left). There have been a number of government killings of church personnel and leaders who were perceived to be in league with the enemy, the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero in El Salvador being one notable example.

What links these acts of violence to what Shupe referred to originally as clergy malfeasance are the concepts of exploitation and abuse of power. Shupe (1995) originally focused on the relationships between the group's believers and the elites of that religion. Broadening the definition brings a greater number of victims of abuse and exploitation by religious elites under the clergy malfeasance umbrella.

Inclusion of the Organizational Actor

With the definition broadened by this shift of focus to the elements of abuse and exploitation, the role of actor shifts from the individual abuser or exploiter to the organizational actor. Here the abuse or exploitation is part of the organization's operating policy. For example, the nature of the Catholic Church's organizational response to the sexual abuses of Father James Porter in communities around the nation, over a period of years during which he accumulated more than two hundred known victims (Burkett and Bruni 1993), would make the organization an accomplice after the fact, as church officials merely moved him from parish to parish to contain scandal. The church's actions could be considered certainly organized, if not corporate, crime—at the very minimum, criminal negligence.

There is a history (although not a long one) of organizations being prosecuted for the abuse and exploitation of workers, consumers, and communities. (The U.S. federal and state governments' recent cases against the tobacco industry for the damage it knowingly inflicted on consumers is a contemporary example.) The illegal coverups of clergy malfeasance cases like Porter's, some of which may be traced all the way to the Vatican, are grounds for criminal prosecution that have never been considered. Similarly, the church's policies of forced coercion in South and Central America and Africa, and its cooperation with local governments in the establishment of missionaries, are also examples of organizational abuse. The reason the abuse and exploitation, or crime in the former case, on the part of the organization has never been recognized is because of the significance of the next element of the open model.

Support or Collusion of Elites across Institutional Spheres

A third and related element of the open systems model is the significance of the support or collusion of elites across institutional spheres and system levels (organizational, community/local, nation-state, and international) that allows deviance to be perpetuated. Institutions do not operate independently of each other. Both functional and critical theorists recognize the importance of institutional linkages within a total social system. Simon and Eitzen themselves employed a Millsian analysis of corporate and state crime to make this point (Simon and Eitzen 1990).

The links between institutions represent an important area of analysis that must be incorporated in any theory of religious crime. By focusing on mainstream areas of conventional crime or deviance, researchers blind themselves to the significance of these linkages. Once one broadens the definition of exploitation and abuse to include acts of harm that occur in the conversion process (i.e., missionary work) or acts of rebellion against the state, the linkages become more visible. Other important institutional linkages to consider are those between religious organizations and volunteer organizations, many of which may themselves be religious (and may occasionally be guilty of clergy malfeasance). Consider for example the alliances formed by the Unification Church, following the Rev. Moon's 1982 federal income tax evasion prison sentence, with the LDS Church, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Moral Majority, and other religious groups involved in petitioning against Moon's sentence; and Moon's later support of controversial Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan (Shupe 1988b; Muhammad 1997).

These institutional linkages occur within a context of multiple hierarchical systems. An individual congregation's linkages with the power structure of a local community can determine whether and how the local criminal justice system responds. This is the first step in determining whether the clergy malfeasance will be recognized or defined as clergy malfeasance. Beyond the community context, there are state and/or regional, nation-state, and international institutional linkages. At each level, the position of the church organization and leadership vis-à-vis representatives at the corresponding levels of other systems will significantly influence the career of the religious abuse and exploitation. There are also linkages between levels that reinforce or legitimate or provide a check on the nature of the abuse and exploitation. Again, consider as an example the Father James Porter case discussed above, or any of a number of other sexual abuse cases documented within the Catholic Church. The significance of the linkages at each level made the offenders (both the individual and the organization) invisible to the public at each corresponding level, as Shupe (1995) and others argue.

The most important linkage in regard to the definition and response to deviance is of course the state. The nature of such linkages and their location can be essential in the process of defining deviance. Religious organizations may be linked to the state via the personnel of the state themselves being members of the religious organization. It is no coincidence that when a Satanic abuse hysteria broke out in Utah in the early 1990s, Mormon church leaders as well as Mormon politicians were urged to “do something” to calm public concerns (Shupe 1991, 200).

The connection between the religious organization and the local media is another important linkage that needs to be articulated. “News” of clergy malfeasance, after all, does not develop in a vacuum. Whether and how the media responds to acts of deviance by religious elites defines whether the act is recognized as deviance and whether there is a response to it by the state. In some cases, church organizations not only may influence media by means of their power in the community or nation; they may also own media. In the latter case this can provide them with an ability to define the problem for their membership.

As an illustration of church influence over the media, Jenkins (1998, 1996) argues that up to about twenty years ago, the Roman Catholic Church used its influence with the media to hide priestly sexual scandals. Before local ownership of newspapers and electronic media began being transferred to larger, national enterprises, a bishop or monsignor could threaten a hometown editor with parishioner boycotts of media outlets—or, more importantly, of their advertisers. This is one significant reason why clergy malfeasance has only relatively recently begun to "make news."

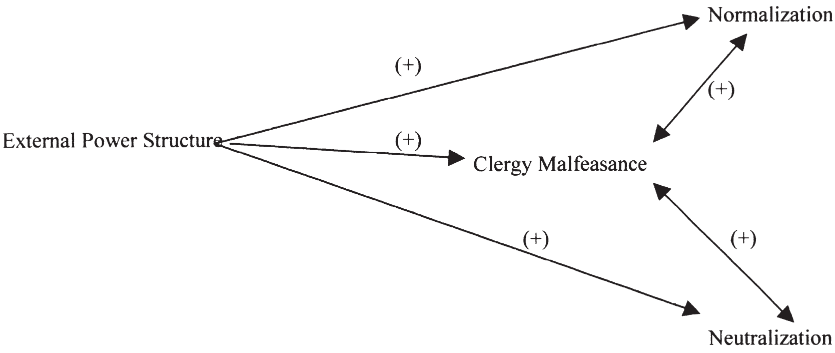
Likewise, Shupe (1991, 106–23) has described attempts by leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints to minimize a Satanic child-abuse hysteria largely contained in one Utah community. And extensive examinations of the Mount Carmel siege/conflagration in Waco, Texas (e.g., Wright 1995), suggest how a religious organization's lack of media influence can shape public opinion and its definition as deviant.

Another important area is the linkage between economic elites and religious organizations. Economic elites may be members of religious organizations that are involved in religious deviance. These elites may have considerable influence in the community, and may thus affect how the malfeasance is defined and responded to by the community and state. Furthermore, many religious organizations are themselves powerful economic actors, as the Jenkins data show, owning some businesses and/or influencing the assets of others. This power can often translate into influence over community leaders, mayors, city prosecutors, or chiefs of police. Finally, in the case of acts of domination, subjugation, and conversion of indigenous populations, church missionary organizations may be supported by local economic elites who stand to benefit most. Fur traders in Canada and the United States, for example, were supporters of missionary work by the Catholic Church during the earliest stages of conquest. Today, local business elites in many Latin and African countries actively support and promote missionary work that leads to the destruction of indigenous cultures, and consequently to the availability of the resources those cultures possessed.

Power Contexts

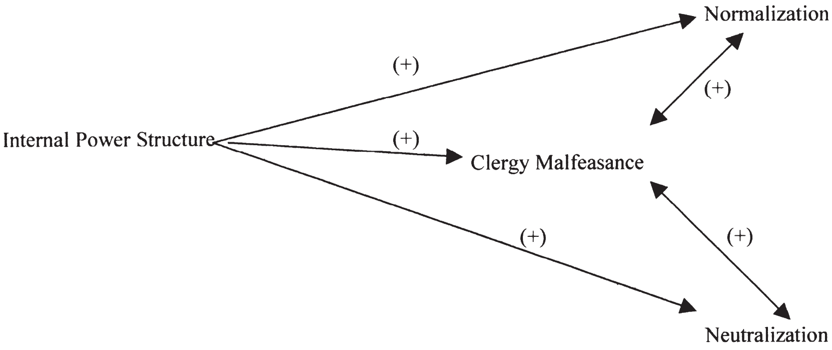
In his original theoretical conceptualization, Shupe focused on the external power context, the hierarchical structures of the religious organization beyond the specific church. The more hierarchical the external power structure, the higher the incidence of clergy malfeasance, and the greater the ability to neutralize the negative response of the community;

FIGURE 1
External Power Structure, Clergy Malfeasance, Normalization, and Neutralization


Normalization
(+)
(+)
External Power Structure
(+)
Clergy Malfeasance
(+)
(+)
Neutralization

NOTE: High score on External Power Structure means high centralization of power externally, low score means low centralization of power externally.

FIGURE 2
Internal Power Structure, Clergy Malfeasance, Normalization, and Neutralization


Normalization
(+)
(+)
Internal Power Structure
(+)
Clergy Malfeasance
(+)
(+)
Neutralization

NOTE: High score on Internal Power Structure means high centralization of power internally, low score means low centralization of power internally.

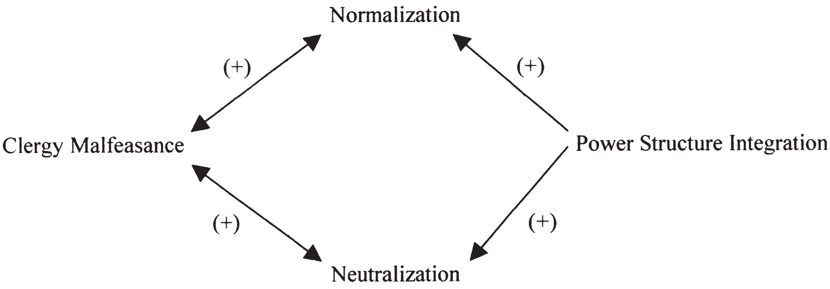
however, the likelihood of normalization in such cases is ultimately lower. Accountability to outside elites, in other words, was the most important independent variable affecting the dependent variables of reactance: perpetrators, elites, and victims (fig. 1).

The internal power context variable is added as a fourth element in the open systems model. This refers to the level of centralization or dispersal of power within the individual church membership (laity and clergy). The internal power relations may be more important in relation to the occurrence and normalization of the act. The ability of the laity to respond collectively will have a significant impact upon the individual and organizational actors. For example, since there is potentially greater power dispersed to members of the church within congregational structures, one could argue that church leaders would have less ability to "normalize" their deviance. Furthermore, if the local organizational membership pursues state intervention through the criminal justice system, the organization will eventually attempt to isolate and marginalize the individual actors (both offenders and victims) to defend itself. Thus at each level the least powerful actor accused will be the most vulnerable to prosecution (fig. 2).

Power Structure Integration

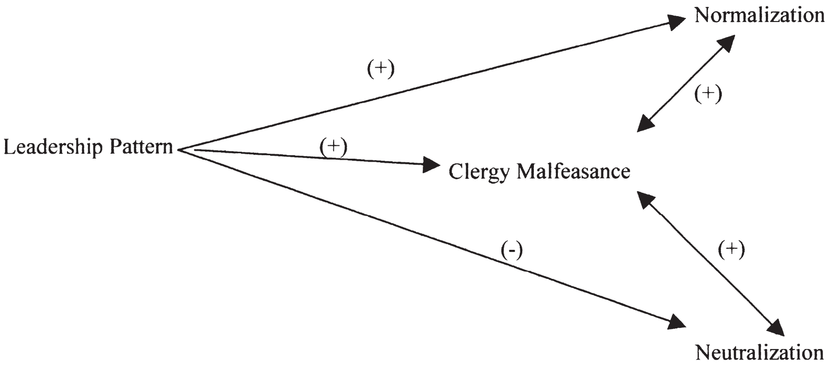
The other dimension of power and its impact on clergy malfeasance is the degree to which the church leadership is integrated into the local or national power structure. This does not necessarily impact the occurrence of clergy malfeasance; rather, it impacts whether the malfeasance is neutralized or normalized. For example, is the problem of sexual abuse by priests likely to develop as a public issue in Poland or Mexico, where the church is more likely to be integrated into the power structure of the society? Or is it more likely to develop as a public issue in, let us say, India, Nigeria, Indonesia, Egypt, or the Republic of China, where the church is less likely to be integrated into the power structure? In the latter case, normalization and neutralization is less likely to occur, thus depressing the occurrence of clergy malfeasance. As we were writing this chapter, an instance was reported in the local newspaper where a priest was caught embezzling $14,000 in church funds. Rather than formally processing the charge, the local authorities decided to handle the matter informally, allowing the priest to pay back the money without being charged with the criminal offense. If the religious organization were less integrated into the local power structure of the community, it would be less likely that such a matter would be handled in this way. Figure 3 illustrates the hypothesized relationships between power structure integration, neutralization, normalization, and clergy malfeasance.

FIGURE 3
Power Structure Integration, Normalization, Neutralization, and Clergy Malfeasance


Normalization
(+)
(+)
Clergy Malfeasance
Power Structure Integration
(+)
(+)
Neutralization

NOTE: High score on Power Structure Integration means high level of church leadership in power structure of society, low score means low level of integration of church leadership in power structure.

FIGURE 4
Leadership Pattern, Clergy Malfeasance, Normalization, and Neutralization


Normalization
(+)
(+)
Leadership Pattern
(+)
Clergy Malfeasance
(-)
(+)
Neutralization

NOTE: High score on Power Structure Integration means high level of church leadership in power structure of society, low score means low level of integration of church leadership in power structure.

Internal Leadership Pattern and the Stability and Congruence of the Normative System

A fifth element of the open systems model is the significance of the organization's internal leadership pattern and the stability of the normative structure. As the authority of leadership is greater in the charismatic organization, there is a commensurately greater incidence of malfeasance, greater ability to normalize the deviant behavior, and less ability to neutralize the negative response of the community. Since the charismatic leader involved in the religious deviance is often identified as the church, once the offense becomes known it is typically ascribed to the organization as a whole, thus making neutralization difficult. Conversely, the more closely leadership patterns follow a legal/rational model the less likely malfeasance is to occur, the less the organization's ability to normalize the deviant behavior, and the greater the organization's ability to neutralize the negative response of the community (fig. 4). This neutralization is likely to occur by means of a bureaucratic process that allows for controlling behavior, defining doctrine, and separating the offender from the organization when deviance occurs.

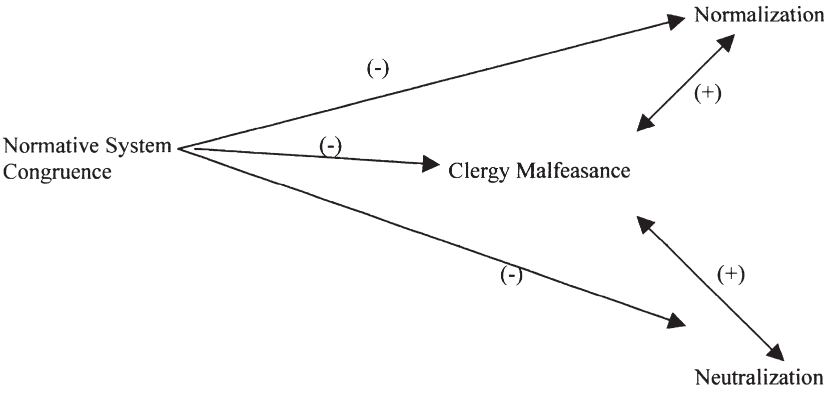
As previously hypothesized (Iadicola 1998) in regard to normative stability, the higher the level of stability of the normative structure or religion, the lower the incidence of clergy malfeasance, the lower the organization's ability to normalize the deviance, and the greater the group's ability to neutralize the negative response of the community. Conversely, the less stable the doctrine, or the more it is subject to interpretation by local church leadership, the greater the likelihood of malfeasance, the greater the likelihood of normalization of the deviance, and the less likely the organization will be able to neutralize the negative response of the community. Normative stability militates against the occurrence of clergy malfeasance in that the rules or doctrine are clearly defined and more rigidly defended. Furthermore, as a result of the stability of the doctrine, normalization of deviance is less likely to occur. Where the doctrine is very stable it is defined as the basis or foundation of the religious organization. Thus, individual offenders are easily separated from the doctrine, thereby helping to neutralize negative community response.

The other dimension of the normative system to be included is the nature of its content. The greater the degree to which the normative system of the religious organization is congruent or consistent with the normative system of the larger society, the less likely there will be clergy malfeasance, and the less likely there will be normalization and neutralization. For example, religious normative systems that support or promote polygamy, the use of illegal drugs, child endangerment through denial of medical treatment, or animal or human sacrifice will have more problems with perceived religious deviance than those whose normative systems are part of the cultural and normative mainstream.

TABLE 1
Normative Stability and Normative Congruence and Patterns of Clergy Malfeasance

		Normative Stability High	 Low
Normative Congruence	High	Low clergy malfeasance	Low clergy malfeasance
	Low	High clergy malfeasance	High clergy malfeasance

FIGURE 5
Normative System Congruence, Clergy Malfeasance, Normalization, and Neutralization



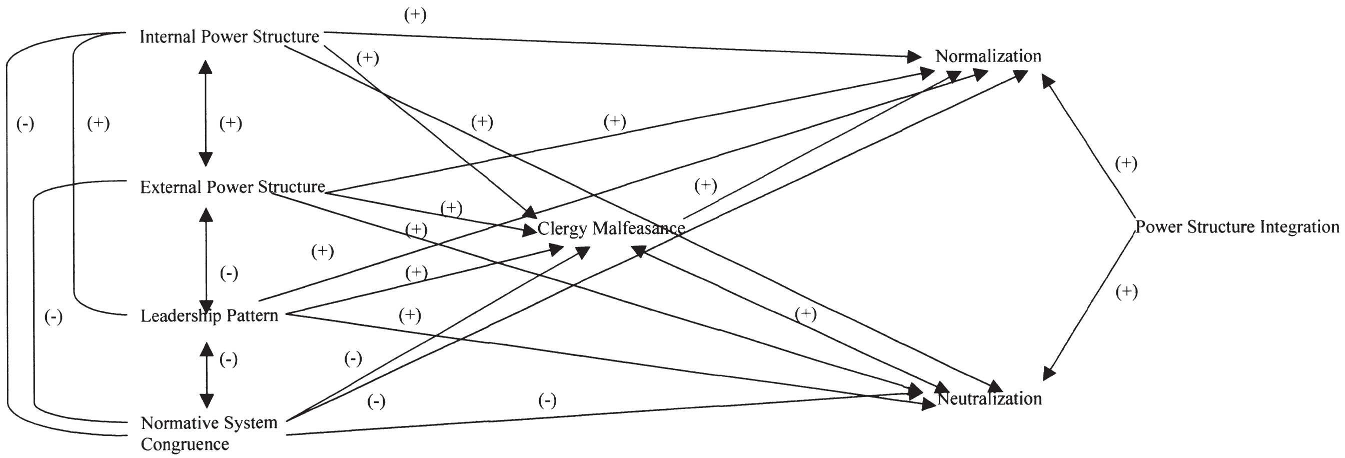
NOTE: High score on Normative System Congruence means high congruence of normative system, low score means low congruence of normative system.

When we examine the interrelationship between the two components or the normative structure in a two-by-two table we can see that the salient factor as it relates to clergy malfeasance is not stability but rather congruence of the normative system. Whether the normative system is stable or not is relatively insignificant; the crucial dimension is whether the normative system is consistent with the larger normative order. Thus, the model presented earlier (Iadicola 1998) is changed to substitute normative congruence for normative stability (fig. 5).

Figure 6 illustrates the full open system model in all its complexity. The more power is centralized internally (hierarchical—high score on the Internal Power Structure variable), the higher the incidence of

FIGURE 6

Modified Full Model of Clergy Malfeasance, Normalization, and Neutralization



Internal Power Structure
External Power Structure
Leadership Pattern
Normative System Congruence
Clergy Malfeasance
Normalization
Neutralization
Power Structure Integration
(+)
(+)
(+)
(+)
(+)
(+)
(+)
(+)
(+)
(+)
(+)
(+)
(+)
(+)
(+)
(+)
(-)
(-)
(-)
(-)
(-)
(-)
(-)
(-)

clergy malfeasance, the greater the likelihood of normalization, and the greater the organization's ability to neutralize the negative fallout. The more power is dispersed internally (low score on the Internal Power Structure variable), the lower the incidence of clergy malfeasance, the lower the likelihood of normalization, and the less likely the organization will be able to neutralize the negative response of the community. The more hierarchical the external power structure, the higher the incidence of clergy malfeasance, and the greater the organization's ability to neutralize the negative response of the community, but the lower the likelihood of normalization of the deviance.

The linkage between the external and internal power structures is mutually reinforcing—i.e., in the vast majority of church organizations the external power structure determines the nature of the internal power structure.

Leadership pattern is linked to the external and internal power structure in that charismatic leaders are likely to preside over highly hierarchical organizations, , but to exist within much less hierarchical external power structures. In such cases, the charismatic leader of the local group is likely to be perceived within the larger structure as a threat to authority, and thus the larger group is likely to either incorporate the local leader into its own leadership hierarchy or to constrain the local leader's power.

Combining these factors, we can hypothetically describe a religious organization that would have the greatest likelihood of clergy malfeasance as one in which the internal and external power structure is hierarchical, where leadership patterns are more likely to be of the charismatic type, and where the normative doctrine is highly unstable and inconsistent with the dominant culture (though such a combination is empirically unlikely). Clergy malfeasance is least likely to occur in an organization where internal and external power structures are more egalitarian or decentralized, leadership patterns are of the legal/rational type, doctrine stability is high, and doctrine content is consistent with the cultural mainstream.

Conclusion

Iadicola (1998) calls for a focus on the social context as it relates to organizational forces (structures and processes) that lead to, or facilitate, the commission of criminal acts of clergy malfeasance in the same way that criminologists would in analyzing corporate crime in a monopoly capitalist economy (e.g., Mokhiber 1988; Iadicola and Shupe 1998). Iadicola acknowledges that criminology as a specialization has generally ignored crime by religious elites, but suggests that criminologists take the established stance of examining such malfeasance in a way that distinguishes between individual and organizational crime.

The thrust of such an argument, presented in truncated form here, is that the internal dynamics of religious organizations, congregational or hierarchical, that provide "opportunity structures" for deviance do not occur in a societal vacuum. From the medieval crusades with their civilian atrocities to Christian missionaries' complicity with entrepreneurs who, among other things, hunt down ("pacify") Third World youths and literally sell them into slavery, prop up right-wing dictatorships, and promote American corporate profits, religious elite deviance and religious groups' policies cannot be divorced from larger, macrocultural/political forces and issues (Chomsky and Herman 1979; Colby and Dennette 1995).

This extended conceptualization, we suggest, offers to replace the closed system model with a model that integrates external and internal structural environments via a series of feedback loops of influence. The African American congregation, for example, does not exist in a majority white society in which its particular minority status is irrelevant to revelations of clergy scandal. The example of the Reverend Henry Lyons, head of the National Baptist Church USA and pastor of a black St. Petersburg, Florida, church is illustrative. During the late 1990s Lyons was accused, indicted, and convicted of embezzlement, excessive personal and unethical enrichment from contracts drawn between the denomination and various vendors, and transparent adultery. Despite obviously questionable activities, Lyons was upheld as denominational head at the denomination's national convention. Lyons blamed revelations and criticisms of his actions on a racist white press (e.g., Associated Press 1997a, b, c, d). The role of the black community (and the role of the black pastor in that subculture) in reacting to such malfeasance is only one of the avenues for exploration suggested by an open systems model.

Finally, the notion of congregational versus hierarchical church polity and their relations to the larger society invite further conceptualization, using the growing number of case studies to flesh out how "local" polity relates to larger societal polity. Clergy malfeasance as a "discovered" phenomenon has too long been mostly the preserve of journalists and hand-wringing moralists. We call for extended theorizing.

REFERENCES

Aho, James A. 1990. *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho Christian Patriotism*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Allred, Janice Merrill. 1996. "How to Read Bad News." In *Case Reports of the Mormon Alliance, Vol. 1, 1995,* ed. Lavina Fielding Anderson and Janice Merrill Allred, 13–19. Salt Lake City, Utah: Mormon Alliance.

Anderson, Lavina Fielding. 1997. "Context and Analysis: 'You Have Heard True Doctrine Taught': Elder Bruce R. McConkie's 1981–82 Addresses." In *Case Reports of the Mormon Alliance: Vol. 2, 1996,* ed. Lavina Fielding Anderson and Janice Merrill Allred, 80–96. Salt Lake City, Utah: Mormon Alliance.

Anderson, Lavina Fielding, and Janice Merrill Allred. 1997. "Information About the Mormon Alliance." In *Case Reports of the Mormon Alliance. Vol. 2, 1996,* ed. Lavina Fielding Anderson and Janice Merrill Allred, xvi–xix. Salt Lake City, Utah: Mormon Alliance.

Associated Press. 1997a. "Controversy Ensnares National Baptist Leader." *Fort Wayne (Indiana) Journal Gazette*, 13 July.

———. 1997b. "Report: Lyons Lied About Former Wives." *Sarasota (Florida) Herald-Tribune*, 11 August.

———. 1997c. "Baptists to Forgive Errant Leader." *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*, 13 August.

———. 1997d. "Ministers: Lyons Should 'Step Aside' Pending Probe." *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, 16 August.

Berry, Jason. 1992. *Lead Us Not into Temptation: Catholic Priests and the Sexual Abuse of Children*. New York: Doubleday.

Blanchard, Gerald T. 1991. "Sexually Abusive Clergymen: A Conceptual Framework for Intervention and Recovery." *Pastoral Psychology* 39, no. 4: 327-46.

Blanshard, Paul. 1958. *American Freedom and Catholic Power*. 2d edition. Boston: Beacon Press.

Burkett, Elinor, and Frank Bruni. 1993. *A Gospel of Shame: Children, Sexual Abuse, and the Catholic Church*. New York: Viking Press.

Chomsky, Noam, and Edward S. Herman. 1979. *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism*. Boston: South End Press.

Colby, Gerard, and Charlotte Dennette. 1995. *Thy Will Be Done*. New York: HarperCollins.

Cooper-White, Pamela. 1991. "Soul Stealing: Power Relations in Pastoral Sexual Abuse." *The Christian Century,* 20 February, 196–99.

Dziech, Billy Wright, and Linda Weiner. 1990. *The Lecherous Professor: Sexual Harassment on Campus*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Farley, Lin. 1980. *Sexual Shakedown: The Sexual Harassment of Women on the Job*. New York: Warner Books.

Fisher, Jo. 1989. *Mothers of the Disappeared*. Boston: South End Press.

Fisher, Marc. 1996. "Moon, the Host of Stars." *The Washington Post*, 1 August.

Fortune, Marie M. 1989. *Is Nothing Sacred?* San Francisco: HarperCollins.

Fried, Jonathan L., Marvin E. Gettleman, Deborah T. Levenson, and Nancy Peckenham. 1983. *Guatemala in Rebellion: Unfinished History*. New York: Grove Press.

Gage, Susan. 1991. *Colonialism in the Americas.* Victoria, British Columbia: Victoria International Development Education Association.

Hadden, Jeffrey K., and Anson Shupe. 1988. *Televangelism: Power and Politics on God's Frontier*. New York: Henry Holt.

Hammer, Joshua, and Marcus Mabry. 1998. "Victim or Mass Murderer?" *Newsweek,* 9 February, 56–57.

Heinerman, John, and Anson Shupe. 1985. *The Mormon Corporate Empire*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Iadicola, Peter. 1998. "Criminology's Contributions to the Study of Religious Crime." In *Wolves within the Fold: Religious Leadership and the Abuse of Power,* ed. Anson Shupe, 212–29. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Iadicola, Peter, and Anson Shupe. 1998. *Violence, Inequality, and Human Freedom*. New Jersey: General Hall.

Jenkins, Philip. 1996. *Pedophiles and Priests: Anatomy of a Contemporary Crisis*. New York: Oxford University Press.

———. 1998. "Creating a Culture of Clergy Deviance." In *Wolves within the Fold: Religious Leadership and the Abuse of Power,* ed. Anson Shupe, 118–32. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Lebacqz, Karen, and Ronald G. Burton. 1991. *Sex in the Parish*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press.

Mackinnon, Catherine. 1979. *Sexual Harassment of Working Women: A Case of Sex Discrimination*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.

Mauss, Armand L. 1975. *Social Problems as Social Movements*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott.

McLoughlin, Emmett. 1962. *Crime and Immorality in the Catholic Church*. New York: Lyle Stuart.

Milgrim, Jeanette Hofstee, and Gary R. Schoener. 1987. "Responding to Clients Who Have Been Sexually Exploited by Counselors, Therapists, and Clergy." In *Sexual Assault and Abuse: A Handbook for Clergy and Religious Professionals,* ed. Mary D. Pellauer, Barbara Chester, and Jane Boyojian, 207–18. San Francisco: HarperCollins.

Moen, Matthew C. 1992. *The Transformation of the New Christian Right*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

Mokhiber, Russell. 1988. *Corporate Crime and Violence*. San Francisco: Sierra Club.

Muhammad, James. 1997. "The Sacredness of Marriage: Saying 'I Do' God's Way." *The Final Call*, 9 December, 2, 6–7.

Nason-Clark, Nancy. 1983. "A Church Divided." In *The Nicaragua Reader*, ed. Peter Rosset and John Vandermeer. New York: Grove Press.

———. 1997. "Buddhists for Bill." *Newsweek*, 22 December, 28–29.

———. 1998. "The Impact of Abuses of Clergy Trust on Female Congregants' Faith and Practice." In *Wolves within the Fold: Religious Leadership and Abuses of Power,* ed. Anson Shupe, 85–100. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Rutter, Peter. 1989. *Sex in the Forbidden Zone*. Los Angeles: Jeremy P. Tarcher.

Shapiro, Susan. 1987. "The Social Control of Impersonal Trust." *American Journal of Sociology* 93, no. 3: 623–58.

Shupe, Anson. 1980. *The New Vigilantes: Deprogrammers, Anti-Cultists, and the New Religions.* Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage.

———. 1991. "The Lehi Child Sexual Abuse Scare." In *The Darker Side of Virtue*. Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books.

———. 1995. *In the Name of All that's Holy: A Theory of Clergy Malfeasance.* Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

———. 1998a. "Economic Fraud and Christian Leaders in the United States." In *Wolves Within the Fold: Religious Leadership and Abuses of Power,* ed. Anson Shupe, 49–64. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

———. 1998b. "Frame Alignment and Strategic Evolution in Social Movements: The Case of Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church." In *Religion, Mobilization, and Social Action,* ed. Anson Shupe and Bronislaw Misztal. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

Simon, David R., and D. Stanley Eitzen. 1990. *Elite Deviance*. 3d edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Southern Poverty Law Center. 1993. "Klanwatch Reports Hate Violence at Record Levels Last Year." *Southern Poverty Law Center Report* 23: 1, 5.

Tinker, George E. 1993. *Missionary Conquest*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Wilson, Margaret, and Ingrid Kvale. 1994. "They Do Not Know Us Yet." *The New Internationalist* (June): 17.

Wright, Stuart A. 1995. *Armageddon in Waco*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Chapter 3

Narratives of Sexual Danger

A Comparative Perspective on the Emergence of the Clergy Sexual Violation Scandal

David G. Bromley and Clinton H. Cress

Just over a decade ago there was a sudden profusion of narratives recounting sexual violations by members of the clergy. There quickly followed a wave of media reports and social science analyses identifying a new social problem most often referred to as "clergy abuse" or "clergy malfeasance." While clergy malfeasance refers to a range of behaviors including financial violations, misuse of leadership authority, and sexual misconduct (Shupe 1995), the sexual violations have captured the lion's share of public and scholarly attention. The Catholic Church priest cases certainly rank as the single most explosive scandal of this type. The narratives recounted by aggrieved families and their spokespersons raised the specter of widespread sexual activity, primarily with young sons of parish members, sending shock waves through that religious community. A secondary cover-up scandal emerged in the wake of revelations that in a number of instances priests had been involved in *serial* sexual violations, that the church had knowingly reassigned these priests to new parishes where other unsuspecting congregations were victimized, that priests were protected while families were deceived, and that the church sought to avoid legal responsibility for these actions. The succession of revelations in this episode was at least the epicenter event that drew public attention to a variety of other kinds of misconduct across denominational lines.

At least initially, the outpouring of journalistic and social science analysis of clergy sexual deviance treated these violations as anomalous. The revelation of a pattern of serious violations by highly trusted figures in a sacred institution required explanation. Once this new category of deviance had been "discovered," the focus shifted to issues such as the number of perpetrators and incidents, distinguishing pathological attributes of individual perpetrators, perpetrator careers, the organizational environment in which the behavior was learned, organizational attributes associated with varying rates of violation and apprehension, and the impact of the violations on the parties involved. In this chapter we adopt an alternative perspective that investigates the "discovery" of clergy sexual violations through a comparison of sexual coercion scandals.

We contend that if clergy sexual deviance is examined in a historical-comparative perspective, the apparent anomaly disappears. The argument developed here rests on six pivotal observations. First, contemporary claims of sexual violations are not unique to clergy. Similar claimsmaking ("the activities of individuals or groups making assertions of grievances and claims with respect to some putative conditions") is occurring elsewhere in the social order around themes of "sexuality" and "coercion," most notably in workplace, professional, familial, and dating relationships (Spector and Kitsuse 1977, 75). Second, the available data indicate that the behavioral patterns around which claimsmaking is currently mobilizing have long histories. While there obviously is considerable variation in contemporary and historical rates of various behaviors, the evidence on prevalence and persistence is impressive. Third, there is little doubt that within all of the social networks involved knowledge about the problematic behavior was relatively widespread, but the narratives typically did not circulate outside these networks. Fourth, the nature of the danger posed by coercive sexuality has changed between earlier and more recent versions of each set of narratives. In particular, the current narratives emphasize the danger to individuals by virtue of their being placed in social relationships that undermine their self-directedness. Fifth, in the initial set of narratives the individuals located in the role of "victim" or "survivor" were predominantly families, women, and children while the "perpetrator" role was filled almost exclusively by adult males. There is some evidence that claimsmaking has since diffused more broadly. Finally, each of these contentious behavioral patterns achieved public visibility during roughly the same time period.

These observations suggest several premises that orient our analysis. Allegations of clergy deviance are not substantively unique but rather constitute one case in a series of thematically related claims now being advanced in a number of social arenas. This observation inclines us toward a structural analysis that might account for the emergence of thematically related claims. Further, the current claims identify behaviors that either were not defined as violations at an earlier time or were violations for which there was no extant social recourse, despite their being known to insiders. The fact that claimsmaking might have occurred but did not focuses our attention on how structural conditions have changed so that particular claims can now be advanced and warranted. The emergence of a common theme in contemporary narratives, an inappropriate type and level of relational control over individuals, hints at the nature of claims now considered legitimate to advance. The central role of women and children as "victims/survivors" and of males as "perpetrators" leads us to explore patriarchal control as the source of power being challenged in these narratives. The emergence of these claims in diverse social locations at approximately the same historical moment suggests to us a common set of structural factors that has rendered certain forms of relations increasingly problematic.

Since the emergence of the clergy sexual scandal emanates most directly from the narratives of individuals identified as "victims" or "survivors" within the narratives, we take the related issues of the structural conditions under which claimsmaking began and the nature and timing of the claims advanced as the problematic. In our analysis of the problematizing of sexual coercion, we treat the emergence of claimsmaking narratives as revelations of "scandal." Scandal refers to *patterned deviant activity within an established organization/institution that is externally challenged as a breach of its social trustworthiness* (see also Fine 1997). The argument formulated here is structural, with the specific goal of identifying the historically developing conditions underlying the emergence of a series of scandals thematized around sexual coercion. We argue that the temporal coincidence of these narratives can be traced historically to three interrelated developments in the reconfiguration of contractual and covenantal social relations (Bromley 1997). First, there has been a major expansion of contractual forms of social relations in both public and private spheres over the last several decades. Correspondingly, personal autonomy, voluntarism, and self-directedness (rationality in the public sphere and self-actuation in the private sphere) have become the normative basis for connecting individuals to institutions and relationships in either sphere. Finally, regulatory units that authorize contractual standards and empower claimsmaking around those standards have been created, or their mandate has been expanded. The establishment of regulatory units creates third parties with an independent interest in social control, along with criteria, procedures, and power for exercising that control (Bromley 1998). The simultaneous development of more contractual organization, which redefines policies and procedures in terms of which claimsmaking can be legitimated; individuals with orientations and expectations premised on contractually compatible relationships, which yields a pool of potential claimants; and expansion of contractually oriented regulatory units, which can warrant claims, has created the basis for asserting contractual primacy. Clergy sexual deviance, then, became problematic and was subsequently discovered as a result of major structural changes in the contemporary social order.

If we examine the series of scandals thematized by sexual coercion, the common problem identified in each is inappropriate configurations of contractual/covenantal social relations, specifically the failure to organize covenantal relations within a contractually compatible context. In each case the locus of the violation is the local site at which the presumptively autonomous individual connects with a relational network. The substance of the violation is the inappropriate form and/or degree of embedding of the individual at that site. The inappropriate embedding of individuals, symbolized through coercive sexuality, is the product of continued *sub rosa* patriarchal control. From this perspective, religious organizations are simply one site at which new forms of deviance are being constructed as part of a reconfiguration of dominant forms of social relations. We pursue this argument by first describing contractual and covenantal forms and changes in the relationship between the two forms and the utility of sexuality as a means of symbolizing and dramatizing inappropriate relationships. We then analyze four cases in which scandals have been defined through themes of sexuality and coercion—harassment, exploitation, abuse, and molestation—that closely resemble the current clergy sexual scandal.

Contractual and Covenantal Social Relations

The American social order is organized through two major forms of social relations, which we term contractual and covenantal. The two traditions construct social relationships on fundamentally different premises, yet they coexist within the contemporary social order and are integral to one another. Stated most parsimoniously, contractual social relations are those authorized by state-economic organizations (e.g., through property rights, organizational charters, professional credentialing), while covenantal relations are authorized through religious, familial, clan, community, and ethnic groups (e.g., through love, friendship, kinship, voluntary association relationships). Let us briefly summarize the two traditions and the shifting relationship between them.

From a contractual perspective individuals are the basic constituent unit of human groups, individual interests are the natural form through which human intentions take shape, and institutions are derivative units legitimated by and responsive to individual interests. It is assumed that collective good is the product of individual actions in furtherance of personal interest. In contractual social relations, such as classic buyer-seller transactions, participants signal their intentions through the process of negotiation with a goal of reaching mutual agreement. Contractual exchanges are organized positionally, which means that it is the category (e.g., employer-employee, customer-salesperson) into which participants fall that shapes relationships, and there is a sharp distinction between role and person. Since their objective is to effect an exchange, participants pledge to specific performances (e.g., hours worked and wages paid) rather than making more global pledges to another's overall well-being. Negotiations are orchestrated through a sequence of performance rituals (e.g., demonstrating products or skills, making offers, "good faith" deposits, "closing" ceremonies) that accentuate the presence of choice and voluntarism. Mutual agreement is most consensually achieved if the parties perceive one another to be acting reasonably (i.e., acting rationally on the basis of disclosed interests). Participants symbolize the relationships in which they are involved as ordered by mechanistic laws, most frequently those of justice, the market, and science. Individuals orient contractual relationships cognitively, and the capacity for acting rationally is foundational to reaching agreements voluntarily.

The covenantal tradition grants primacy to the community rather than to the individual as the elemental unit of human organization, since individuals are the product of the communities of which they are part. It is therefore incumbent on individuals to advance the collective good and to frame individual aspirations and actions in that context. In covenantal social relations, individuals symbolize their intentions through a process of vow-taking (proposals, marriage vows, professions of faith) with a goal of reaching mutual commitment. Covenantalism integrates role and person, which means that it is the unique essence of the individual (e.g., soul, personality) that shapes relationships (i.e., one relates to the other as a "thou" rather than an "it"). Because their objective is to become more integrally connected to each other, mutual pledges are to one another's overall well-being (e.g., personal or spiritual welfare) rather than to performance of specific actions. The sequence of rituals that build commitment feature progressive bonding and unity (e.g., dating, engagement, marriage). Mutual commitment is facilitated if the parties perceive one another to be acting in the proper spirit (e.g., loving, nurturing). Participants symbolize the relationships in which they are involved as being ordered by spiritual/personal agency, such as the laws of Love or God. Covenantal social relations orient individuals in terms of spirit, which is maintained through transpersonal connection with the larger whole of which the individual is part (i.e., the relationship between husband and wife or God and believer).

Virtually all public-sphere institutions have assumed a more contractual form, and this restructuring has been particularly pronounced over the last several decades. Rationalized organization in the form of corporate and governmental bureaucracies increasingly separates person and position, and the definition of positions is constructed legalistically in terms of rights and responsibilities (Sitkin and Bies 1994). Organizational output is commodified as products and services, with a corresponding conversion of participants into consumers and clients. For example, educational institutions have largely shed covenantal *in loco parentis* functions and have assumed an economic relationship involving exchange of credentialing skills and expertise for tuition. Traditional family physicians and community hospitals are rapidly being replaced by corporate health care service providers to which individuals are connected through contractual relations with employers and insurers. Individuals seek to acquire appropriate market credentials and orient rationally in terms of self-interest toward their organizational environment in terms of both generating resources and meeting needs. The preferred persona in a contractual environment is one in which individuals operate autonomously as voluntaristic, rational entities. Organizational trustworthiness is defined impersonally in terms of honoring participants' rights and organizational responsibilities. Individual-organizational relationships are authorized through third parties that create adjudication forums to formally enforce agreements that often are secured through pools of capital (e.g., health insurance, liability insurance, and pension plans).

In the private sphere, institutions such as family and church have also assumed a more contractual form. Families increasingly resemble "firms," selling their labor and purchasing services in the economy. Expanding family participation in the economy, particularly increased female entry into the labor force, has resulted in commodification of traditional family functions (including food preparation, household maintenance, and childcare). Purchasing an expanded range of goods and services, in turn, necessitates more extensive participation in the economy to generate the required financial resources. Internal family structure too is configured so that covenantal relationships preserve contractual viability. Mechanisms such as prenuptial agreements (that pledge prospective mates to specific relational performances and prearrange postmarital division of personal property), proposals to calculate "comparable worth" of domestic responsibilities, and "planning" of family size around career development and economic resources exemplify such arrangements. Love and interpersonal intimacy are constructed within this institutional context. The emerging model of romantic relationship is more individuated and self-oriented, and sexuality is a primary bonding mechanism. Relationships are created and sustained around simultaneous cultivation of one's own unique essence on the one hand, and development of intimacy (the mutual revelation and sharing of individual unique essence) with a romantic partner on the other. Such relationships are intrinsically valuable; that is, the relationship itself and rewards associated with participating in it are "priceless." A variety of state, economic, and professional organizations secure the voluntarism of familial relationships and the potential for individuals to reassert autonomy.

To summarize, over the last several decades contractual and covenantal relationships have continued to partition into the public and private spheres, respectively. With the expansion of contractualism, both spheres have moved toward compatibility with contractual forms. Individuation has increased, with autonomous, voluntaristic, self-directed individuals as the normative form. In the contractually oriented public sphere, individuals connect with organizations in either production- or consumption-related roles. These roles are the local sites at which the autonomous, voluntaristic, rational individual meets the rationalistic, positionally oriented organization. Organizational and individual expectations both are defined impersonally in terms of rights and responsibilities. Individual embeddedness and organizational encapsulation are constrained and monitored closely. Covenantal forms therefore become increasingly irrelevant to and incompatible with contractual order. Indeed, any relational form that embeds the individual in the organization on noncontractual grounds is illegitimate. Sexually based embeddedness is emblematic of this violation because it involves personal, intimate relationships.

In the covenantally oriented private sphere, individuals connect relationally in familial, religious, and associational networks. Roles such as romantic partner, spouse, or parent are the local sites at which autonomous, voluntaristic, self-actuated individuals connect with others in personalized relations. Group and individual expectations are defined personally in terms of mutual commitment to others' well-being. At the same time, such special relationships must not undermine individual autonomy, voluntarism, and self-actuation. Any relational form that embeds individuals by compromising these attributes is defined as detrimental to individual well-being and therefore as illegitimate. Since sexuality is a primary means through which individuals embed in romantic/familial relationships, coercive sexuality dramatically symbolizes illegitimate covenantal forms. In both public and private spheres, then, coercive sexuality epitomizes illegitimate individual-social network connections and thus constitutes the grist for scandal.

Four Types of Sexual Coercion Scandals

A variety of public forums have of late featured the narration of sexual stories. In his introduction to *Telling Sexual Stories*, Kenneth Plummer observes that “We have moved from the limited, oral and face to face tales told throughout much of history . . . to a contemporary late modern world where it seems that ‘sexual stories’ know no boundaries” (1995, 4). Indeed, he asserts that “Sex, then, has become the Big Story.” Or, as Steven Seidman puts it, “sex not only went public but it pushed its way into the social center” (1991, 124). Contemporary sexual stories by both men and women include both positive accounts—sexual fantasy, liberation (and more recently abstinence), self-discovery, coming out, and intimate fulfillment—and negative accounts—sexual dysfunction, disease, victimization or survival, harassment, assault, abuse, and addiction.

The recent profusion of sexual narratives might appear paradoxical given the Victorian tradition of sequestering and maligning sexual expression. Seidman astutely observes, however, that there has been a profound transformation in sexuality over the last several decades that constitutes “a transformation in the meaning of sex as momentous as its construction as a domain of love” (1991, 124). As he describes this transformation, sex has become “a domain of pleasure, self expression and communication apart from a context of intimacy or love. As a medium of these secular values, sex was defined as acceptable in virtually any consensual adult context. Eros was, in effect, transfigured into a site of individuation and social bonding” (124).

It is precisely this tension between individuation and bonding that renders sexuality a source of danger. On the one hand, sexuality becomes a primary means of expressing individual essence and uniqueness; on the other, it is a means of connecting with another through intimacy and self-disclosure. Coercive sexuality is illegitimate in both cases, as it undermines the capacity of the individual to maintain either autonomy or connectedness in a voluntaristic, self-directed fashion. In the public sphere, sexuality, either as an expression of individuality or as bonding, becomes incompatible with contractual logic. To import sexuality into contractual organization coercively indicates the untrustworthiness of presumptively contractual arrangements. In the private sphere, to coerce intimacy and thereby counterfeit connectedness is equally contradictory and is indicative of untrustworthy covenantal relationships. Coercive sexuality is thus emblematic of inappropriate social relations, and any publicly revealed pattern of either type is potentially scandalous.

In order to interpret clergy sexual deviance contextually, we identify four other types of coercive sexual relationships. Two of the four types, sexual harassment and sexual exploitation, are located in public-sphere institutions and are defined in terms of contractual rights and responsibilities. *Sexual harassment* refers to any attempted or completed sexual relationship by one individual within an organizational context that impedes occupational performance or opportunity of another individual. We use such relationships in corporate and governmental bureaucracies to illustrate sexual harassment. *Sexual exploitation* identifies attempted or completed sexual relationships in the context of treatment of clients by professional service providers. We illustrate sexual exploitation with such relationships between therapists and clients. The two remaining forms are found in the private sphere and are defined in terms of covenantal commitments. *Sexual abuse* refers to attempted or completed coercive sexual activity in the context of covenantal role relationships. Conjugal sexual relationships that are coercive in nature illustrate this type. Finally, *sexual molestation* refers to attempted or completed coercive sexual activity in the context of covenantal relationships involving socialization or care. Sexual relationships involving parents and children represent this type.

Sexual Harassment

The historical expansion of contractualism has involved a progressive partitioning of contractual, public-sphere relationships and covenantal, private-sphere relationships, such as the physical separation of home and workplace and the passage of nepotism laws (Kanter 1977). However, at least through the 1950s managerial workers remained strongly embedded in the organizations that employed them. Writing in 1956, William Whyte described the “organization man” as one who did not simply work for but *belonged to* the organization. Individuals fashioned out lifetime careers within an organization, and some organizations became renowned for loyalty to employees. Regulatory units in the form of personnel departments and grievance procedures were most often controlled by the organization itself (Dobbin et al. 1988). The available evidence strongly indicates a long history of occupational segregation of women through formal and informal control mechanisms. Women’s occupational status and opportunities have been shaped not only by gender but also by sexuality (Kwolek-Folland 1994; Peiss 1983; Roy 1974). Rosabeth Kanter's *Men and Women of the Corporation* (1978) describes the legacy of this system as women in lower-ranking staff positions allied with more powerful males to create stability and opportunity for advancement. Women in higher-ranking positions had a limited number of adaptations available to them, all of which were gender related. Irrespective of rank, then, women's organizational status has been gender related, even if this only occasionally involved explicitly sexual alliances.

The nature of public-sphere organizations, worker orientations, and regulatory activity began changing quite rapidly beginning in the 1960s. As we have already noted, there was a massive expansion of corporate and governmental bureaucracies around which credentialed, middle-class careers were constructed. Bureaucratic structuring created a more positional, rationalistic form in which individuals became temporary functionaries. The shift from a hierarchical toward a more therapeutic style of bureaucracy accentuated the importance of contingent, voluntaristic relationships. On the organizational side, one result was weaker loyalty to individual incumbents. In fact, organizations were advised not to elicit too much commitment from employees. Randall states that "At high levels of commitment, it appears that the costs of commitment outweigh the advantages. . . . The firm may lose flexibility and find itself burdened with overzealous employees" (1987, 467). Managerial workers beginning careers in corporate and governmental bureaucracies adopted a stance based on comparable contractual logic. Randall observes that "greater numbers of employees are refusing to commit totally to the firm, and executive mobility between firms has been observed at an unprecedented high level" (468). The normative form of individual-organization connections thus is one of limited embeddedness. Trust is impersonal in that pledges on both sides rest on specified rights and responsibilities associated with organizational position (Giddens 1990; Shapiro 1987). Organizations become untrustworthy when rules and procedures are violated so as to undermine contractual agreements. As a noncontractual form, sexuality is by definition irrelevant to organizational performance, and coercive sexuality therefore represents a scandalous disregard for individual rights.

A major change in regulatory units also occurred with the active intervention of the state through extension of 1960s civil rights legislation that articulated the contractual logic governing organization-employee relationships (Dobbin et al. 1988; Sutton et al. 1994). Regulatory agencies began specifically targeting gender-based employment violations, and claimsmaking has been facilitated by court rulings that reject requirements that claimants demonstrate psychological harm or impeding of job performance (Masters, Johnson, and Kolody 1995, 646). It is not surprising that tension between organizations and regulatory agencies has been high, as organizations are likely both to "shield" practices from external observation that will result in liability or loss of control and to decline enforcement of external norms.

While the formal structure of corporate and governmental organizations moved in a more contractual direction, informal patriarchal control persisted. Current survey estimates of sexual harassment of women yield rates from 40 to 90 percent (Mackinnon 1979; Tangri, Burt, and Johnson 1982; Janus and Janus 1993). In addition, episodes such as the U.S. Navy's Tailhook scandal offer every indication that organized patterns of sexual harassment are deeply entrenched in some organizations and that women in these situations often are well aware of their vulnerability. The rooting of harassment claims in contractual social arrangements is indicated by the rising percentage of males as claimants. Current survey data indicate that between 10 and 20 percent of men report being sexually harassed (Tangri, Burt, and Johnson 1982; Janus and Janus 1993). The succession of sexual harassment scandals thus became increasingly likely as the contradiction became more pronounced between formal structure, individual expectations, and regulatory mandates on the one hand, and de facto organizational practices and shielding on the other.

Sexual Exploitation

Contemporary therapy is a contractually linked restorative technique. Philip Rieff (1966, 68) states that predecessors to contemporary therapy, which he terms "commitment therapies," were designed to "commit the patient to the symbol system of the community." By contrast, the development of "analytic therapy" constituted a technique "to manage the strains of living as a communally detached individual" (1966, 74). Although the earliest therapies, most notably psychoanalysis and behaviorism, disembedded individuals from "positive communities," therapy was a prolonged process in which there was a major power imbalance between analyst and analysand. The therapeutic relationship was premised on the analysand accepting a "patient" role through which to achieve insight and ego control, and the therapist acting as an agent of societal reintegration. Regulation of the therapeutic relationship was ensconced firmly in the hands of professional associations, which largely protected the profession and its practitioners (Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass 1990; Prilleltensky 1997). Certainly through its early history therapy was a male-dominated profession, patients were predominantly female, female sexuality was a major theme in psychoanalytic theories, and there was a persistent tendency to medicalize female characteristics (Tennov 1975). It is not surprising, therefore, that sexual relationships occurred between male therapists and female patients. Data on such relationships are sparse. However, the facts that a number of prominent therapists married former patients and that some privately acknowledged that they allowed patients to sexually "act out" suggests a continuous pattern of such relationships over time (Chesler 1972, 138–42).

Over the last several decades, the contractual context in which therapy occurs has been extended. Among the most important developments are the professionalization and credentialing of therapists, which has sustained their power base as experts; the bureaucratization of therapy, which has structured therapy in positional terms; and the inclusion of therapy as a contractual health care benefit, which has created a potential regulatory coalition. At the same time, the advent of humanistic psychology changed the meaning of therapy and in the process has expanded the clients' control. The fundamental premises of this perspective—that human beings naturally seek growth, have vast untapped potential, and should seek self-fulfillment unrestricted by social convention—meant that healthy individuals might use therapy as a means of realizing their true potential. Individuals entering therapy under these circumstances were likely to perceive therapists as fiduciaries and service providers and to expect that therapy would enhance individual autonomy, voluntarism, and self-actuation. By its nature therapy may involve an unusual degree of embeddedness for a public-sphere relationship, as clients must abandon psychic defenses and reveal inner psychic states. The therapy relationship has thus come under intense pressure as the profession assumes a more contractual form while maintaining that covenantal commitment to the client's well-being is integral to the therapeutic process. In order to accommodate contractual logic, therapists are treated as fiduciary agents charged with protecting clients' rights and personal security while the client's capacity for autonomy and voluntarism is diminished. The ethical position required of the therapist is minimum embeddedness to effect personal reintegration, and the fiduciary relationship becomes untrustworthy when the therapist advances personal over client interests. Sexual relationships therefore are violations: sexuality needlessly embeds the client, by definition is not in the client's interest, and is rooted in an asymmetrical power relationship that compromises consent.

While the professionally organized practitioners have retained considerable autonomy, a variety of regulatory mechanisms have been created or expanded (Freidson 1984). With the bureaucratization of therapy, administrators defend organizational over practitioner interests; extension of credentialing increases professional oversight; and contractual provision of mental health benefits creates regulatory interests by health care and insurance firms. Recent developments in codes of ethics and law have increased the likelihood of regulatory unit intervention and expanded the grounds for claimsmaking. A number of states have criminalized therapist-client sexual contact, created provisions for civil suits by clients (negligence, breach of fiduciary trust, malpractice, breach of contract, infliction of emotional distress), and excluded client consent as permissible grounds for defense (Pogrebin, Poole, and Martinez 1992).

Although therapy has steadily moved in a more professionalized, bureaucratized direction, subject to expanded regulatory control, patriarchal dominance within the ranks of therapists has persisted. Evidence from surveys of various types of practitioners over the last several decades indicates rates of sexual contact with at least one client in the 5 to 10 percent range, predominantly involving male therapists and female clients (Akamatsu 1987; Gartell et al. 1986; Pope and Bouhoutsos 1986). There is reason to suspect that these figures represent significant underestimates. Most surveys are based on therapist self-reports (which tabulate violators rather than incidents), under conditions in which codes of ethics explicitly proscribe therapist-patient sexual contact. As with many other categories of victimization, the vast majority of exploited patients do not file complaints. Other data show that nearly two-thirds of therapists have treated clients who reveal a sexual relationship with a prior therapist (Gartell et al. 1986). This finding also suggests that therapists are well aware that colleagues are involved in sexual liaisons with clients. This continued prevalence of informal therapist-client sexual relationships in the face of the contractual organization of therapy, individual expectations of therapy as a vehicle of empowerment and autonomy, and the formation of an activist coalition of regulatory units created the basis of a continuous series of revelations about scandalous conduct by therapists.

Sexual Abuse

The history of the family is one of tightly integrated kinship organization in the context of religious and community authorization, and sexuality was organized in the service of collective needs. The shift from extended family to nuclear family, with its basis in romantic love, created the foundation for strong, emotionally based personal connections. However, romantic love legitimated through marriage re-embedded individuals, women in particular, within the familial institution (Goode 1959). Lewis Coser (1974) refers to the resulting households as "greedy institutions" in their encapsulating qualities, particularly for "housewives." The strong emphasis on internal solidarity is evidenced by the problematizing of breakdowns in the integrity of families in the form of divorce and extramarital liaisons (Davies 1982). Danger was thus externalized in the service of a public rhetoric of family harmony (Miller 1990). There is strong historical evidence of sexual coercion in marital relationships simply by virtue of the connection between physical and sexual abuse, although abuse has been formally recognized only recently. The erosion of community and extended kinship networks along with an absence of state-authorized regulatory units left family members in abusive situations few public forums for claimsmaking, guaranteeing the virtual invisibility of such sexual coercion.

There have been dramatic changes in the nature of familial and intimate relationships over the last several decades. Family units have moved in a more contractually compatible direction, with less embeddedness in covenantal networks. As we have already noted, contracting for a variety of domestic services was integrally linked to the proliferation of two-career families; likewise, the contractual nature of other institutions offered families commodities and services rather than networks of support (Weiss 1973). Correspondingly, there has been a diminution in the authority of traditional covenantal institutions, most notably church and family. The logic of intimate relationships has shifted as well. Relationships have assumed a much more contingent character, which Anthony Giddens defines as "pure relationships." This type of relationship occurs when individuals enter it "for its own sake, for what can be derived by each person from a sustained association with another; and which is continued only in so far as it is thought by both parties to deliver enough satisfactions for each individual to stay within it" (1992, 58). This means that love is "active and contingent" (61–62). These relationships are premised on a connection between autonomous, voluntaristic, self-actuated individuals who construct intimacy by exploring, developing, and disclosing their identities. Sexuality is a primary means of covenantal bonding in which individual unique essence can be expressed and intimate, personal connectedness can be achieved simultaneously. Giddens asserts that this new active and contingent form of love "for the first time introduces the ars erotica into the core of the conjugal relationship and makes the achievement of reciprocal sexual pleasure a key element in whether the relationship is sustained or dissolved" (62). Trustworthiness in such relationships is sustained by nurturing and honoring the integrity of the other while creating intimate connectedness. Coercive sexuality is taken as evidence of the instability of one's own identity, an inability to nurture one's partner's identity, and an inauthentic intimate connection.

State-authorized regulatory units moved on a parallel course. State regulation of traditional family arrangements has loosened in certain respects, such as no-fault divorce and prenuptial agreements designed to preserve the individual autonomy and contractual viability of marriage partners. At the same time, the state has assumed a much more activist role in preserving individual voluntarism within marital relationships through physical and sexual abuse laws. A coalition of feminist and social service reform groups provided the primary impetus for these laws in the 1970s (Tierney 1982). The movement continued with revisions of rape laws in a number of states during the 1980s. These legal reforms created provisions such as mandatory reporting and arrest, graded levels of sexual assault to facilitate prosecution, partial or complete exemption of marital relationship as a defense, and assessment of responsibility based on force employed rather than resistance offered (Ferraro 1989).

While the formal structure of family has moved in the direction of individual autonomy and voluntarism, informal male physical and sexual dominance has persisted (Gelles 1977). Sexual coercion in families is overwhelmingly male-initiated with females as victims. Several surveys report that about 10 percent of women report having been raped in marriage relationships (Russell 1982; Finkelhor and Yllo 1983). Based on such percentages, marital rape is the most frequent form of rape, although the rate of reporting by victims is extremely low. The link between marital rape and informal male dominance is underscored by the facts that frequently sexual assault is intended as punishment and that it occurs when couples are separated or divorced. The movement of the marital relationships in the direction of greater autonomy and voluntarism, partner expectations of intimate relationships as a source of individual fulfillment and empowerment, and regulatory intervention against physical and sexual coercion together created the conditions for a succession of revelations of marital sexual coercion in high-profile cases.

Sexual Molestation

In the history of the family, the positions of youth and women are comparable in their degree of embeddedness in the patriarchal family unit. The process of disembedding youth occurred slowly over a long period of time. The growing importance of the autonomous individual and the accompanying notion of individual development gradually led to the conceptualization of "childhood" and "adolescence" as distinct stages of life (Kett 1977). Schools were a major source of contractual influence as they "removed children from the family, set up a system of authority based on state sanction and expertise . . . and instituted a 'work' discipline strikingly similar to that of adult organizations" (Kanter 1977, 12). Nonetheless, youth remained strongly embedded in the family as their importance to families shifted from economic to emotional. Public-sphere institutions supported familial controls, and even childsaving agencies operated largely to protect the community and family rather than children (Platt 1969). It is not surprising, therefore, that sexual relationships within families, overwhelmingly involving fathers and daughters, assumed the form of "turning girls into second wives" who served as sexual partners and housewives (Gordon 1986, 254; Gordon and O'Keefe 1984). Such relationships were secluded from public view and often were "normalized" within the family.

Changes in the status of youth within the family have been dramatic in recent decades. Children are much more likely to be socialized in the kind of contractually oriented two-career family we have already described. Contractual influences in the socialization process now involve ever earlier schooling. Daycare, for example, operates as "institutionalized, professionalized, and governmentally regulated group care" (Loeske and Cahill 1994, 195) designed to insure that children are "adjusted and attuned to bureaucratic life," through "control of human emotional irrationality" (Kanter 1972, 186–95). At the same time, within the family childhood and adolescence are firmly ensconced as developmental periods during which covenantal bonds are utilized to develop the child's unique essence. As this nurturance process evolves, children become an emotionally "priceless" asset in creating the same kind of love and companionship marriage partners seek with each other (Zelizer 1985). Children in these families expect that their identities will be cultivated and honored; and, ideally at least, behavior is coordinated through voluntary agreements. As one contemporary childrearing manual puts it, children should become "self-regulating, self-governing, inner-directed and separate" (Gordon 1975, 41; Cress and Bromley 1997). In this type of family, parents are treated almost as fiduciaries who provide children with the requisites for life in a contractual world while committing to their well-being during the "parenting process." Trustworthiness involves embedding the child sufficiently to provide necessary love and security while progressively disembedding to insure the capacity for eventual autonomy. To invoke the current colloquialism, parents should provide children with both "roots and wings." One major form of untrustworthiness is embedding a child so as to undermine movement toward autonomy, toward building voluntaristic relationships, and toward promoting self-actuation. Sexuality involving children is by definition untrustworthy parenting. It is involuntary since the power asymmetry precludes consent, it promotes the adult's needs at the expense of the child's, and it retards the child's progress toward autonomy by linking the child's emotional welfare to parental needs.

Regulatory agencies also began more active intervention in the socialization and discipline of children as part of the general campaign against violence and sexual coercion in families. The "discovery" of child abuse by pediatric radiologists and the creation of the "battered child syndrome" was pivotal in that campaign (Pfohl 1977). While there were few cases of legal intervention in child abuse cases prior to the 1960s, by the end of that decade every state had enacted child abuse legislation. In the 1970s federal legislation designed to create uniform state statutory definitions of abuse specifically included parental sexual contact together with physical coercion in the definition of child abuse. The involvement of physicians in controlling child abuse weakened the traditional alliance between family and physicians and, along with mandatory reporting provisions, created the basis for increased intervention (Beckett 1996; Nelson 1984). Child welfare officials also came under increased pressure to identify warning signs of sexual and physical abuse (Howe 1992), and developed reporting procedures that privileged victim accounts (Margolin 1992).

Particularly given the normative priority of nurturing fragile individual essence in middle-class families, the prevalence of sexual relationships between fathers (or surrogates) and daughters might seem incongruous. However, the data indicate a pervasive pattern of male violations. Between 10 and 50 percent of women report experiencing sexual assault during childhood, and incest is reported by 10 to 20 percent (Finkelhor 1984; Finkelhor et al. 1990; Meiselman 1990; Russell 1986). It is particularly striking that rates of sexual abuse are quite high in the middle class where "pure relationships" presumably are most thoroughly institutionalized. The reporting of such relationships is extremely low since male violators use their power within the family to maintain secrecy. The shift in childrearing practices in the direction of contractually compatible socialization along with covenantal commitment, expectations from both parents and children that socialization will use voluntaristic methods consistent with the child's self-actuation, and expanded child protection mandates created the basis for scandal when sexual relationships with children were revealed.

Clergy Sexual Violations

We examine the case of clergy sexual violations, and the Catholic priest scandal in particular, separately here not only because it is the focus of this volume but also because it is a distinctive case in at least three respects. First, it is not clear what kind of case it is, at least from the perspective of the participants. Some actors have treated the violations as a betrayal of the family-church alliance while others have defined it as a failure of fiduciary responsibility. Second, this scandal differs from the other four types in that state regulatory agencies have less control over churches than over secular entities. Moreover, neither the regulations governing exploitation nor those dealing with molestation anticipated religious organizations/functionaries as violators. Third, although there have been prior sexual violation episodes involving denominations, these were treated as isolated incidents. The current scandal appears to constitute a precedent-setting event that is likely to shape a new category of deviance (clergy malfeasance) and will influence the disposition of future incidents. We begin with an analysis of the structural conditions associated with clergy sexual violations in general, and then turn to the Catholic priest scandal.

Mainline religion has progressively assumed a more contractually compatible form since the Protestant Reformation. Secularization theory chronicles the movement of religion into the private sphere, and church-sect theory describes organizational changes that involve movement of individual denominations toward contractual compatibility. Still, the alliance between family, community, race, and ethnicity remained strong in a number of social locations. It was common for individuals to maintain strong religious identities and loyalties over their lifetimes, and, particularly in the conservative denominations, for individuals to be rather firmly embedded in their religious traditions. State control over churches has been minimal in the United States as a product of constitutionally mandated church-state separation. Denominations have therefore been largely self-governing, and some religions, such as the Catholic and Mormon churches (see for example Firmage and Mangrum 1988), have maintained rather elaborate internal judicial systems. As state regulatory agencies have expanded, the domain of these systems has steadily narrowed toward adjudicating only internal religious/spiritual issues. The extent of sexual violations in religious groups through American history probably will never be known, but both sexual experimentation and violations are part of the early histories of a number of churches and religious movements. If historical case studies are representative (e.g., Brown 1986; Curb and Manahan 1985; Daichman

1990; Foster 1981), there is no reason to believe that sexual violations were less frequent in earlier historical periods.

Recent scholarship on mainline churches emphasizes the movement toward more contractually compatible organization over the last several decades. As Mark Chaves (1993, 25) describes this change, religion is now "marketed," with the result that churches "become marketing agencies and the religious traditions become consumer commodities." Churches "rationalize their structures to manage efficiently both their current resources and their attempts to win new members (i.e., to expand their market share)"; "'Organization men' replace priests and prophets among the religious elite"; and "the organizational ethos becomes dominated by a 'logic of bureaucracy' rather than by theological concerns." There is a decline in religious authorization and greater contractual compatibility (Bromley 1997), which takes such forms as loosening of sacred narratives so as to emphasize individual empowerment, organizing as voluntary associations with a service orientation that resembles other civic associations, assuming a noncontroversial political stance that Williams and Demerath term "civic religion" (1991, 420), and incorporating therapy as a restorative technique. Individuals are more likely to make decisions about membership and attendance voluntaristically on grounds of convenience and personal preference. As Hammond puts it, "Greater numbers of persons now . . . legitimately look upon their parish involvement as their choice, to be made according to their standards. That involvement is now calculated as rewarding or not by individually derived equation" (1992, 169). Roof and McKinney reach much the same conclusion, stating that "The subjective aspects of faith have expanded as ascriptive and communal attachments have declined" (1987,67). As mainstream denominations gravitate toward more contractually compatible forms, definitions of trustworthiness move in the direction of impersonal rather than personal trust. To the extent that clergy assume managerial/therapist roles, normative expectations approach those for their professional, secular counterparts. To the extent they sustain a relationship as spiritual leaders of a church-family alliance, normative expectations approach those for extended family members. In either event, of course, coercive sexual relationships are scandalous.

While there has been some increase in state regulation of religion, and certainly of the myriad "special purpose" organizations created by churches, specifically religious activity has remained largely outside state control. Denominational bodies continue to include administrative units that function in a regulatory role, and, like professional associations, they have been more likely to promote clergy loyalty and defend organizational interests than to seek redress for claimants. The absence of a regulatory unit to empower claimsmaking may well be the key difference between clergy sexual violations and the other forms of sexual violations discussed above. As clergy assumed a more professionalized, service-provider orientation and parishioners began orienting to churches as consumers and clients, the potential for claimsmaking increased. However, the absence of external regulatory agencies turned claimsmaking inward.

There simply are no systematic data on clergy sexual violations, since the various denominations have largely maintained internal control over adjudication of complaints. In the case of Protestant churches, for example, clergy heterosexual relationships with adult parishioners may be the most common type of incident (Shupe 1995). Since religious counseling is not state-authorized, incidents are less subject to external control than comparable incidents involving secular therapists. Nonetheless, publicly visible sexual scandals have rocked numerous denominations (e.g., Poloma 1989; Jenkins 1996) as well as various contemporary religious movements (Wallis 1983; see also Jacobs's contribution to this volume). The sheer number of individual instances and the diversity of groups involved in these violations suggest a rather pervasive pattern of deviance.

Turning to the Catholic priest scandal, the pattern of events represents a confirmation of the argument developed here. The Second Vatican Council launched rather dramatic reforms beginning in the 1960s that moved the church in the direction of greater contractual compatibility, expressed internally as an accommodation to modernism (Ebaugh 1991). The church proposed to reduce its authority so as to promote such accommodation, unevenness of change and reversals of course notwithstanding. For example, doctrine was to be analyzed and expounded in ways consistent with the methods and findings of science, and traditional covenanted religious communities were dismantled or reconstructed so as to reduce the perception of seclusion. Priests symbolically repositioned themselves to reduce social distance from parishioners through such means as delivering the

Mass in vernacular while facing the congregation. Correspondingly, parishioners were empowered through church assertions of mutual responsibility with priests for ministerial activity and of "collegiality" with higher-level clerics. There were also pledges to democratic process, the integrity and inviolability of individual conscience, and equality and human rights. Like their Protestant counterparts, of course, individual Catholics already were moving toward greater voluntarism and autonomy in their relationships with the church. At the same time, the hierarchical nature of the church combined with church-state separation meant that regulatory processes remained centralized and internal, thus permitting continued shielding of contested practices.

As the priest sexual scandal demonstrates, the movement of the church toward contractual compatibility did not eliminate strong covenantal relationships between church and family through priests. The informal access to children that many families extended to priests, often in their homes as extended kin, is one indication of the continued influence of priests in family life. Despite the increased autonomy of families vis-à-vis the church, the alliance continued to be a close one for many families. One familiar theme in families' detection of sexual violations is initial disbelief and subsequent appeal to church superiors rather than to secular authorities. It was only after continued dissimulation and manipulation by church officials that most families looked elsewhere for redress (Shupe 1995). The matter of expansion of regulatory mandate is somewhat more complex. The mandate of regulatory agencies did not expand specifically with respect to churches, and church shielding of violations persisted. What did occur was that the expansion of laws and regulatory agencies governing abuse and exploitation created the basis for intervention in the priest violation cases. Added to the availability of external agencies were the intense conflict between modernist and traditionalist coalitions within the church, each faction having its own motives for exposing internal violations (Jenkins 1998), and a grassroots family movement within the church determined to overcome official intransigence (Miller 1998). These two sets of groups provided regulatory agencies with critical information and witnesses. Of course, intervention was facilitated by the very nature of the violations, involving as they did violation of clerical vows, homosexual relationships, and child molestation.

Informal patriarchal influence thus increased through the continued informal authority of priests, embeddedness of families in the church community, and shielding by the church hierarchy of any violations that occurred. The extent of priest sexual violations is difficult to estimate; several factors contribute to underestimation. These include the massive resignations in the priesthood over the last several decades that increase the difficulty of identifying earlier cases; the continuing reluctance of church members to make formal, public claims; and the practice by church officials of demanding sealed records as part of case settlements. There is little doubt, however, that violations have been pervasive The most common estimate is that there are several hundred extant cases in the United States alone. Further new cases continue to be uncovered that increase estimates, and the number of revelations in European countries is now on the rise. Claims of violations by adults indicate that these patterns have been well entrenched over a number of decades. There is also compelling evidence that violations were known to church officials, that priests used their authority to coerce sexual relationships, and that church officials shielded the offending priests. This combination of practices created conditions highly conducive to precisely the kind of scandal that is now occurring.

Conclusions

The recent clergy sexual violation scandal has been treated by the media and social scientists as an anomalous episode of deviance, in an unexpected location, that requires explanation. Once the unrecognized problem was discovered, the search for precipitating conditions and perpetrators commenced. We offer a different perspective, a comparative perspective that seeks the structural sources of discovery in the form of narratives of sexual danger. We examine clergy sexual violations in the context of four other behavioral patterns based on coercive sexuality—harassment, exploitation, abuse, and molestation. In each case the behaviors have long-standing histories, have been relatively pervasive, were known within but not outside the arenas in which they occurred, were defined as problematic at about the same time, and initially involved women or children as victims.

We argue that the discovery of a series of coercive sexuality scandals is rooted in the changing nature of the two major forms through which contemporary social relations are organized, contractualism and covenantalism. The patterning of organizational structure, individual expectations and behavior, and regulatory mandates all shifted in the direction of greater compatibility with contractual requisites. However, informal patterns of patriarchal dominance persisted, creating the basis for scandals in which institutional arrangements are found to be untrustworthy. Coercive sexuality is a particularly powerful means of symbolizing inappropriate relationships, as it violates the premises of both contractual and covenantal social relations. The argument we have fashioned here does not constitute a full theory of scandal. Rather, our interest is in identifying common structural conditions out of which a series of scandals with the same theme appeared in different social locations at about the same time. Each scandal was discovered, defined, revealed, promoted, and resisted in a specific social location through the actions of specific coalitions of actors. A historical analysis of each scandal is necessary to detail these dynamics.

From our perspective, the most important insight to be gained from this analysis is that danger appears where there are breakdowns in social order. Scandals involve a particular kind of disorder, a breakdown in institutional trustworthiness. The requisites of contractual compatibility have made the autonomous, voluntaristic, self-directed individual the basic building block of the social order. In order for contractual and covenantal forms of social relations to coexist, both individuation and social bonding are necessary. There is danger to be found at social sites where the individual connects with social institutions such that some degree of individual embeddedness is called for. Coercive sexuality powerfully symbolizes inappropriate social relations because it violates the fundamental premises of both contractual and covenantal relationships. The process of discovering the problem, identifying the responsible agents, creating categories of claims-making, and invoking rituals of social control domesticates the danger. Clergy violations were discovered late in this series of scandals—largely, it appears, because regulatory units integral to the narration and validation of claims were not in place. The Catholic priest cases are therefore a precedent-setting episode, and future episodes will be profoundly shaped by the resolution of the present scandal.

REFERENCES

Akamatsu, J. 1987. "Intimate Relationships with Former Clients: National Survey of Attitudes and Behavior among Practitioners." *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* 18: 454–58.

Beckett, Katherine. 1996. "Culture and the Politics of Signification: The Case of Child Sexual Abuse." *Social Problems* 43: 57–76.

Boswell, John. 1981. *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bromley, David. 1997. "A Sociological Narrative of Crisis Episodes, Collective Action, Culture Workers, and Countermovements." *Sociology of Religion* 58 (1997): 105–40.

———. 1998. "The Social Construction of Contested Exit Roles: Defectors, Whistleblowers, and Apostates." In *The Politics of Religious Apostasy,* ed. David Bromley. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

Brown, Judith. 1986. *Immodest Acts: The Life of a Lesbian Nun in Renaissance Italy*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Chaves, Mark. 1993. "Intraorganizational Power and Internal Secularization in Protestant Denominations." *American Journal of Sociology* 99: 1–48.

———. 1994. "Secularization as Declining Religious Authority." *Social Forces* 72: 749–74.

Chesler, Phyllis. 1972. *Women and Madness*. New York: Avon.

Coser, Lewis. 1974. *Greedy Institutions*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.

Cress, Clinton, and David Bromley. 1997. "Beyond Corporal Punishment Debate Rhetoric: The Logic of Child Discipline in Two Social Worlds." Paper presented at the annual meetings of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, San Diego. California.

Curb, Rosemary, and Nancy Manahan. 1985. *Lesbian Nuns: Breaking Silence*. Tallahassee, Fla.: The Naiad Press.

Daichman, Graciela. 1990. "Misconduct in the Medieval Nunnery: Fact, Not Fiction." In *That Gentle Strength,* ed. Lynda Coon, Katherine Haldane, and Elisabeth Sommer, 97–117. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.

Davies, Christie. 1982. "Sexual Taboos and Social Boundaries." *American Journal of Sociology* 87: 1032–63.

Derber, Charles, William Schwartz, and Yale Magrass. 1990. *Power in the Highest Degree*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dobbin, Frank, Lauren Edelman, John Meyer, W. Richard Scott, and Ann Swidler. 1988. "The Expansion of Due Process in Organizations." In *Institutional Patterns and Organizations: Culture and Environment,* ed. Lynne Zucker, 71-98. Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger.

Ebaugh, Helen. 1991. *Vatican II and U.S. Catholicism*. Greenwich, Conn.: Association for the Sociology of Religion and JAI Press.

Edelman, Lauren. 1990. "Legal Environments and Organizational Governance: The Expansion of Due Process in the American Workplace." *American Journal of Sociology* 95: 1401–40.

Ferraro, Kathleen. 1989. "Policing Woman Battering." *Social Problems* 36: 61–74.

Fine, Gary. 1997. "Scandal, Social Conditions, and the Creation of Public Attention: Fatty Arbuckle and the 'Problem of Hollywood.'" *Social Problems* 44: 297–323.

Finkelhor, David. 1984. "How Widespread is Child Sexual Abuse?" *Children Today* 13: 18–20.

Finkelhor, David, Gerald Hotaling, I. Lewis, and C. Smith. 1990. "Sexual Abuse in a National Survey of Adult Men and Women: Prevalence Characteristics, and Risk Factors." *Child Abuse and Neglect* 14: 19–28.

Finkelhor, David, and K. Yllo. 1983. "Rape in Marriage: A Sociological View." In *The Dark Side of Families,* ed. David Finkelhor, Richard Gelles, G. Hotaling, and Murray Strauss, 119-130. Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications.

Firmage, Edwin, and Richard Mangrum. 1988. *Zion in the Courts*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Foster, Lawrence. 1981. *Religion and Sexuality*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Freidson, Eliot. 1984. "The Changing Nature of Professional Control." *Annual Review of Sociology* 10: 1–20.

Gartell, N., J. Herman, S. Olarte, M. Reldstein, and R. Localio. 1986. "Psychiatrist-Patient Sexual Contact: Results of a National Survey. 1: Prevalence." *American Journal of Psychiatry* 143: 1126–31.

Gelles, Richard. 1977. "Power, Sex, and Violence: The Case of Marital Rape." *Family Coordinator* 25: 339–47.

Giddens, Anthony. 1990. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

———. 1992. *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

Goldner, Fred, R. Richard Ritti, and Thomas Ference. 1977. "The Production of Cynical Knowledge in Organizations." *American Sociological Review* 42: 539–51.

Goode, William. 1959. "The Theoretical Importance of Love." *American Sociological Review* 24: 38–47.

Gordon, Linda. 1986. "Incest and Resistance: Patterns of Father-Daughter Incest, 1860–1930." *Social Problems* 33: 253–67.

Gordon, Linda, and P. O'Keefe. 1984. "Incest as a Form of Family Violence: Evidence from Historical Case Records." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 46: 27–34.

Gordon, Thomas. 1975. *P.E.T. (Parent Effectiveness Training)*. New York: New American Library.

Gutek, Barbara. 1985. *Sex and the Workplace*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Hammond, Phillip. 1992. *Religion and Personal Autonomy*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press.

Howe, David. 1992. "Child Abuse and the Bureaucratization of Social Work." *The Sociological Review* 40 (August): 491–508.

Janus, Samuel, and Cynthia Janus. 1993. *The Janus Report on Sexual Behavior*. New York: John Wiley.

Jenkins, Philip. 1996. *Pedophiles and Priests*. New York: Oxford University Press.

———. 1998. "Beyond Reproach: Creating a Culture of Clergy Deviance." In *Wolves within the Fold,* ed. Anson Shupe. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Kanter, Rosabeth. 1972. "The Organization Child: Experience Management in a Nursery School." *Sociology of Education* 45: 186–212.

———. 1977. *Work and Family in the United States*. New York: Russell Sage.

———. 1978. *Men and Women of the Corporation*. New York: Basic Books.

Kett, Joseph. 1977. *Rites of Passage*. New York: Basic Books.

Kwolek-Folland, Angel. 1994. *Engendering Business: Men and Women in the Corporate Office, 1870–1930*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Loeske, Donileen, and Spencer Cahill. 1994. "Normalizing Daycare—Normalizing the Child: Daycare Discourse in Popular Magazines, 1990–1990." In *Troubling Children,* ed. Joel Best, 173–199. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Mackinnon, Catherine. 1979. *Sexual Harassment of Working Women*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.

Margolin, Leslie. 1992. "Deviance on the Record: Techniques for Labeling Child Abusers in Official Documents." *Social Problems* 39: 58–70.

Masters, William, Virginia Johnson, and Robert Kolody. 1995. *Human Sexuality*. New York: HarperCollins.

Meiselman, K. 1990. *Resolving the Trauma of Incest*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Merry, Sally Engle. 1984. "Rethinking Gossip and Scandal." In *Toward a General Theory of Social Control,* ed. Donald Black, 271-302. New York: Academic Press.

Miller, Jeanne. 1998. "The Moral Bankruptcy of Institutionalized Religion." In *Wolves within the Fold,* ed. Anson Shupe. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Miller, Leslie. 1990. "Violent Families and the Rhetoric of Harmony." *British Journal of Sociology* 41 (June): 263–88.

Nelson, Barbara. 1984. *Making an Issue of Child Abuse*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Peiss, Kathy. 1983. "'Charity Girls' and City Pleasures: Historical Notes on Working-Class Sexuality, 1880–1920." In *Powers of Desire: The Politics of*

Sexuality, ed. Ann Snitnow, Christine Sutansell, and Sharon Thompson, 74–87. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Pfohl, Steven. 1977. "The Discovery of Child Abuse." *Social Problems* 24:310–323.

Platt, Anthony. 1969. *The Child Savers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Plummer, Kenneth. 1995. *Telling Sexual Stories*. New York: Routledge.

Pogrebin, Mark, Eric Poole, and Amos Martinez. 1992. "Account of Professional Misdeeds: The Sexual Exploitation of Clients by Psychotherapists." *Deviant Behavior* 13: 229–52.

Poloma, Margaret. 1989. *The Assemblies of God at the Crossroads*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.

Pope, K., and J. Bouhoutsos. 1986. *Sexual Intimacy between Therapists and Patients*. New York: Praeger.

Prilleltensky, Isaac. 1997. "Values, Assumptions, and Practices: Assessing the Moral Implications of Psychological Discourse and Action." *American Psychologist* 52: 517–35.

Randall, Donna. 1987. "Commitment and the Organization: The Organization Man Revisited." *Academy of Management Review* 12: 460–71.

Rieff, Philip. 1966. *The Triumph of the Therapeutic*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Roy, Donald. 1974. "Sex in the Factory: Informal Heterosexual Relations between Supervisors and Work Groups." In *Deviant Behavior,* ed. Clifton Bryant, 44–66. Chicago: Rand McNally.

Roof, Wade Clark, and William McKinney. 1987. *American Mainline Religion*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Russell, Diana. 1982. *Rape in Marriage*. New York: Macmillan.

———. 1986. *The Secret Trauma*. New York: Basic Books.

Seidman, Steven. 1991. *Romantic Longings*. New York: Routledge.

Shapiro, Susan. 1987. "The Social Control of Impersonal Trust." *American Journal of Sociology* 93: 623–58.

Shupe, Anson. 1995. *In the Name of All that's Holy*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

Sipe, Richard. 1991. *A Secret World*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

Sitkin, Sim, and Robert Bies. 1994. *The Legalistic Organization*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.

Spector, Malcolm, and John Kitsuse. 1977. *Constructing Social Problems*. Menlo Park, Calif.: Cummings.

Sutton, John, Frank Dobbin, John Meyer, and W. Richard Scott. 1994. "The Legalization of the Workplace." *American Journal of Sociology* 99: 944–71.

Tangri, S., M. Burt, and L. Johnson. 1982. "Sexual Harassment at Work: Three Explanatory Models." *Journal of Social Issues* 38: 33–54.

Tennov, Dorothy. 1975. *Psychotherapy: The Hazardous Cure*. New York: Abelard-Schuman.

Tierney, Kathleen. 1982. “The Battered Women Movement and the Creation of the Wife Beating Problem.” *Social Problems* 29: 207–20.

Wallis, Roy. 1983. “Sex, Violence and Religion.” *Update* 7: 3–10.

Weiss, Robert. 1973. “Helping Relationships: Relationships of Clients with Physicians, Social Workers, Priests, and Others.” *Social Problems* 20: 319–28.

Williams, Rhys, and N. J. Demerath III. 1991. “Religion and Political Processes in an American City.” *American Sociological Review* 56: 417–31.

Wong, Mary Gilligan. 1983. *Nun: A Memoir*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Whyte, William. 1956. *The Organization Man*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday.

Zelizer, Viviana. 1985. *Pricing the Priceless Child*. New York: Basic Books.

Chapter 4

Has the Silence Been Shattered or Does a Holy Hush Still Prevail?

Defining Violence against Women within Christian Churches

Nancy Nason-Clark

Listening to the voices of church women:

> But if one out of every four families are being abused, the minister, if everybody came to the minister like that, he would never get home for supper. I mean he, he wouldn't have the time. . . . I don't think that we can leave it up to the pastor.[1]
>
> I've grown up in the church and you're not supposed to get [a] divorce, you know. You married this guy and you're supposed to stick it out for better or worse and it's really a hard decision to finally leave. It's one of the hardest decisions I've ever made.[2]
>
> [W]hen I met my husband, I kind of backslid and I wasn't going to church, and also too, I didn't know anything about abuse, because I was from a very loving Christian family, so you really can't blame God.[3]
>
> I think that just being more open about it . . . even from the pulpit talking about it. So if there are people that are in the congregation that are . . . suffering . . . they'll feel more comfortable to discuss it with someone.[4]

Listening to the voices of pastors:

> I thank the Lord that I'm a great big two-hundred-pound guy because . . . I've had a husband who was violent against his wife haul and hit me and all I could think about was "these glasses cost me two hundred dollars and I don't want to get them broken." So I put my fists up and I

> said, "Go for it!" . . . If a man is screaming at me, as in this case, I don't coward down. . . . If another man can try to intimidate me, great big two-hundred-pound guy, what makes me so friggin' mad is another man would do that to [his wife]. . . . I see the violence against women and it makes me mad, and there's a lot of it going on.[5]

> Basically . . . your task is to try to help a person in a very difficult moment in their life, using your best abilities, and whatever resources are available. . . . I had involvement [where] both individuals were teachers in school . . . we talked at length . . . one of the scenarios that I run into quite often is when—the alcoholic . . . the remorse, the repentance and I'll never do this again, you know, and all that sort of thing. And she had repeatedly gone back into the violent [situation] and for whatever reason . . . whether it was love, or you didn't want to see failure in their marriage . . . I had occasion where she arrived at the house . . . he went on a bender . . . I took the wife and boys to our house, and they slept over, over night . . . because she was fearful at that time.[6]

> I don't propose divorce or separation to any of the couples that I see at all. . . . My focus in counselling [is] healing of relationships. Healing our relationship with God and healing our relationship with ourself . . . healing our relationship with one another, that's my focus.[7]

Introduction

For the past twenty-five years, the secular society has been slowly—and rather unwillingly—coming to grips with the problem of violence against women. The scholarly literature has mushroomed (DeKeseredy and MacLeod 1998; Gelles 1985; Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz 1980); women activists have continued to speak out (Harrison and Laliberte 1994; Walker 1990); shelters have grown in number, as have the women and children who seek refuge there (Loseke 1992; Timmins 1995). But what has been the word from the sacred community? Has the silence been shattered in churches across North America, or does a holy hush still prevail? That is the question this chapter will attempt to address.

Since the problem of wife abuse was introduced into our vocabulary, there has been a growing recognition of its severity, its pervasiveness in all strata of society, and the long-term consequences for victims recovering from its pain (Dobash and Dobash 1979; Martin 1981). Few have considered the spiritual dimensions of abuse that permeates family life, creating havoc in the lives of women victims and their children (Copeland 1994; Fortune 1991; Horton and Williamson 1988). Even fewer have considered the role of religious belief in the journey from victim to survivor (Bussert 1986).

Understanding wife abuse is multifaceted: we need to consider the impact of the environment in which we live, where power abuses are rarely condemned and violent acts are often glorified; we need to reflect on the power and potential of the feminist movement that has encouraged women to share with one another their struggles and to disclose their pain; we cannot forget the learning that takes places early in the life of a man or woman when they witness—and (often) later model—their parents' behavior (Family Violence in a Patriarchal Culture 1988; Family Violence Prevention Initiative 1994; Fire in the Rose Project 1994; Gelles and Straus 1979). Moreover, there are political dimensions to wife battery (Timmins 1995). And who can rightfully claim expertise over the issue of the healing components (Barnsley 1995)?

Defining the issue, naming the victims, and charting the journey toward healing and wholeness have political, clinical, religious, and feminist dimensions. How one defines the act and the actors has important ramifications for the transformation of betrayal into empowerment, the road from victim to survivor.

In this chapter I want to highlight several components to understanding the response of contemporary Christianity to the issue of wife abuse. Whether ministers are preaching from the pulpit, counseling in the pastoral study, or visiting parishioners in their own homes, how they define abuse and name its victims impacts whether or not the issue will be swept under the proverbial church carpet or clearly articulated and condemned within sacred space and time. Reflecting on data collected over a six-year period from more than one thousand clergy, church women, transition house workers, and female victims of abuse, I will explore evidence for both the silencing (holy hush) and the naming (shattered silence) of the persistence and prevalence of violence in families connected to faith communities.

The Religious Context for Understanding Abuse

Family life and family values dominate the conservative religious marketplace, with Dr. James Dobson and his Focus on the Family organization its primary mouthpiece. With a staff of more than a thousand, Focus on the Family publishes a plethora of popular Christian magazines and an average of fifty books a year, not to mention the radio broadcasts, the newspaper columns, and the distribution of audiotapes (Gay, Ellison and Powers 1996; Nason-Clark 1997: 21–36). Together with other writers like Smalley (1996, 1988) and the LaHayes (1995, 1982, 1978), Dobson (1996, 1995) preaches a family lifestyle characterized by male leadership and female submission. This design—believed to be God's blueprint for family togetherness—is supposed to enable couples and their children to remain strong despite the secular forces at work, forces that according to these writers are seeking to destroy the family unit through divorce, gay rights, and rebellious children. The sign of "happy Christian families" resides in strong male leadership and supportive, nurturant women (Nason-Clark 1999a), a message that has received great popularity through the Promise Keepers Movement (see Lockhart 1996; Elmore 1992; Janssen 1994).

While Dobson never condones physical battery of women by their husbands, he never explicitly condemns the use of force. Rather, when excessive power and control are exercised by men, Dobson holds the wife responsible for stopping the abuse through his concept of tough love. Dobson counsels victimized women to stand firm, to surround themselves with supportive family and friends, and to seek counseling from a trained spiritual leader. From Dobson's perspective, reconciliation is the number one goal of clerical or clinical intervention in cases of wife battery. Smalley (1996: 48) suggests that women consider the "hidden pearls," or nuggets of gold, connected to the offense perpetrated against them. The LaHayes (1995: 103) teach women that submission to one's husband is not "contingent on the actions of your partner." The reality and pervasiveness of the violence in some Christian homes is all but dismissed so that the message of "happy family living" can be proclaimed unscathed. This rhetoric impacts the average pastor and the average churchgoer immensely. Since women and men are to strive for marital happiness at all costs, clergy find themselves caught in the crossfire between an ideology of family life they are meant to uphold and the reality of parishioners in marital crisis (Nason-Clark 1996).

Conducting the Research

The research described in this chapter has been collected as part of a larger multiphase series of studies conducted by the Religion and Violence Research Team[8] under the umbrella of the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research at the University of New Brunswick. Working together with a variety of Protestant faith traditions (Anglican, Baptist, Salvation Army, United, and Wesleyan), our individual projects have employed a plethora of research methodologies, including mailed questionnaires, in-depth interviews, focus groups, telephone surveys, and community consultations.[9] This series of studies has sought to document what happens when a battered religious woman looks for help within her faith community. Through our varied methodologies, we have sought to tell that story from a variety of perspectives, including those of the battered woman, the clergy, the transition house workers, and other women, men, and youth involved in the local congregation.[10]

The survey data illustrated for us how often, and under what circumstances, clergy are called upon to respond to abuse located within the family setting. We were able to document ways in which both clergy and lay people regard violence in families of faith as distinct from abuse occurring within other families in the community. We heard of the struggle of ministers as they attempt to meet the needs of parishioners with limited training in counseling to counterbalance the growing demands for their pastoral care. Through our telephone interviews, we were introduced to the complexities of congregational and community life that mitigate against churches and secular social service agencies working as partners. Yet we also learned of the new opportunities for collaborative ventures between the sacred and the secular as resources for the community shrink in the face of reduced budget allocations for direct intervention into the lives of people touched by abuse.

Through in-depth interviews with clergy, we have been able to document the advice and referral practices offered to woman victims, male perpetrators, and the children who also bear the scars of abuse. We learned of the plethora of practical, emotional, and spiritual supports that emanate from the local parish church to a battered woman and her dependent children. We heard church women lament their clerical leaders' apparent unwillingness to discuss violence from the pulpit, and their own stopgap measures to bring healing and support to victims of abuse. Moreover, we began to understand both the challenges and the opportunities for partnering between congregations and local resources funded by the government, foundations, or charitable donations.

In total, more than one thousand clergy, female victims, transition house workers, church women, and members of local congregations have been involved in some stage of this research program. Taken as a package, these studies and the corresponding data offer us a unique look into the lives of religious congregations and their response to violence against women. Hope and disappointment, victory and struggle, empowerment and dismissal characterize the stories we have heard. As we will see throughout this chapter, there is evidence for both shattered silence and holy hush within the stained-glass enclave, as both the institution and the faithful who support it come to grips with the reality and the pain of violence.

Evidences of Holy Hush

> It's not a safe place to come because once you get there . . . nobody knows what to do with you.[11]
>
> By remaining unhappy . . . by deciding to stay in a pattern that's not to cause waves. It's choosing the path of least resistance. That's probably her way of contributing to the conflict in that relationship. By staying. . . .[12]

Perhaps the most accurate portrayal of the church's failure to recognize and respond to wife abuse in their own midst and within the communities where they serve would be as a "conspiracy of silence." The multimillion-dollar Christian family literature does not discuss it, pastors rarely if ever preach about it from the pulpit, and other church programs do not normally make a deliberate effort to include it within their curricula. Elsewhere I have written that the holy hush of churches around the subject of woman battery is related to four factors: resistance to the phrase "wife abuse"; refusal to believe that church families can be just as violent as nonchurch families; reluctance to preach against violence within the family; and interpreting reconciliation as recovery (Nason-Clark 1999a: 44–49).

Among clergy, resistance to the phrase "wife abuse" is no doubt related to the fact that the terminology grew out of the women's movement, the feminist struggle to name the experiences of women in the face of a male-dominated culture. Transition house workers use the term in their attempt to help victims of violence see that they should not hold themselves responsible for the abuse they have suffered; feminists who lobby on behalf of the shelter movement use the term to denote that an individual woman's need for safety and respite from a violent partner is part of a larger societal problem of unrestrained male aggression, a specific example of the broader public issue of men controlling women (Thorne-Finch 1992; Walker 1990).

Clergy, on the other hand, prefer to conceptualize the problem as family violence, out of reluctance to lay blame for the violent behavior solely on the violent spouse. From this standpoint, abuse is evidence that there are relational problems in the marriage, and that help is required to restore marital bliss. Violence, then, suggests that the couple is confused about God's plan for family life, or that they require additional resources in order to implement that design in their own lives. By referring to abuse as a family problem, clergy place the blame squarely within the family unit, to be resolved at that level, by both partners working in cooperation.

Naming the violent conflict between men and women within the family unit is a political act. Since churches often claim ownership of *family values*, and celebrate the strength and vitality of family life, it is not surprising that on this issue they choose to stake out their turf as *the family* (Nason-Clark 1999c). Accordingly, abusive acts perpetrated by intimates is primarily conceptualized as a family problem. Interpreting her own unpleasant relationship experiences as abusive, however, is a major step for a woman. Indeed, the healing journey normally is not begun until she discloses her pain, humiliation, and ongoing suffering to someone else. Identifying the pain and naming the conflict are central ingredients on the road toward disclosure. Not only is naming the violence a political act; in essence, it has the potential to be a healing act as well.

There is also a persistent refusal among religious leaders to believe that church families might be just as plagued by abuse as other families within the neighborhoods to which the church ministers. Yet the evidence indicates that violence knows no faith boundaries (Timmins 1995; Horton and Williamson 1988). While clergy report at least an awareness of the social scientific explanations for woman abuse within the secular world, they are most resistant to appropriating these explanations to account for violence within families of faith (Nason-Clark 1996). Rather, clergy prefer to understand abuse in church families as a byproduct of thwarted spiritual development, a specific sign that religious maturation is ongoing and that the carnal nature of men and women presents a persistent struggle in the life of the believer.

It flows naturally, then, that since the cause of the violence is spiritual, so too must be its cure. As a result, the pastor, or spiritual leader, ought to be the primary caregiver to men and women suffering the pain and humiliation of violence within the family context. Even though ministers report feeling untrained to deal with violence, and overburdened by the counseling demands of parishioners, they are still reluctant to refer abused women and abusive men to secular agencies or health care professionals for help. In part this is a reflection of their unwillingness to entertain the notion of nonspiritual forces at work among the faithful. Interestingly, those clergy with the most counseling experience dealing with abuse are also the least reluctant to make a referral to an outside agency or professional; where referrals are needed most (amongst the least experienced clergy), they are also the least likely to occur (Nason-Clark 1996).

Few clergy ever preach a message condemning wife abuse, though countless numbers of women parishioners wish they would. In fact, church women have grown very impatient with their clerical leaders on this subject: since church women's knowledge of abuse is framed by helping women they know who have been violated (like sisters, friends, and neighbors), they are likely to empathize with an abused woman's low self-esteem and are reluctant to blame her for either the violence or her reluctance to leave an abusive marital home (Nason-Clark 1995). Church women want clergy to discuss the issue of abuse from the pulpit, in a context that is safe, and where men are present. Yet there is growing pressure on ministers not to scare away the men who are present on Sunday morning. With numbers of male attenders shrinking, and with the challenge from groups like the Promise Keepers to bring the men back in (Elmore 1992; Janssen 1994; Lockhart 1996), religious leaders often find themselves caught between what they might like to say and what is expedient.

Pastoral public silence on this issue would no doubt be reconsidered if ministers understood just how powerful their condemnation of violence could be in the life of a violated woman or abusive man. In fact, many religious victims reported the impact of their priest or pastor saying violence is wrong, that it is *not God's plan*, as they journeyed from victim to survivor status. Having the support of their minister, including God's permission to leave an abusive relationship, is an essential ingredient in the healing process of most religious victims of abuse (c.f., Whipple 1987; Horton and Williamson 1988; Nason-Clark 1997).

Put together all these elements—naming the abuse as *family violence*, regarding church families who are violent as spiritually immature, and feeling some pressure to especially welcome men to their worship services—and it is not surprising that clergy report feeling rather responsible for repairing damaged families and helping couples restore marital bliss. In fact, many of the pastors we interviewed talked about their failure to bring reconciliation into the lives of an abused woman and her abusive partner. Not only did they regard this as a failure of the man and the woman to repair their relationship; they felt personally that they had failed as a pastoral counselor.

Reconciliation is regarded as one of the chief goals of clerical intervention with troubled families. Clergy endorse reconciliation as both desirable and attainable; as spiritual counselors, their enthusiasm for reconciliation draws its strength in part from the traditional Christian message. Reconciliation lies at the heart of the gospel: remorse and transformation are central constructs within Christianity. Thus, for the pastor faced with a (temporarily) repentant abuser and a violated wife, the notion of reconciliation seems both a feasible solution and the counseling path of least resistance. Reluctant to see any marriage dissolve, clergy frequently counsel couples to look within themselves to repair their broken relationship with God and with each other. They appear optimistic that violent men want to (and then can) alter their violent behavior. They underestimate the long-term consequences of battery in the life of an abused woman.

Holy Hush and Religious Definitions of Abuse

First and foremost, churches need to be safe places to disclose the pain, humiliation, and consequences of battery. Within the walls of the local congregation, is there such safety? Do pastors minimize the trauma of abuse? Do they sweep women's stories under the proverbial church carpet? Does a religious halo surround a church family man, blurring clerical vision? Is there compelling evidence of a *holy hush?*

Violent religious men, violated religious women, and church couples in conflict pose a direct challenge to the message of marital bliss and "happy family living" so enthusiastically endorsed by clergy across North America. The rhetoric of strong families has so much popular appeal in religious circles that many pastors find themselves caught between an ideology they are meant to uphold and the reality of men and women in crisis.

Within our interview data among evangelical clergy, there is great enthusiasm for the nuclear family and a strong notion that Christian families are different from those in the secular world. Their reluctance to suggest divorce bears a personal time cost, since evangelical pastors put a great deal of energy into counseling families in conflict. They cling to the potential of reconciliation until it is clear that an abusive man will not change his violent ways. Mainstream clergy too are very strong family supporters, though they appear to have less vested interest in keeping families together at all cost. Thus, one of the contributing factors to the *holy hush* is the enthusiasm with which clergy and religious institutions have embraced the "happy family" myth.

A second factor relates to the paucity of counseling training given the average congregational pastor. Armed with an ideology that supports family life at almost any cost, and equipped with little training to help couples in crisis, or women living in fear, or men who apparently cannot control their anger, clergy resort to what they know best: dealing with communication problems between family members. Although they conceptualize abuse as a *spiritual* problem, needing *spiritual* solutions and the counsel of the *spiritual* leader, surprisingly little *spiritual* counsel is offered to abusive men, abused women, and couples in conflict (see Nason-Clark 1997).

Clergy face a very difficult dilemma. They are not trained to respond to violent men or violated women. They endorse an ideology that says family values are a central construct in the contemporary Christian message. Yet they see the pain and suffering of victims and want to bring healing to the individuals and to the family unit. So what do they do? In cases involving less direct evidence of physical force, they interpret the problems as relational. As a result, they suggest that a man be more attentive to his wife and her needs, and they encourage women to take more responsibility for both the ownership of the problem and its accompanying solution. Some may be tempted to see this as an explicit example of blaming the victim. However, I would argue that it is in large measure a function of clergy resorting to the territory with which they are comfortable: helping nonviolent couples relate better, improving communication skills and offering modest suggestions to make a satisfactory relationship better. Generally speaking, clergy see a lack of communication skills and limited self-understanding at the heart of almost all marital discord.

It is important to interject that we have no evidence that would suggest that clergy directly dismiss a battered woman's call for help, conceal her pain, or minimize the immediate consequences of her suffering. Contrary to some others, we did not find that pastors sent physically battered women home to pray that they would be better wives and mothers (Brown and Bohn 1989; Bussert 1986; Horton and Williamson 1988). Yet most clergy do not understand the cycle of violence, the manipulative acts of a perpetrator, and the pattern of (temporary) remorse after a violent episode, nor do they see the structural and personal impediments to a woman leaving a partner who has been violent. Moreover, among church families, clergy are very unlikely to consider the role of nonreligious forces in accounting for the violence or despair. The more common scenario was for clergy to frame verbal put-downs and emotional abuse as communication difficulties or relational challenges, and to advise both partners to take responsibility for their personal contribution to the problems and their eventual solution. Interestingly, many pastors believe that the reason parishioners seek their counsel is because of their strong interpersonal skills: in essence, they play the role of a friend *par excellence.* Thus, it is not primarily their advice that is sought, but their interpersonal warmth and charisma. Since naming the issue poses some real difficulties, since there is virtually no literature concerning the issue or its resolution, and since direct preaching about it is unlikely to happen, by default the issue is silenced. A *holy hush* pervades; yet, in many corners of the average congregational church, there is a rumbling that cannot be silenced (Nason-Clark 1999a).

Evidences of Shattered Silence

> A girl that went to our church. We helped her move. . . . I got my daughter's boyfriend . . . I got his army buddies to come up so that they could handle the [abusive] boyfriend if he came back while we helped her move everything out in a truck . . . this girl was only 100 pounds soaking wringing wet.[13]

> I think that some of my female colleagues find that they get a better window to that than some of the male members.[14]

One of the most dramatic ways silence is being shattered in the life of a local congregation is through the support, empowerment and courage women offer to one another in—and through—their faith-based and friendship networks. As I have argued elsewhere, there are four key elements to the *shattered silence* just beginning to emerge in some churches: circle of support, context of care, clergy as empathic counselors, and choice as an intervention strategy (Nason-Clark 1999a).

As church women gathered in focus group settings, we learned of the amazing level of support offered to abused women in both rural and urban contexts. Two in every three church women have offered some form of practical or emotional support to a battered woman in her church or in her community. Perhaps based upon their firsthand experience responding to the needs of women victims, church women were well aware of the challenges of confidentiality in a closed community and the limitations of clergy-only counsel. Through their actions, church women encouraged more disclosure. The home of another woman of faith was a safe place to talk about the pain, despair, and vulnerability violence brings into a woman's life. Church women accompanied women to court, they helped women escape and move belongings from a home where physical and emotional health could never be assured, and they offered what resources they had to give: a listening ear, a couch for the night, babysitting for the woman's children. Of the help that had been offered, one in five church women provided overnight accommodation and 12 percent gave direct financial assistance (Nason-Clark 1996). What was particularly impressive about the form of empowerment practiced by women of faith is that it did not require an abused woman to sever all ties with her violent partner, nor did it suggest that she return and remain in a domestic situation that threatened her physical or emotional health. Rather, the empowerment offered by church women offered choices, a form of agency, whereby a battered wife was encouraged to take control of her life and her future, perhaps for the first time ever (Beaman-Hall and Nason-Clark 1997a).

Through our contact with transition house personnel, we have learned of the rather curious relationship between conservative church women and local shelters for abused women. Shelter workers informed us of how church women's groups in their local community would support the house by donating goods, painting a room, volunteering their time, or giving yearly financial contributions (Beaman-Hall and Nason-Clark 1997b). Relative to the transition house's annual budget, these donations were rather small, but they were consistent, ongoing, and often rather innovative. Two examples: in one local community the church women would "host a shower" at their local church and donate all the presents to the shelter; at another church, the women's group "adopted" a room at the local shelter and would ensure that it was freshly painted and appropriately furnished. Church women understood these acts of love under the umbrella of Christian social action, *living what you believe*.

On the other hand, clergy had very limited contact with transition houses: approximately one-third of the clergy in our research had been to a shelter at some point, but the overwhelming majority had no regular contact with the house, nor did they have any ongoing working relationship with its staff. Many clergy were wary of the advice women might be offered in a shelter environment, and many transition house workers were equally skeptical of the advice women might be offered within the confines of a pastoral study. To be sure, the road to collaboration between secular and sacred organizations is fraught with some real challenges concerning the disclosures and response to woman abuse (Nason-Clark 1999b). Unlike their clerical leaders, though, church women did not see themselves on an ideological collision course with the local shelter—they simply appropriated fragments of both religious teaching and feminist interpretations of the problems surrounding violence against women (Beaman-Hall and Nason-Clark 1997a).

Most clergy report that parishioner demand for pastoral counsel has increased dramatically in recent years. No doubt a reflection of the tightening of the public purse string, the immediate service and the free counsel in a local church setting is hard to beat. A contributor to clerical stress, the "on-call" nature of their work means that most ministers are accessible to their congregants nearly every day and most waking hours. Furthermore, in rural and suburban contexts, clergy often visit parishioners (sometimes unannounced) to check up on their emotional and spiritual well-being. In fact, many pastors reported that when they are alerted to the possibility of violence in a relationship, they increase their "unannounced" visits; several related stories of arriving at a home where the woman was at risk and subsequently taking her out of the violent home, either to the hospital, to the shelter, or to a home connected to their congregation (sometimes to the parsonage). A number of ministers shared stories that suggested that their own safety was compromised by these caring acts (Nason-Clark 1997).

So how much experience do clergy have with abused women and families in conflict? Our data suggests that the average pastor sees two or three abused women per year, one or two abusers per year, two or three couples where violence is present, and several women who are recovering from childhood traumas (Nason-Clark 1996). While clerical experience in no way matches the level of need, clergy are an important resource for religious women who have been violated and religious men who are perpetrators (Nason-Clark 1999a). While clergy are reluctant to suggest separation and divorce, particularly those who espouse a conservative theology, they do recommend separation and the initiation of divorce proceedings when it becomes clear that an abusive husband's behavior is ongoing and that he is resistant, or unable, to change. Many clergy reported frustration in dealing with male perpetrators, particularly their manipulative ways, and their unwillingness to engage in ongoing therapy that might lead to behavioral change. A common occurrence was for clergy to have an ongoing counseling relationship with an abused woman, ever hoping to engage her resistant partner, but with limited success. Many pastors interpreted this as failure on their part: their inability to win the trust and allegiance of the abusive man, and ultimately to alter his violent ways.

The road to healing and wholeness for an abuse victim is long, winding, and strewn with obstacles. For religious victims of abuse, there are some unique challenges, or difficulties to be overcome. Yet, as Lori Beaman and I argue elsewhere, conservative church women themselves see their faith as an asset on the road to recovery, not a liability (Beaman-Hall and Nason-Clark 1997b). Often religious abuse victims will use language that suggests that their experience of battery has equipped them to reach out to others, made them sensitive to suffering, or enabled them to meet women in like circumstances. Sometimes these women transform their personal pain into ministry opportunities by highlighting the issue in their local church and then engaging in outreach to the local transition house.

Notwithstanding their stories of recovery, the obstacles battered church women face are ever present: the enthusiasm of contemporary Christianity for intact nuclear families; the doctrine of instantaneous conversion; the concept of forgiveness; and the notion of separation from the world. The celebration of family life and family values permeates many church programs and the literature that is distributed to parishioners: from the church picnic to the youth group, from the Sunday sermon to the premarital counseling curriculum. The doctrine of conversion focuses on dramatic, instant change in the life of a believer: from darkness to light, from godlessness to godliness. Evangelical church women hold in high regard the teaching of being "born again," and the importance of each believer testifying to this transformative experience. However authentic a believer's conversion narrative may be, there are some parallels between the process of conversion and the rather inauthentic plea for forgiveness on the part of an abuser who is (temporarily) remorseful for his violence and promises never to batter again. For religious women, these parallels are very difficult to tease apart. In religious terms, she knows that God can change the heart in a moment; through her lived experience she knows about the cycle of violence and the often short-lived honeymoon period after a violent episode (see DeKeseredy and MacLeod 1998; Horton and Williamson 1988). Christian concepts such as forgiveness that emphasizes "seventy times seven," or the need repeatedly to forgive someone who has wronged you, and the glorification of temporal suffering for the long-term benefit of spiritual maturity compound the healing narrative of religious women. That is why religious counsel is such an integral component in the journey toward wholeness in the life of a battered religious woman (Clarke 1986; Halsey 1984; Whipple 1987).

Shattered Silence and Religious Definitions of Abuse

Faith communities have some unique characteristics that augment the practical and emotional help they can offer women victims of abuse. Whether they choose to break the silence or not depends upon the resources available, and the willingness of church members and the leadership to extend themselves in care toward another person. In referring to cases in which they were involved, ministers offered graphic details of a woman's life, like this story from a United church minister:

> A woman very actively involved in the church . . . a deeply spiritual person . . . five grown children . . . he was a controller and a man that was power-hungry. . . . She's sixty, [he] gave her and her eighty-three-year-old mother two hours to get out . . . it was Sunday morning and I was in my first service when this took place . . . there was a note on the pulpit saying she would be waiting to meet with me downstairs when I got home. . . . And her self-esteem was low because she had grown up in a family where there was abuse . . . she had seen her grandfather knock her grandmother out, leave her on the floor in a pool of blood. She saw her father treat her mother very negatively. . . . [Her husband] and his verbal put-downs. He was always calling her stupid and telling her she didn't know what to do. I felt so bad for her, she was so vulnerable.[15]

In discussing how he intervened in this case, the pastor noted that he talked to this woman daily over the course of an entire year, and then had contact twice a week with her on the phone for another eighteen months. Referring to this specific case, but then generalizing to others, he said, "When they have taken the marriage vow, they will ask you: Because I took those vows in the sight of God, they are sacred vows. How do you break them? . . . [T]hey are condemned until some minister tells them that God is love. And if there is no love there [in the marriage], God is not there."

One of the real benefits of spiritual counsel in the life of a battered woman is the shared knowledge that God, the God whom she loves and to whom she is devoted, does not expect her to remain in a violent marriage. Through the pastor's counsel, God speaks. When pastors offer helpful advice, or condemn the battery, the healing journey is augmented; when they fail to see the gravity of a woman's need, or her financial vulnerability, or her sense of despair, there is a missed opportunity and a woman's healing journey is thwarted. That is why it is so critical to ensure that clergy are knowledgeable about the factors that give rise to abuse and use their spiritual authority to bring healing and reduce guilt.

So how is the silence of the churches being shattered? One story at a time, told by a victimized woman to a caring listener. Sometimes that disclosure occurs in the pastoral study; often it is shared at the kitchen table of another woman of faith (Nason-Clark 1999a). The silence will prevail until churches are safe places to talk about violence and shelters are safe places to talk about religion.

NOTES

1. Woman #5, Focus Group #1, cited in Nason-Clark 1997: 108.
2. Woman #2, Focus Group #1, cited in Nason-Clark 1997: xiv.
3. Church Woman Interview #71, cited in Nason-Clark 1999b: 39.
4. Woman #2, Focus Group #4; cited in Nason-Clark 1998: 61.
5. Baptist Clergy Interview #373, cited in Nason-Clark 1997: xii.
6. United Clergy Interview #272.
7. Baptist Clergy Interview #552, cited in Nason-Clark 1997: xiii.
8. The Religion and Violence Research Team was established in 1992 by Nancy Nason-Clark, and she has coordinated it since its inception. Its membership includes academic researchers and denominational partners working in collaboration: Rev. Terry Atkinson, Dr. Lori Beaman, Dr. Lois Mitchell, Ms. Christy Terris Hoyt, and Rev. Sheila McCrea are team members; Amanda Henry Steeves, Michelle Spencer-Arsenault, and Lisa Hanson have served as graduate research assistants. Projects have included the Atlantic District of the Wesleyan Church, the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces, the Maritime Conference of the United Church, the Anglican Church (Province of New Brunswick), and the Maritime Division of the Salvation Army.
9. Financial support of our research initiative and community consultations has been provided by the Louisville Institute for the Study of Protestantism and American Culture, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Department of the Solicitor General, Secretary of State Canada, Status of Women Canada, the Lawson Foundation, the Constant Jacquet Award of the Religious Research Association, the Fichter Fund of the Association of the Sociology of Religion, the Muriel McQueen Centre for Family Violence Research, and the University of New Brunswick Research Fund. Financial and in-kind contributions have also been provided by the participating denominations.

10. Study 1 was a pilot project that examined tensions, collaboration, and contradictions between personnel of transition houses (e.g., front-line workers) and clergy in selected regions of Atlantic Canada. Telephone interviews were conducted with pastors and shelter workers in twelve sites, the average interview lasting an 45 minutes.

Study 2 was a survey mailed to all ministry personnel of the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces, the Atlantic District of the Wesleyan Church, the Maritime Conference of the United Church, the Maritime Division of the Salvation Army, and the Anglican Church (Province of New Brunswick). Survey items included clergy experience with woman and child abuse, their knowledge of family violence issues, and their referral practices involving cases of battery. More than 550 clergy participated in this series of studies, representing response rates that ranged from 40 percent of the United Church ministry personnel to 70 percent of United Baptists and Wesleyans.

Study 3, built upon the results of the clergy survey, involved in-depth interviews with a sample of 150 clergy ministering in various regions across eastern Canada (the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland). These interviews, which lasted between 60 and 120 minutes, probed clergy knowledge of abuse and focused on pastoral counseling strategies with battered women and their families.

Study 4 explored the unique and specific needs of church women who suffer abuse and the responses of their faith communities to that violence. Focus groups were held in thirty locations across Atlantic Canada, involving between five and twenty church women. Individual forms were also completed by each woman who attended a focus group. A further study conducted ninety-four in-depth interviews with women who had participated in an earlier focus group (Beaman-Hall 1996).

Study 5, still in progress, is a congregational project involving telephone interviews with a sample of church members who attend one of twenty-four selected local churches throughout the Atlantic Region. Its purpose is to document sources of help perceived to be available to family members who find themselves in distress or conflict.

The Building Bridges Project involves a series of consultations, in each of the Atlantic provinces, where religious and secular caregivers have been brought together to talk about supportive services for battered women and their children. Its purpose is action-oriented, with the goal of building bridges between the “steeple” and the “shelter.”

11. Evangelical church woman, cited in Nason-Clark 1998: 60.

12. United Clergy Interview #376.

13. Church Woman Interview, cited in Nason-Clark 1998: 57.

14. United Clergy Interview #272.

15. United Clergy Interview #396.

REFERENCES

Barnsley, Jan (1995). Co-operation or co-optation? The partnership trend of the nineties. In Leslie Timmins (ed.), *Listening to the Thunder: Advocates Talk about the Battered Women's Movement*, 187–214. Vancouver, B.C.: Women's Research Centre.

Beaman-Hall, Lori (1996). Feminist practice, evangelical worldview: The response of conservative Christian women to wife abuse. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, N.B., Canada.

Beaman-Hall, Lori, and Nancy Nason-Clark (1997a). Partners or protagonists? The transition house movement and conservative churches. *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work* 12 (2): 176–96.

——— (1997b). Translating spiritual commitment into service: The response of evangelical women to wife abuse. *Canadian Women Studies* 17 (1): 58–61.

Brown, Joanne, and Carole Bohn (eds.) (1989). *Christianity, Patriarchy and Abuse: A Feminist Critique*. Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press.

Bussert, Joy (1986). *Battered Women: From a Theology of Suffering to an Ethic of Empowerment*. New York: Lutheran Church of America, Division for Mission in North America.

Clarke, Rita-Lou (1986). *Pastoral Care of Battered Women*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.

Copeland, Mary Shawn (1994). Reflections. In Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza and Mary Shawn Copeland (eds.), *Violence against Women*, 119–22. London: SCM Press.

DeKeseredy, Walter, and Linda MacLeod (1998). *Woman Abuse: A Sociological Story.* Toronto: Harcourt Brace.

Dobash, R. P., and R. E. Dobash (1979). *Violence against Wives: A Case against the Patriarchy*. New York: Free Press.

Dobson, James C. (1995). *Straight Talk: What Men Need to Know; What Women Should Understand.* Dallas, Tex.: Word.

——— (1996). *Love Must Be Tough: New Hope for Families in Crisis*. Dallas, Tex.: Word.

Elmore, Timothy (1992). *Soul Provider*. San Bernardino, Calif.: Here's Life Publishers, Inc.

Family Violence in a Patriarchal Culture—A Challenge to Our Way of Living (1988). The Church Council on Justice and Corrections and the Canadian Council of Social Development. Available from Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada, 77 Charles Street West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1K5.

Family Violence Prevention Initiative, Province of Nova Scotia (1994). Newsletters 1–5, 1994.

Feld, S. L., and M. A. Straus (1989). Escalation and desistance of wife assault in marriage. *Criminology* 27 (1): 141–61.

Fire in the Rose Project (1994). *What is Abuse? Facts and Stories*. Unpublished report. Ottawa: The Canadian Council on Justice and Corrections.

Fortune, Marie (1991). *Violence in the Family: A Workshop Curriculum for Clergy and Other Helpers*. Ohio: The Pilgrim Press.

Gay, David A., Christopher G. Ellison, and Daniel A. Powers (1996). In search of denominational subcultures: Religious affiliation and "pro-family" issues revisited. *Review of Religious Research* 38 (1): 3–17.

Gelles, R. J. (1985). Family violence. *Annual Review of Sociology* 11: 347–67.

Gelles, R. J., and M. A. Straus (1979). Violence in the American family. *Journal of Social Issues* 35: 15–39.

Halsey, Peggy (1984). *Abuse in the Family: Breaking the Church's Silence.* Office of Ministries with Women in Crisis, General Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Church.

Harrison, Deborah, and Lucie Laliberte (1994). *No Life Like It: Military Wives in Canada.* Toronto: James Lorimer and Company.

Horton, Anne, and Judith Williamson (eds.) (1988). *Abuse and Religion: When Praying Isn't Enough*. New York: D. C. Heath and Company.

Janssen, A. (ed.) (1994). *Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper.* Colorado Springs, Colo.: Focus on the Family Publishing.

LaHaye, Tim, and Beverley LaHaye (1978). *Spirit Controlled Family*. Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications.

——— (1982). *The Battle for the Family*. Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Company.

——— (1995). *The Spirit-Filled Family.* Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House Publishers.

Lockhart, William. H. (1996). Redefining the new Christian man: An investigation into books related to the promise keepers movement. Paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, August 16–18, New York City.

Loseke, Donileen R. (1992). *The Battered Woman and Shelters: The Social Construction of Wife Abuse*. New York: State University of New York Press.

MacLeod, Linda (1987). *Battered But Not Beaten . . . Preventing Wife Battering in Canada*. Ottawa: Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Martin, Del (1981). *Battered Wives*. San Fransisco: Volcano Press. First edition, 1976; San Francisco: New Glide Publications.

Nason-Clark, Nancy (1995). Conservative Protestants and violence against women: Exploring the rhetoric and the response. In Mary Jo Neitz and Marion Goldman (eds.), *Sex, Lies and Sanctity: Religion and Deviance in Modern America,* 109–30. Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press.

——— (1996). Religion and violence against women: Exploring the rhetoric and the response of evangelical churches in Canada. *Social Compass* 43 (4): 515–36.

——— (1997). *The Battered Wife: How Christians Confront Family Violence.* Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press.

——— (1998). Canadian evangelical church women and responses to family violence. In Madeleine Cousineau (ed.), *Religion in a Changing Global Economy,* 57–65. Greenwich, Conn.: Praeger.

——— (1999a). Shattered silence or holy hush? Emerging definitions of violence against women in sacred and secular contexts. *Journal of Family Ministry* 13 (1): 39–56.

——— (1999b). Woman abuse and faith communities: Religion, violence and the provision of social welfare. In Paula D. Nesbitt (ed.), *Religion and Social Policy for the 21st Century*. Walnut Creek, Calif.: AltaMira Press.

——— (1999c). The steeple or the shelter? Family violence and secularization in contemporary Canada. In David Lyon and Marguerite Van Die (eds.), *Rethinking Church, State and Modernity: Canada Between Europe and the USA.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, forthcoming.

Smalley, Gary (1988). *Hidden Keys of a Loving, Lasting Marriage*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House.

——— (1996). *Making Love Last Forever*. Dallas, Tex.: Word.

Straus, M. A., and R. J. Gelles (1986). Societal change and change in family violence from 1975 to 1985 as revealed by two national surveys. *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 48 (August): 465–79.

Straus, M. A., R. J. Gelles, and S. K. Steinmetz (1980). *Behind Closed Doors: Violence in the American Family*. New York: Doubleday/Anchor.

Thorne-Finch, Ron (1992). *Ending the Silence: The Origins and Treatment of Male Violence against Women*. Toronto: The University of Toronto Press.

Timmins, Leslie (ed.) (1995). *Listening to the Thunder: Advocates Talk about the Battered Women's Movement.* Vancouver, B.C.: Women's Research Centre.

Walker, Gillian A. (1990). *Family Violence and the Women's Movement: The Conceptual Politics of Struggle*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Whipple, Vicky (1987). Counselling battered women from fundamentalist churches. *Journal for Marital and Family Therapy* 13 (3): 251–58.

Chapter 5

Guide to Enlightenment of Strayed Shepherds?

The Problems of Claimed Clergy Malfeasance in Interreligious Perspective

James V. Spickard

The topic of this volume is clergy malfeasance. Our work is varied, and—perhaps—comes to no clear conclusion. Indeed, I wish to make the reaching of such a conclusion more difficult by questioning the notion of malfeasance itself. In doing so, I follow in a long line of philosophers who risk being condemned as "corruptors of the young."[1]

My point, simply put, is that "malfeasance," "misconduct," and other related concepts take their sense from particular universes of moral agreement. People who share a given understanding of the world agree about what constitutes malfeasance. People who do not share this conceptual world have other notions of what malfeasance might be. One thus cannot define "malfeasance" in the abstract, because its meaning in any particular case is constituted by the moral universe within which it is used. This is standard cultural-relativist fare (Herskovits 1972), but it has more biting ethical consequences in today's world than heretofore.

Though we once could have imagined that our morality was universal, widespread moral universes are rarely found in our late modern world and are in principle never found in a postmodern one. If we live in the latter, as some critics claim, then we cannot weigh the moral worth of any act. "Clergy malfeasance" is thus an empty term and all of our discussions are pointless. If, however, there remains some ground for shared moral discourse, we may—if we are lucky—

be able to say something about our topic. Just what that may be I shall leave until the end of this article.

I

Let me begin with a story. In the first chapter of his *Interpretation of Cultures*, Clifford Geertz (1973) presents the story of a Moroccan Jew whose goods had been stolen by a band of brigands. Failing to get help from the French colonial authorities, the Jew turned instead to a Moslem sheikh, with whom he had a traditional trade pact. That sheikh captured the brigands and instructed the Jew to take his compensation in sheep. He did so, only to have the sheep confiscated by the French because the case was handled outside the law.

As Geertz shows, each player in this little drama—French, Berber, and Jew—saw it differently. The Jew saw it as a matter of compensation: something stolen needed to be repaid. The sheikh saw it as a matter of honor: someone under his protection had been wronged. The French saw it as a matter of law: such matters should be handled by the state, not privately (though they conveniently forgot that they had not helped the Jew when he came to them for assistance). Each interpreted the case according to his own culture, and each acted out of his own sense of moral rightness. The Jew got his goods, at least temporarily; the sheikh upheld his honor; and the French upheld the law by confiscating the "stolen" sheep. Each was, in his own eyes, "right," though in the end French power prevailed.

Geertz uses this incident to show how people may interact with one another, yet have quite different notions of what is happening. I retell it to note the social situatedness of morality: whether actions are right or wrong depends on the social worlds of which they are a part. For who was "right" in this tale? Frenchman, Berber, and Jew each followed the generally accepted norms of his culture. Each upheld his fundamental principles of compensation, honor, and law. These principles are not part of the structure of the universe; they arise from the constellation of ideas, norms, and generally shared expectations peculiar to any interacting group of people. We call such constellations "cultures," and recognize that different people have different ones. These cultures tell all peoples—Jew, Berber, French, American, or Hottentot—what is "right" and "wrong."

Because these cultures are independent, there is no justifiable reason for us to say that one is any better than another. To claim that the Jew was right and the French were wrong is merely to say that compensation is more important than the rule of law—a truism for the Jew but nonsense for the French. It is like saying that Chinese is a better language than Russian: true for the Chinese, but false for the Russians. There is no supracultural court of appeals to decide such matters. An act is "morally right" if it fits the norms of the culture that evaluates it.

If this is true for cultures, it is even more true for religions, for moral systems are grounded in worldviews, and religions—whatever else they do—systematize worldviews for their adherents. Religions thus provide the ultimate foundation for the moralities of religious folds, though nonreligious people may well get their morals elsewhere. This is merely to say that people's morals are based on their ultimate beliefs and commitments, which are religion's domain.

Yet this means that there are as many moralities as there are religions—a lot, in today's world. To pick two local examples: Jehovah's Witnesses and the members of the Catholic Worker communities have different moralities because they have different beliefs about the nature of the world they live in (see Beckford 1975; Ellis 1978; Murray 1990). They act differently, though not as differently as one might expect given their reputations: both are pacifists, both spend much of their lives with their fellow believers, both bear daily witness to their God and their beliefs. Yet their lives differ because they are guided by different moral principles. Jehovah's Witnesses focus on the end of time and live a life of rules that prepares them for the Second Coming. Catholic Workers orient themselves toward the cultivation of compassion and service toward "the least" of God's creatures. The leftist political involvement of the latter contrasts sharply with the political uninvolvement of the former. Moral notions central to one group are peripheral to the other, and vice versa.

Can one, in principle, tell which of these moralities is "correct"? Only if one can tell which of their worldviews is the most accurate. If, as the Witnesses claim, the Second Coming is nigh and the way to Heaven is narrow, then following their rules may be the only acceptable human path. If, on the other hand, the kingdom of God is here on earth and ruled by love, compassionate service to others is our true calling (Spickard and McGuire 1994). These moralities differ, despite their overlap, and their differences stem from their different ways of seeing the world.

There is no point in multiplying examples, though given the fifty-seven different religious groups in my university town of sixty-five thousand people, I would not have to go far from my door to do so. True, most members of my local churches could agree about certain general rules: "thou shalt not kill," "thou shalt not steal," "thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's Winnebago." But this agreement does not constitute a shared *morality*. Morality cannot be reduced to a few propositions about specific acts. It involves a deep-seated approach to the world, a guideline for the orientation of the human soul. Two moralities may condemn killing, but one of them may also allow it under certain circumstances: in a "just war," for example, or to save people from torturous pain. Or they may each allow it for different circumstances (Lebacqz 1986). One cannot say that two religious groups share a morality unless they share it at the level of the worldview from which their morality grows—and this amounts to saying that they are not two religions, but one.

A wilder example may illustrate this. Some years ago, I saw a German film about the Rajneesh commune in Poona, India, that showed a rape during a group therapy session. A man and a woman confronted each other, the man accused the woman of frigidity and spiritual repression, they struggled, and he raped her as the group looked on (see Carter 1990; Goldman 1995; Palmer 1996). Had this happened in my local Episcopal parish, the man, the group therapist, the onlookers, and probably the priest and the filmmakers would now be in jail. Yet the Indian police were not called, and the film later showed the victim herself praising the rape as crucial to her subsequent spiritual breakthroughs. One is reminded of M. Scott Peck's (1988) refusal to reject on principle all sex between a psychotherapist and a client: were there a case, he wrote, in which the sex would unequivocally help the client, he would do it. (He added, however, that he had great trouble imagining such a situation.)

What is the moral point? For the local Episcopalians, as for most Americans, rape is always wrong. It violates a woman's personal integrity and is thus never appropriate. Yet Rajneesh followers, at least in their early years, saw sex as a path to spiritual enlightenment (Goldman 1995). Though no reports show rape being used as a therapeutic technique, one could not declare it wrong in all cases. The test of rightness or wrongness is not the act itself, nor even the personal integrity it might violate, but the spiritual enlightenment that results. If they bring enlightenment, all acts are morally legitimate, despite their condemnation by the world.

What does all this have to do with clergy malfeasance? My point is simple. An act is only "malfeasance" if it violates a group's own morality and worldview. Rape is "wrong" for, say, Episcopalians not because it is wrong absolutely, but because it violates Episcopalian morality. The morality is based on a high estimation of the integrity of the self. Episcopal "big tent" theology leaves individuals much room to direct their own spiritual lives, and their integrity is a big part of (at least modern liberal) Episcopalian thinking. Anything that violates that integrity is evil. Thus—for Episcopalians as for other mainstream denominations—sexual contact between clergy and parishioners is taboo because it threatens the latter's spiritual integrity. It violates church morality and is thus "wrong" (see Fortune 1989; Cooper-White 1991; Lebacqz and Burton 1991).

On the other hand, rape might be (arguably) "right" for those religious groups that value spiritual enlightenment as a prime goal—but only if it is done for the sake of that enlightenment and not out of violence or desire. It is then an extreme case of a more common phenomenon: a spiritual leader having sex with a follower because such sex helps the follower's spiritual progress. One might hypothesize that such sex might increase the follower's self-esteem so that she or he can concentrate on meditation, for example. Or it might free the follower from a childhood parent-fixation. If this is the case, it would be the duty of the leader to put aside his or her own purity to serve the follower better. Though an outsider might call this rationalizing sexual abuse, the follower might accept the more spiritual interpretation. (See Jacobs 1989, 1995 for an antirelativist's report of such interpretations.)

Let me be clear about this culturally relativist claim. Relativists do not argue that there are no ways to judge if an act is right or wrong. People in all societies make such judgments daily. Relativists merely contend that one society's (or religion's) standards of judgment cannot take precedence over any other's. No morality is absolute; each depends on the root principles its society (or religion) enshrines. What is "right" in one place is literally "wrong" in another, for an act that conforms to one set of moral principles may violate a different core code. As there is no way to evaluate such principles universally, we must assume that each group's standards are equal. All moralities are equally valid. Each applies only within the communities that support the principles they proclaim.[2]

II

What does this philosophizing mean in practice? Let's take a few cases to see what "clergy malfeasance" looks like in the real world.

Various authors have spilled much ink in the last few years exploring clergy sexual peccadilloes, especially those of the Catholic priesthood (e.g., Fortune 1989; Berry 1992; Burkett and Bruni 1993; Shupe 1995; Jenkins 1996). Yet the condemnation of clergy conjugation arises because of two facts. First, such acts violate church law for both Catholics and Protestants; second, when they involve minors they violate civil law as well. The first is not problematic: Christian moral teaching is quite clear on both promiscuity and the sexual violation of minors. Catholic clergy are supposed to be celibate, and most Protestant denominations ask their clergy to confine sex to monogamous marriage. In any case, the relationship of clergy toward their parishioners is supposed to be pastoral and caring, not predatory. Greeley (1990) has argued that freedom from sexual intimacy makes possible the spiritual intimacy that helps parishioners grow. As such spiritual growth is a major reason for the clergy's existence—especially as guides to youth—no moral relativism can exonerate Christians who violate their own codes.

But it is a further step to argue that pederasty is wrong always and everywhere. Ancient Greek education centered on the amorous ties between teacher and pupil—both male—and saw their emotional transference as a key part of the learning process. Plato and others quite famously praised such liaisons, and indeed placed heterosexual and homosexual love on equal moral footing. Were they "right" and modern Catholics "wrong," or is it the other way around?

Similarly, American law gives children special protection, regardless of religion. Pedophilia is a crime regulated by the state, so there is no doubt that priests can be tried and convicted, or that the Church can be sued for damages. And the Church has not contested the issue.

Yet there are other crimes that have not produced such easy judgments. During the 1970s and 1980s, various new religions were accused of "kidnapping" and "brainwashing" their young adherents (Bromley and Richardson 1983; Robbins 1985). Various new religions were accused of forcibly converting the impressionable young. These groups often fought back, claiming that their religious freedoms were being violated. Regardless of the facts of these cases, are there any defensible limits on religious practice? Could a religion legitimately revive human sacrifice, so long as its "victims" (the very word is prejudicial) were willing offerings to their God? Could the members of the Heaven's Gate suicide cult have been legitimately prosecuted for following their religion's teachings—assuming they had survived their own attempt on their lives? Several issues intertwine here, including the relative hegemony of church and state and the acceptability of non-mainstream religious practices (see Richardson 1991; Anthony and Robbins 1995, 1996). The moral issue is not as clear-cut as it seems at first sight.

Take another case: the Reverend Sun Myung Moon's conviction for "tax evasion" (see Robbins 1987: 138–39). Clearly, Reverend Moon mixed church money with his own, much as do the pastors of numberless entrepreneurial churches—including many on the New Christian Right. This was illegal, though there is a question of the selective prosecution of a non-mainstream figure and a further question of whether the offense was a moral one, even in Christian eyes. But seen from the point of view of the religion itself, is there not perhaps a deeper justification for Reverend Moon's actions? If, in fact, he is the new messiah, does not everything belong to him anyway? By mingling funds, is he not just reclaiming what he already owns? And who are these tax authorities to question the acts of God's own savior? Are they not the new pharisees, unworthy to touch the hem of his robe?

My point is, the morality or immorality of Moon's financial dealings depends on the worldview that sits in his judgment. We cannot speak of "clergy malfeasance" here without specifying the moral code that claims such acts to be wrong, and the worldview by which that moral code is justified.

Let me take a third and final case. In October 1997, two Los Angeles-area women were convicted of first-degree murder in the beating death of a five-year-old girl—a distant relative of mine, it turns out, though not from a part of the family that I have ever met. These women murdered the child in the midst of an exorcism, in which they forced the girl's mother to beat her to "rid her of the Devil." Apparently her mother and two friends frequently gathered to take methamphetamine and beat their children. The slaying was particularly brutal, though as one of the detectives remarked, "the worst was, I think she thought this is what normal life was like."

My own emotions aside, one has to wonder how to judge the morality of it all. If, as the women claimed, the girl was possessed, did she not need exorcising? Is it proper to discount these women's religious claims? Does not some responsibility for this act accrue to their minister and the TV evangelists, who convinced them that the Devil can inhabit a girl's body and that her only salvation lies in beating? And does not this raise the issue of religious freedom? The case poses these questions, though with the drug use and other circumstances it does not pose them cleanly enough to undermine the legal system or the jury verdicts. The line between religion and lunacy is not always very clear.

III

Admittedly, the foregoing has been provocative; I am trying to make a rather uncomfortable point—uncomfortable to me as well as to others. Nonetheless, comfort is not an acceptable standard of truth. If we are to respect people's religion we need to respect their religiously based moralities, and that means accepting a lot of behavior we otherwise detest. The only alternative to this moral agnosticism is submission to one or another variety of religious police—a prospect most people would find just as appalling.

Yet is the case really so severe? Have I not left something crucial out of my discussion? Several things, in fact, need to be added to the foregoing, but as none of them will dampen our sense of unease, I shall pass through them quite quickly.

First, there is the issue of secularity. I have said that the moral systems of religious folk are grounded in their worldviews. Is the same true for the nonreligious? And is there any way that nonreligious morality can become a standard for measuring clergy malfeasance? The answers to these questions are "yes" and "no" respectively: yes, it is true for the nonreligious; no, there is no nonreligious universal standard for clergy (or other) malfeasance. These answers stem from the structural relationship between morality and worldview, which is identical in the religious and nonreligious cases.

Briefly, the religious or irreligious content of a worldview makes no difference to its status as a ground for morality. One does not need to be a theist to be convinced of the sanctity of human life and the integrity of each individual person. From these beliefs can stem such moral notions as the concept of innate human rights, an ethic of "do unto others," or a calling to help the oppressed.

Yet like religious ethics, none of these moral notions is valid for those who do not accept the underlying worldview. A human rights ethic will have little purchase for one who truly believes in racial supremacy. Those who avow the natural superiority of the capitalist class will not likely aid the oppressed. And both of these groups are apt to "do unto others" only if they see this as a doing *before* it is done unto them. Their competitive worldview emits a competitive moral vision. *Any* moral vision is grounded in a worldview, religious or not; one cannot overthrow a reality without overthrowing the worldview on which it depends.

This brings us to our second issue: is there not some "superior morality," some vantage point from which one can judge other moralities as adequate or wanting? Again, the answer is no, and again it stems from the structural relationship between morality and worldviews. In order to claim supremacy for any one point of view, one needs to demonstrate the truth of its underlying worldview. But how are we to do that? At least as the world is now constituted—i.e., barring human omniscience—the only way to secure a worldview is through divine revelation. The highest powers in the universe would have to say "This is so."

Yet any such revelation would immediately be contested by those who do not believe in it. They would require some proof of the revelation's divine origin, which would require another convincing revelation, and so on *ad infinitum*. Without these nested revelations—or even with them—we would be in the same pickle we are in now: with competing and perhaps incommensurable moralities based in competing and incommensurable worldviews.

Third, could not different religions come to consensus on this matter? Even if there is no superior morality, is there not some set of values on which everyone can agree? This is a judgment call, but beyond those few platitudes I mentioned above—and there are those who covet my neighbors' Winnebago—I do not think such agreement likely. Remember that moral systems are not just lists of rules, but grow out of ways of seeing. Though people from many religions might agree on certain basic rules, they are much less likely to agree on the principles from which those rules derive.

There is a good analogy to this in the political process that produced the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That Declaration was drafted by a committee of five: René Cassin, a French political liberal and defender of the traditions of the French Republic; Charles Malik, a Lebanese Thomistic Christian; Peng-Chun, a renowned Confucianist; John Humphrey, a Canadian diplomat; and Eleanor Roosevelt. While the first three argued hammer and tongs about principles, Roosevelt pointed out that full agreement on principles would never come and they needed to produce a final document. Like all moral texts, the resulting Declaration does have principles, but they are so vague as to be unable to sustain intellectually coherent interpretations of even the list of rights that the document proclaims. Human rights are thus honored as much in the breach as in practice—particularly by so-called "Asian democracies" that claim never to have bought into the agreement in the first place (Spickard forthcoming: chapter 2).

As religions are even more uncompromising than governments, it seems unlikely that America's varied religions would ever agree on a unified standard of morality to apply to clergy or to anyone else.

Yet a fourth issue is a bit more biting. Religious groups do not participate just in their own institutional lives; they participate as well in a public world. Is it not possible to claim the supremacy of American public morality on the grounds that religious groups buy into a public moral code as a condition of receiving public support and legitimacy? After all, religions get many social privileges: tax exemptions, public approbation, and so on. Is it so unreasonable to expect that they accept—at least implicitly—general public notions about the right things to do?

Some churches will perhaps answer "yes," but most of them will answer "no"—as the long list of *amicus* briefs in Rev. Moon's tax case indicates (Robbins 1985: 138–39). For the consequences of an affirmative answer are arresting. If religions must accept general public morality as a condition of living in the public world, they have accepted the end of their distinctiveness, indeed of their freedom. They have undercut their own existence as alternatives to the status quo. I feel this keenly as a member of one of the historic peace churches (Quakers, Amish, Mennonites, Brethren, and so on) because “general public morality” opposes pacifism and favors capital punishment, among other antilife practices. But what Catholic, of the Right or of the Left, would give up the role of a social critic? What Jew would give up the right to follow the Torah rather than Babylon? If religious freedom comes with the commandment to follow “the general public morality,” it has become the freedom to be irrelevant. And this is just the mainstream. Buddhists, Moslems, Zoroastrians, and adherents of the innumerable new religions must feel the press of conformity more strongly, because the Judeo-Christian mainstream is not theirs.

Further, this call mistakes law for morality. It is one thing to ask people to obey the law, and yet another to ask them to abandon their morality for another’s. As a Quaker, I can accept the fact that the law condemns people to die without thinking that it is right for it to do so. At times, my moral code compels me to do the latter, and so I choose jail in witness to the law’s immorality. This may or may not change the law, but from my (sectarian) point of view, that is irrelevant. I owe the public sphere my acceptance of the rule of law, but I do not owe it my moral allegiance.

And this call also mistakes the origin of religious legitimacy. Religions get their legitimacy not from participating in secular affairs, but by holding to their religious visions. Their members grant them honor to the degree that those members find their worldview plausible and their institutional and moral practices consonant with it. That is, religions are deemed legitimate to the degree that they take their own beliefs and moralities seriously and thus provide their members with stable guides for living. To abandon their moral principles in order to conform to a “general public morality” with which they disagree is to squander that legitimacy and to make them organs of the status quo.

What does this all have to say to the problem of clergy malfeasance?

First, there is no escape from the relativist dilemma. “Malfeasance” is a relative term that makes sense only within a universe of moral discourse. One can thus not talk about malfeasance in the abstract, but only in the concrete: as the violation of specific rules a religion sets for itself. One cannot apply outside rules to determine whether malfeasance has or has not occurred. One must judge immanently, not transcendentally.

Second, and more positively, given that a religion has a sufficiently elaborated moral code, there is no obstacle to judging clergy malfeasance from within. Most religions are clear about the line between proper and improper action. Moral philosophy has no problem with these internal judgments, only with those that try to reach across religious boundaries. These are philosophically invalid in our multireligious world.

IV

I want to close with two sociological questions, which may bring some hope to the universalists among my readers. They are deliberately speculative, in the original sense of that word: "forward-looking." First, what is the social source of the currently increasing moral contentiousness on such matters? And second, are there trends on the horizon that might move us closer to at least some kind of moral community in which concepts such as clergy malfeasance will have more universal content than they do today?

First, why do we *now* see increasing conflict over basic moral issues, along with a neofoundationalist counterattack that urges us to think that there isn't any problem? Some of this is the result of globalization, which can be captured by Salman Rushdie's comment that in today's world "Khomeini lives upstairs." Now that groups formerly unaware of each other's existence live in each other's laps, they must either find common ground or struggle for hegemony. Both routes problematize moral issues that previously seemed simple. The increased contact between groups with different worldviews produces some cooperation but even more retrenchment. Peter Beyer (1994) sees these universalizing and particularizing tendencies as a key aspect of the move toward a global world, erupting in phenomena as varied as the human rights movement, environmentalism, and the various religious fundamentalisms that have been so prominent in recent years. Conflicts over clergy malfeasance are just one result of this increased disharmony.

To Beyer's universalizing and particularizing tendencies I would add, following Anthony Giddens (1991), a move toward individuation. One central aspect of the present age is the rise of the individual as a locus of moral worth—a phenomenon that I, like Durkheim (1964), trace to an ever-increasing, internationally interdependent division of labor (Spickard 1995). No longer is the society or even the group the prime unit of social analysis. At least in key social strata, individuals are now forced to create themselves throughout their life course. They must find their way in a world beset by metaphysical cacophony and confusion.

Postmodernism reflects this loss of metaphysical and social consistency. If—as the postmodernists claim—the present epoch no longer supports "grand narratives," it does not because it no longer supports the unified groups with their moral universes on which judgments of such things as clergy malfeasance depend. Those universes were based on such narratives and their groups carried them into the next generation. Such coherent worldviews have traditionally been religion's forte. The rise of a fragmented social world undercuts religious narratives though it does not undercut the efforts of religious groups to sell their narratives to those seeking a more coherent world. Postmodernism predicts that these sales jobs will ultimately fail—a prediction borne out by the high turnover rates of many new religions (Barker 1989) as well as by the spiritual careers of baby boomers (Roof 1993), whose religious life is eclectic, to say the least.

Yet this makes the problem of defining "malfeasance" even more biting than I have argued above. For if the globalized world has abolished narratives, as the postmodernists claim, it has abolished them not just *between* religions, but *within* them. Thus it is not enough to demonstrate that Catholic moral theology condemns priestly pederasty; postmodernism makes suspect the very notion of "Catholic moral theology," so that it can no longer serve as an unambiguous standard of judgment. Perhaps the recent prominence of malfeasance complaints results not from changed practices, but from a desire to revive an old moral order that is perceived to be slipping away (see Shupe 1995; Jenkins 1996). Clergy misconduct might well be seen as the ultimate sign of moral decay, and might be hidden precisely because religious institutions are afraid of the further moral dissolution its disclosure brings (see Stockton 1997).

At least speculatively, this situation has consequences for moral philosophy as well as for institutional life. If the postmodernists are right, not just universal but all standards are threatened. With the decay of internal as well as external standards, claims of clergy malfeasance do not just become hard to apply; they become impossible. They depend, after all, on the existence of socially shared moral universes, which are at best contested and may in fact be passing from the scene. Without such universes, morality itself vanishes. This is my professional terror in the face of a postmodern world.

Nonetheless, I would not lose hope just yet—and this is my second sociological observation. Along with this decline of the old "grand narratives" comes the rise of their replacement: the one narrative that still makes sense in postmodernity. This is the story of the individual. Hidden in the decline of universal groups and institutions—or at least in their increasingly obvious irrelevance to the modern multicultural world—is the growing salience of the person. This salience has three interrelated aspects: structural, ideological, and moral. I do not have space to pursue the first two here, but it is the third of these that both undercuts past attempts at moral universalism and promises a new standard by which to judge such things as clergy malfeasance.

The first aspect concerns the structural roots of Beyer's universalizing and particularizing moments as well as of Giddens's description of individuation. Here I note only a vastly more developed division of labor compared to former eras combined with a growing international interdependency that connects people at all levels of global society. These ties are not just vertical, but horizontal; not just economic, but political, social, and cultural. To cite just one example: West African Pentecostals are in close contact with their coreligionists in the United States and Brazil, not just through their organizational hierarchies but as visitors, pilgrims, and spiritual entrepreneurs (Van Duk 1997; Fratani 1997). Individual-centered but internationally connected networks rather than groups or organizations are the emerging units of analysis.

As for the second aspect: the growing role of individualistic ideologies has been well noted by social critics as varied as Christopher Lasch (1991) and Robert Bellah (Bellah et al. 1985). Both note the corrosive effect individualism has had in American life. The latter and his collaborators have charted the empirical decline of non-individualistic public philosophies.

Yet it is the third, moral aspect that interests me here. The key issue for moral philosophy, as I see it, involves finding the moral principles underlying an individualized and globally interconnected social life. What (perhaps minimal) morality is implied by our individualized, functionally differentiated, and globally interdependent social order? What morality must be presumed if individually focused global networks are to sustain a social life? I cannot present the full analysis here (see Spickard forthcoming), but it strikes me that the transition from a social order based on groups to a social order based on individuation and international connection has a parallel on the moral plane.

What moral principles does our era imply? At the very least, a society based on individuals must revere human life, individual freedom and autonomy, and individual integrity. For a society built around individuals must grant them the highest moral worth. The sacredness of individual life—every life—is implied by the central role individuals play in the social structure; holding individuals sacred in turn guarantees the structure's reproduction. But life without freedom, autonomy, or physical and mental integrity is not a life on which an individualized society can depend; so these, too, must be preserved. The "rights" to life, liberty, freedom of thought, speech, religion, freedom from torture, and so on—those so-called "first-generation" human rights so important to the democratic West—find secure moral ground not in some religious or political worldview but as the moral prerequisites of the social world in which we now live.

Yet our global society is not just an individualized, but an interconnected one. Are there also moral principles this interconnection implies? Clearly, our daily life places a positive value on human difference; if we were all alike we could not sustain our globe-spanning division of labor. As we work with an ever-increasing number of others and come to depend more and more on them, we acknowledge our interconnectedness by tolerating—even honoring—their differences from us. These differences sustain us, and make tolerance a key moral virtue.

Besides tolerance, interconnectedness implies mutual responsibility. For if we depend on the Chinese and Hottentots—or on the French, Berbers, and Jews of Geertz's tale—we have responsibility for them. Their starvation is our starvation, their oppression is our oppression. The intertwining of our lives with theirs connects our fates. They are neighbors, not strangers.

Traditional Chinese morality is more strongly focused on relations with neighbors than is the morality of the West (Rosemont 1991). Individuals do not matter as much as mutually responsible relationships. As I have argued elsewhere, Confucian morality is structurally compatible with the functionally integrated aspect of our late modern social order (Spickard 1996). That morality places primary emphasis on what are generally known as "second-generation" human rights: rights to adequate food, housing, education, and economic development. An interconnected society, in which the well-being of each depends on the well-being of all, implies some such moral principles. It is not too much to say that a Confucian responsibility-ethic is as central to the contemporary world as a Western individuality-ethic. Both are implied by our social order.

In short, the individuation and connection that typify our world on the social level must be reproduced on the moral level. Rather than being grounded in a religious or quasi-religious worldview, however, principles both are implied by our everyday social practices and emerge from the practical requirements of sustaining our social structure. The transition can be summarized as follows. As groups decline in importance (relative to individuals), group-based morality ceases to maintain its convicting force. Moral rules no longer stem from group worldviews because the latter are no longer binding. There is, as Durkheim warned, the threat of a descent into *anomie.*

But *anomie* only looms if one ignores the moral prerequisites of the new social structure, which is not formless but organized around individuals and interconnections. Unlike true *anomie,* in which no rules hold, an individuated and differentiated social structure *does* have moral principles that sustain its operation. These principles enshrine individual freedom and integrity, tolerance and mutual caring as (at least some of) the key values of our social order. They are not key values because they are part of people's worldview; they are key values because our practical life implies them and because they make that practical life possible. Without them, our individuated social order would collapse and we would descend into the *anomie* Durkheim feared.

V

What are the consequences for our understanding of clergy malfeasance? Our present world has undercut traditional group moralities and so has reduced our ability to make the moral judgments needed to sustain any coherent standard for measuring "right" and "wrong." But the social transformations driving postmodern thinking have replaced the world's separate moralities with one that sanctifies individual autonomy and integrity on the one hand, and interpersonal tolerance and responsibility on the other. *"Clergy malfeasance" can be defined as any act by which clergy transgress the autonomy and integrity of their parishioners, or undercut tolerance and responsibility for others.* Unlike the moralities described in the first three sections of this paper, this morality applies not just to the groups holding a particular world vision, but everywhere.

What does this look like in practice? Priestly pederasts are still condemned, even in denominations that have no rules against such liaisons, because their acts violated the integrity of their charges. Sex between a religious leader and a follower, like that between a psychotherapist and a patient, is *prima facie* taboo because the power relationship between them undercuts the subordinate's individual autonomy. The Reverend Moon cannot direct his church dictatorially, even if he is the messiah, because his spiritual status cannot override the individual autonomy of his followers. And beating a child to death to drive out the Devil violates the sanctity of her life, over which no religion has power.

We have, therefore, standards by which to weigh clergy—and other—malfeasance. But this morality is not imposed on religious groups from without, nor is it the result of unprincipled compromise. It stems from the moral principles underlying practical life in the postmodern era in which we happen to live. As our era is notoriously corrosive of moral standards of all kinds, I think that discovering these implicit standards is a respectable accomplishment.

NOTES

1. A previous version of this article was presented at the 1997 annual meeting of the Religious Research Association, San Diego, California.

2. Relativists actually claim a great deal more than this, though they come in several flavors and styles. They notably separate into 'cognitive' and 'moral' varieties, though the lines between these are not always clear. For some high points pro- and con- see: Herskovits (1972); Rorty (1979); Putnam (1981); Hollis and Lukes (1982); Hatch (1983); MacIntyre (1984); Geertz (1984); Gellner (1985); Stout (1988.)

REFERENCES

Anthony, Dick, and Thomas Robbins. 1995. Negligence, Coercion, and the Protection of Religious Belief. *Journal of Church and State* 37 (3): 509–36.

———. 1996. Sacred Claims: The "Cult Controversy" as a Struggle over the Right to the Religious Label. *Religion and the Social Order* 6: 153–85.

Barker, Eileen. 1989. *New Religious Movements: A Practical Introduction*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Beckford, James A. 1975. *The Trumpet of Prophecy: A Sociological Study of Jehovah's Witnesses*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Bellah, Robert N., Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler, and Steven M. Tipton. 1985. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Berry, Jason. 1992. *Lead Us Not Into Temptation: Catholic Priests and the Sexual Abuse of Children*. New York: Doubleday.

Beyer, Peter. 1994. *Religion and Globalization*. London: Sage Publications.

Bromley, David, and James T. Richardson, eds. 1983. *The Brainwashing/Deprogramming Controversy: Sociological, Psychological, Legal, and Historical Perspectives*. Toronto: Edwin Mellen Press.

Burkett, Elinor, and Frank Bruni. 1993. *A Gospel of Shame: Children, Sexual Abuse, and the Catholic Church*. New York: Viking Press.

Carter, Lewis F. 1990. *Charisma and Control in Rajneeshpuram.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Cooper-White, Pamela. 1991. Soul-Stealing: Power Relations in Pastoral Sexual Abuse. *Christian Century*, 20 February, 196–99.

Durkheim, Emile. 1964. *The Division of Labor in Society.* 1893. Trans. by George Simpson. New York: The Free Press.

Ellis, Marc. 1978. *A Year at the Catholic Worker*. New York: Paulist Press.

Fortune, Marie M. 1989. *Is Nothing Sacred? When Sex Invades the Pastoral Relationship*. New York: Harper.

Fratani, Ruth Marshall. 1997. Winning Nigeria for Jesus: Nationalist Discourse and Transnational Identity among Nigerian Pentecostals. Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Société Internationale de Sociologie des Religions, August, Toulouse, France.

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.

———. 1984. Distinguished Lecture: Anti Anti-relativism. *American Anthropologist* 86 (2): 263–78.

Gellner, Ernest. 1985. *Relativism and the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Giddens, Anthony. 1991. *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

Goldman, Marion S. 1995. From Promiscuity to Celibacy: Women and Sexual Regulation at Rajneeshpuram. *Religion and the Social Order* 5: 203–19.

Greeley, Andrew M. 1990. *The Catholic Myth: The Behavior and Beliefs of American Catholics*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Hatch, Elvin. 1983. *Culture and Morality: The Relativity of Value in Anthropology*. New York: Random House.

Herskovits, M., ed. 1972. *Cultural Relativism: Perspectives on Cultural Pluralism*. New York: Random House.

Hollis, Martin, and Steven Lukes, eds. 1982. *Rationality and Relativism*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press.

Jacobs, Janet L. 1989. *Divine Disenchantment: Deconverting from New Religions*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

———. 1995. The Violated Self and the Search for Religious Meaning. *Religion and the Social Order* 5: 237–60.

Jenkins, Philip. 1996. *Pedophiles and Priests: Anatomy of a Contemporary Crisis*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lasch, Christopher. 1991. *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations.* Revised edition. New York: W. W. Norton and Company.

Lebacqz, Karen. 1986. *Six Theories of Justice: Perspectives from Philosophical and Theological Ethics*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House

Lebacqz, Karen, and Ronald G. Burton. 1991. *Sex in the Parish*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press.

MacIntyre, Alasdair. 1984. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. 2d edition. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press.

Murray, Harry. 1990. *Do Not Neglect Hospitatlity: The Catholic Worker and the Homeless*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Palmer, Susan J. 1996. *Moon Sisters, Krishna Mothers, Rajneesh Lovers: Women's Roles in New Religions*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press.

Peck, M. Scott. 1988. *The Road Less Traveled*. New York: Touchstone.

Putnam, Hilary. 1981. *Reason, Truth and History.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richardson, James T. 1991. Cult/Brainwashing Issues and Freedom of Religion. *Journal of Church and State* 33 (1): 55–74.

Robbins, Thomas. 1985. New Religions, Brainwashing and Deprogramming. *Religious Studies Review* 11 (4): 361–70.

———. 1987. Church-State Tensions and Marginal Movements in the United States. In *Church-State Relations: Tensions and Transitions*, ed. Thomas Robbins and Roland Robertson, 135–49. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books.

Roof, Wade Clark. 1993. *A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of the Baby Boom Generation*. San Francisco: Harper.

Rorty, Richard. 1979. *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Rosemont, Henry Jr. 1991. *A Chinese Mirror: Moral Reflections on Political Economy and Society*. LaSalle, Ill.: Open Court.

Shupe, Anson. 1995. *In the Name of All that's Holy: A Theory of Clergy Malfeasance*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

Spickard, James V. 1995. When None Dare Call It Evil: A Sociological Framework for Evaluating Abuse in Religions. *Religion and the Social Order* 5: 251–68.

———. 1996. The Logic of Universal Human Rights in a Multi- Cultural World. Paper presented to the "Confucianism and the West" faculty seminar at Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas.

Spickard, James V., and Meredith McGuire. 1994. Religion and Social Action: Narratives of Commitment. Paper presented to Research Committee 22 of the International Sociological Association, July, Bielefeld, Germany.

Stockton, Ronald B. 1997. The Politics of a Sexual Harassment Case: Conflict, Christianity, and Polity in a Presbyterian Congregation. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Religious Research Association, November, San Diego, California.

Stout, Jeffrey. 1988. *Ethics after Babel: The Languages of Morals and Their Discontents*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Van Duk, Rijk. 1997. Time and Transcultural Technologies of the Self in the Ghanaian Pentecostal Diaspora. Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Société Internationale de Sociologie des Religions, August, Toulouse, France.

Part II

Responding to Accusations of Clergy Malfeasance

Chapter 6

Charisma, Male Entitlement, and the Abuse of Power

Janet L. Jacobs

Introduction

On July 19, 1995, Keri Jewell, a fourteen-year-old member of the Branch Davidians, testified before Congress on the living conditions at the Mount Carmel compound in Waco, Texas, prior to its destruction in 1993. Keri Jewell's testimony spoke of the rape of young girls by the Branch Davidians' leader, David Koresh; of her own assault in a motel room at the age of ten; and of her mother's apparent complicity in the sexual violations to which she had been subject while living under Koresh's authority.[1] Keri Jewell's painful testimony once again raised the specter of violation and abuse in charismatic religious groups. Like the mass suicides of Jonestown years before, the events at Waco, Texas, brought the issues of power and violence to the forefront of discussions on authoritarian movements. As politicians and scholars debated the role of the government in the assault on the Branch Davidian compound, the sexual abuse of Keri Jewell provided an important reminder of the dangers some charismatic movements pose, especially for women and children.

In order to understand the abuse of power on the part of leaders like David Koresh, it is useful to consider the structural characteristics that define contemporary charismatic movements. To begin with, charismatic groups are characterized by a wide range of religious orientations, including Christian, Buddhist, and Hindu belief systems. Common to all of these groups is the presence of a charismatic leader whose authority derives from God and who requires obedience and submission of the religious devotees. Typically, these groups maintain rigid boundaries between the religious community and the outside world. Within the insular life of the movement, the leader maintains control over the followers by demanding strict adherence to a set of ideologies and beliefs (Anthony and Robbins 1995; Hatcher 1989). In the vast majority of new religious movements, these ideologies are guided by principles of male domination that originate in the belief system of the charismatic leader.

In an exploration of the relationship between sexual violence and male-dominated charismatic movements,[2] this chapter will examine the ways gender affects the abuse of power in new religious communities. In particular, I will analyze the structural aspects of authoritarian religious movements that legitimize and support the sexualization of women and children. Beginning with a discussion of charismatic authority and male entitlement, the chapter will interrogate the meaning of incest in patriarchal religious communities and the significance of sanctions and isolation for the maintenance of social control.

Charismatic Authority and Male Entitlement

In the dynamics of abuse that have emerged within contemporary charismatic movements, the actions of the charismatic leader would seem to be the most important factor for the study of sexual coercion and violation. As spiritual and social authority is vested in his person, the religious leader becomes representative of a divine being whose will is that of God and whose actions are above reproach. Max Weber described this form of charismatic authority as follows:

> The genuine prophet, like the genuine military leader and every true leader in this sense, preaches, creates, or demands new obligations. In the pure type of charisma, these are imposed on the authority of revelation by oracles, or of the leader's own will, and are recognized by the members of the religious, military, or party group, because they come from such a source. Recognition is a duty. (Weber 1968: 51)

Within charismatic movements, recognition of the leader's relationship to the divine provides the basis for authoritative control over religious followers. Through the redefinition of social and spiritual reality, the leader creates what Bucher (1983) calls a world of total meaning whereby beliefs, practices, and behaviors are interpreted through the worldview of the charismatic authority. A devotee of a Christian fundamentalist movement describes this phenomenon:

> Pastor Jim was feared and revered. He was the leader of the thing. He was responsible for bringing them together. Pastor Jim's word was law. . . . The people followed him completely, worshiped him. He made the decisions and when anyone challenged him, he would say they were in with the devil, the cloak of evil had been pulled over their eyes. (Jacobs 1989: 94)

An analysis of charisma in new religious movements reveals that followers are drawn to religious figures such as Pastor Jim who offer authoritarian leadership within the context of surrogate family ties (Robbins and Anthony 1972; Tipton 1982). In addition, studies of charismatic movements also indicate that over time religious leaders tend to expand their authoritarian control as the adoration of the devotees contributes to the leader's self-perception of omnipotence and godliness. Thus, leaders of such movements tend to make increasing demands on their followers as greater and greater tests of loyalty are required of devotees. The Peoples Temple, the Branch Davidians, and other suicide cults tragically demonstrate the extent to which divine attribution can result in the severe abuse of power. The following excerpt from a speech by Jim Jones, the leader of the Peoples Temple, illustrates the way he used religious symbolism to legitimate the act of revolutionary suicide:

> . . . And Paul said that it's all right to give your body to be buried . . . but be sure you've got charity in your heart. Charity means Principle. What is pure love? Communism. . . . In other words, Paul was saying give your body to be burned. Set it afire, if necessary; to convey a revolutionary message, but be sure you've got Communism in your heart. (Reston 1981: 268)

In less violent totalistic groups, corruption and the abuse of power may be manifested in the acquisition of material goods and extravagant lifestyles, as exemplified by Divine Light Mission. Here a former follower describes his view of the changes that took place as Guru Maharaji demanded increasing financial support from his devotees:

> They told us that Maharaji was bringing peace to this planet, but living in this age required airplanes and luxury hotels, the finest clothing and

> everything which developed into thousands and thousands of people who were working their butts off, seven days a week. I sometimes feel in the beginning he was really sincere. But I think a lot of it just came from being corrupted by the lifestyle. Even his personality decayed. (Jacobs 1989: 103)

As this account suggests, claims to charismatic authority privilege religious leaders, legitimating their right to material indulgence and to unquestioned obedience. Under this system of authoritarian rule, male entitlement to sex becomes one more expression of the leader's special status and of his power to control the lives of others. In his study of Love Israel and the Love Family, Robert Balch describes this "self-aggrandizing" aspect of charismatic leadership:

> Given his exceptional status in the Family, it should not be surprising that Love took advantage of his unusual power and privilege. . . . In Love's case "perks" were small at first: a private room, better clothes and the freedom to come and go as he pleased. But as the Family grew and prospered, Love's lifestyle became increasingly extravagant. He took long vacations, bought several airplanes, and moved into a luxurious house on Queen Anne Hill furnished with beautiful paintings by Family artists and expensive antique furniture. Love enjoyed the best food, the finest wine and a retinue of devoted servants. His household included the most talented musicians and the most attractive women, many of whom had sex with him on a regular basis. (Balch 1995: 171)

Like expensive cars and other luxuries, access to women and children becomes part of the "material culture" to which the leader is entitled. This characteristic of charismatic religious movements derives from the patriarchal culture in which religious groups reside. As charismatic leaders assume the role of patriarchal authority within religious communities, their abuse of power can be situated within the discourse on the commodification and sexual objectification of women in patriarchal society.

One of the first scholars to explore the relationship between male authority and control over female sexuality was the nineteenth-century social theorist Friedrich Engels. In his classic *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884), Engels suggests that patriarchy, as the structural foundation of society, developed in response to the cultural changes that took place with the advent of agricultural societies. According to Engels, as land and tools came under the control of male labor and ownership, so too did women and children. Thus, the shift from hunter-gatherer (communal) to agricultural (private property) social organizations gave rise to the patriarchal family structure in which women and children were designated as the property of men:

> With the patriarchal family, we enter the field of written history. . . . It is based on the supremacy of the man, the express purpose being to produce children of undisputed paternity. . . . As a rule, it is now only the man who can dissolve it [marriage] and put away his wife. The right of conjugal infidelity also remains secure to him . . . and as social life develops, he exercises his right more and more. (Engels 1884: 102–4)

Within this system of male domination, female bodies became commodities for trade, procreation, and pleasure. This shift in the status of women was reflected in the religious culture of the biblical period as laws designating women as property were codified first in the Old Testament and then in accompanying legal interpretations of the Talmud. The regulation of marriage, virginity, and rape in the rabbinic legal codes provides evidence of the institutionalization of the patriarchal family within male-dominated culture. According to these laws, the father has the power to "give" his daughter in marriage and to be compensated if she is raped prior to her betrothal. Judith Romney Wegner thus maintains that the acquisition of a wife was similar to the acquisition of other forms of property:

> The procedure for acquiring a wife (set forth in tractate *Qiddushin* ["Espousals"]) treats marriage as the formal sale and purchase of a woman's sexual function—a commercial transaction in which a man pays for the bride's virginity just as for any other object of value. The wife heads the mishnaic catalogue of transferable property. This, in turn rests squarely on Scripture and follows the list found in the Tenth Commandment (Exod. 20:14) that defines the contents of a man's household as wives, male and female slaves, large and small cattle, and other property. . . . (Wegner 1988: 42)

Such laws substantiate the historical context in which women were defined as objects of exchange in transactions regulated by men. The anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss offers further evidence for the universality of the exchange of women in both Western and non-Western cultures. His analysis locates the commodification of women within the laws regulating exogamy—that is, the laws that require marriage outside the family group. Such laws, according to Lévi-Strauss, were intended to enforce the incest taboo through marriage alliances that exchange group members in a process of "gift giving." Yet, as Lévi-Strauss points out, such exchanges were rarely if ever gender neutral: "The total relationship of exchange which constitutes marriage is not established between a man and a woman, but between two groups of men, and the woman figures only as one of the objects of exchange, not as one of the partners" (1949: 115).

The writings of Engels and Lévi-Strauss provide the foundation for the development of feminist theories of male entitlement and the sexual exploitation of women and children. In this regard, Judith Herman explains the relationship between male domination and the sexual control over daughters in traditional patriarchal culture:

> In patriarchal societies, including Western society, the rights of ownership and exchange of women within the family are vested primarily in the father. . . . Only under male supremacy do women become objects of exchange. Only male supremacy determines that men have the right to give women for marriage or concubinage, while women have no comparable rights either in men or in themselves. Only under male supremacy do incest taboos become agreements among men regarding the disposition of women.
>
> The man who has the power to give a woman away also has the power to take her for himself. That power can be contested only by other men, not by the women who are given or taken. (Herman 1981: 60–92)

Herman's analysis of fathers and daughters offers a starting point from which to examine the abuse of power on the part of charismatic religious leaders who participate in the exchange and procurement of women and in the sexual violation of children. Because the structure of charismatic religious movements closely parallels that of the authoritarian patriarchal family, the actions of religious leaders can be compared to those of incestuous fathers as male entitlement defines the social context through which sexual violation occurs.

Sexual Violation and the Meaning of Incest in Charismatic Religious Movements

The study of charismatic movements has revealed that their success in part relies on their ability to create a surrogate family environment for devotees who come to identify the charismatic leader with a nurturing paternalistic father figure (Jacobs 1989; Jones 1989). In groups such as the Unification Church, entry into the movement involved specific resocialization processes that were designed to replace the devotee's family of origin with the new religious family of Reverend Moon. Here a former devotee recounts his experience of "Heavenly Deception":

> If the recruiter can paint a selective portrait of himself (based on information given to him by the initiate) which appeals to early childhood experience of the initiate, the recruiter can exert control over the interaction in a pattern similar to the initiate's early relationship to a parent or older sibling.

This practice of appealing to early childhood experiences can achieve remarkable effects. After a weekend with the group, for example, I perceived a visual resemblance between my recruiter and my father. Group life reflects the religious belief that individuals enter a spiritual hierarchy by becoming children, siblings, and eventually parents to other spiritual children as they reach a state of perfect identity with Reverend Moon and God. These roles are constantly opposed to the roles converts have experienced in their "fallen" lives. Biological parents, siblings, and their previous childhood roles are disparagingly compared to the simple, perfect, spiritual order (Edwards 1981: 33–37).

Like Reverend Moon, Jim Jones adopted imagery and language that cast him as the Father or Dad to whom all devotees owed obedience and to whom all could confess their deepest fears and desires. Within this role as spiritual father and teacher, he then assumed the authority to demand sexual services from his followers, to arrange sexual liaisons among devotees, and to "offer" female followers to the Guyanese army in exchange for protection (Jones 1989). Aware that behaviors such as these violated the norms of Judeo-Christian beliefs, Jones rationalized his demands with the higher goals of "revolutionary sex." Citing the teachings of Paul, Jones directed his followers to engage in unconventional and coercive sexual practices for the benefit of the Peoples Temple socialist revolution (Jones 1989). Jones and other Christian-based leaders used religious ideology to convince their followers of the morality of their sexual actions (Balch 1991; Mytrash and Kent 1990). Thus, the spiritual fathers of charismatic groups often called upon God to justify their demands for sexual compliance. Studies of incestuous fathers shows similar patterns of coercion and rationalization. In particular, incest survivors who were raised in religious households report that incestuous assaults were frequently accompanied by explanations that linked sexual violence to biblical narratives and to God's will (Driver and Droisen 1989; Imbent and Jorker 1992). One poignant example of this phenomenon is found in an account by a seventeen-year-old survivor who offers this recollection of her father's abuse:

> My mom and him were into church real big. He started talking about stuff, like God gave him everything and stuff out of the Bible. He said he had to teach me about sex and everything. I've always questioned it but he read some scripture from the Bible. It scared me that he was talking to me about this, like he was God. It just scared me. (Jacobs 1994b: 49–50)

Like the incestuous father, the charismatic leader who portrays himself as the spiritual parent uses the authority of God to justify the sexualization of his female followers. This form of boundary violation is found in both Christian-based movements and Eastern groups, and among Western and non-Western charismatic authority figures. In one Hindu-based group, for example, the leader presided over a small community of followers. Within this group of devotees, he maintained control over all aspects of his followers' lives, including decisions on employment as well as interpersonal relationships. As the guiding spiritual parent of the community, the leader established rigid codes of behavior that stressed sexual purity and restraint. Accordingly, women were required to dress modestly and men were warned against speaking or even looking at female devotees, lest they fall prey to sexual temptation. While the leader espoused a theology of sexual abstinence, his own behavior contrasted sharply with the rules he imposed on others. He entered into sexual relations with a number of different women, some of whom were married to other devotees. One of the women from whom he demanded sexual favors spoke of her trust in the leader and the secrecy that surrounded their relationship:

> He was like God to me. I was his disciple and his child. I trusted him completely. He told me that he knew what I needed for my spiritual

> growth and I believed him. When he said he wanted to have sex with me, I hesitated at first but then he assured me that this was the right path. At the same time he made me promise never to tell anyone about our relationship. (Jacobs 1994a)

This account illustrates the ways in which the sexualization of religious devotees in charismatic movements parallels the sexualization of daughters in incestuous families, as secrecy and concealment become the context within which illicit sexual relations are demanded. Like the incestuous father, the leader is a trusted authority figure to whom the devotee turns for moral and spiritual guidance. And like the incestuous father, the leader uses his authority to gain access to the women under his control and to make sexual demands that violate both the norms of the religious culture and the trust of the devotees.

In her book, *Women and New Religious Movements* (1997), Elizabeth Puttick points to the early practices of the Christian-based Children of God as perhaps the most blatant example of the sexual exploitation of women and children by a religious leader. Under the leadership of David Berg in the 1970s, the group instituted the conversion practice of "flirting fishing," whereby women, including Berg's wife, were required to prostitute themselves for God and for the group. Berg referred to potential converts as "fish," and women assumed the role of bait:

> The fish can't understand crucifixion, they can't understand Jesus. But they can understand the ultimate creation of God, a woman. . . . Everyone of you girls who spreads out your arms and your legs on the bed of those men are just like Jesus, exactly like Jesus! (Puttick 1997)

In the 1970s Berg's approach lent credibility to a movement that provided a Christian rationale for the sexual exploitation of women. During the same time period, other movements, primarily those with an Eastern-based focus, framed the demands for sexual service within the context of sexual meditative practices and the search for enlightenment. As these tantric-based movements developed in Western culture, sexual relations with the leader were frequently expected and in many cases constituted an essential aspect of devotion. Under these circumstances, devotees are required to serve the spiritual teacher within a religious culture that assumes compliance while simultaneously forcing women to compete with one another for the sexual attention of the leader. A follower of a Buddhist movement offered this insight into the blurred boundaries of coercion, compliance, and special privilege that characterized her involvement in a tantric community:

> I remember the first time I was chosen to be with [the teacher]. We were at a huge party that the community was giving. I was standing with a group of people and one of the guards tapped me on the shoulder and told me [the teacher] would like to be with me tonight. I looked over at my husband. We all knew what the tap on the shoulder meant for women. He looked kind of unsure and shrugged his shoulders. I felt both flattered and confused but I stayed until everyone else had left. Then I was brought into a small room and told to wash and dress in a particular way. Then I was brought into [the teacher]. What he wanted was oral sex, with me as the passive partner. So I just lay there. Afterwards, I felt in a kind of daze. I felt used and honored at the same time. This was [the teacher] after all, and I knew I should have felt that this was a great privilege for me. But I just didn't really feel anything at all. (Jacobs 1990)

This account demonstrates the confusion a female devotee may experience as her body becomes the vehicle for the leader's spiritual enlightenment, while she herself feels alienated from both the sexual practice and her own spiritual awareness. This approach to sex-based spirituality may have serious consequences for the group, particularly in situations where the leader assumes a position of authority that places no limits on his demands and where there is an absence of accountability. Such was the case when an American-born leader of a tantric movement engaged in unprotected sexual relations with both male and female followers while infected with AIDS. When confronted with the spread of the disease, the leader explained that he thought his special relationship to the divine would shield him as well as others: "Thinking I had some extraordinary means of protection, I went ahead with my business as if something would take care of it for me" (Butler 1990). This case, perhaps more than any other, illuminates the way charismatic authority produces a sense of moral invincibility on the part of religious leaders. Acts of sexual violence and abuse can then be carried out with impunity, as distortions in ideologies of male entitlement/godliness empower patriarchal leaders to make demands that result in the sexual violation of female followers.

As revealed by the events surrounding the attack on the Branch Davidians, the abuse of power in charismatic religious communities frequently extends to control over children. The data on sexual abuse and assault suggest that some charismatic leaders engage in the sexual exploitation of children in the service of their own needs or those of the organization (Jacobs 1989). While Keri Jewell's testimony provided the most publicized reports of these abuses in the United States, other groups also espoused sexual relations with children. The best known among these is the Children of God movement discussed earlier. In a set of now famous letters he wrote, Berg encouraged incest and sexual relations with children, using the Bible to justify such abuses. Among others, Berg's daughter accused him of sexual violation. In recent years, following a court case in England, the movement rejected Berg's child-based sexual ideologies (Puttick 1997). Despite this shift in the movement's belief system, the development of the Children of God provides insight into the relationship between male authority and the construction of exploitive religious practices.

In still another instance of child sexual coercion, a past member of an Eastern-based group spoke of tantric practices that involved the exploitation of male and female children:

> The teacher would sodomize young children who didn't even know what he was doing. He would tell them it was for their spiritual growth, that he was helping them toward enlightenment. But it just didn't make any sense for these kids, barely 12 or 13 years old, to have this man treat them that way. (Jacobs 1992)

This description of sexual violence is particularly close to that of incest and illustrates the power of the leader to demand submission not only from the child but from the parent who fails to challenge the leader's authority. The extent to which members remain compliant in charismatic movements can in part be explained by the relationship of charismatic authority to male entitlement. In addition, it is also important to consider other structural characteristics of charismatic groups that support the authoritative control of the leader. In this regard, two other aspects of charismatic religious communities will be considered: the presence of sanctions and the insularity of the group.

Sanctions

Like fathers in incest families, abusive leaders in religious movements rely on various forms of social control to obtain and sustain compliance from devotees. A variety of sanctions are used to punish individuals who refuse to comply. Coercion, punishment, and fear are among the most significant forms of punitive control used by charismatic leaders. David Koresh, for example, was known to use corporal punishment, as were other leaders of Christian-based groups who espoused the principle of "spare the rod and spoil the child." In many of these instances, physical punishment was justified by Christian doctrine:

> He [the pastor] was a strong disciplinarian. You can beat those kids black and blue, that's all right. They are going to be better for it. And people would do it because Pastor Jim said so. . . . The women were submissive. They take the Bible view of it, plain and simple. And if the children said a naughty word or someone disobeyed, spank them or give them a bloody nose, that's all right. He was the man responsible for organizing it. (Jacobs 1989: 94)

Shunning, shaming, and isolation were also used to punish dissidents and to force devotees to comply with demands for sexual services. In those movements where female devotees were required to use their sexuality to attract other converts, failure to do so would often result in sanctions from the leader and from other group members. One devotee described her experience as follows:

> The philosophy was the more books you sell, the more spiritual you are. . . . The best way to serve was to make money. The most perfect thing to do was to go out and sell books. They told us to use our female tendencies to get people to contribute and therefore to purify them and ourselves. At my best, I was bringing in $400 a day. I became very good at it. But when I couldn't collect money any more, I lost my value to the community. (Jacobs 1989: 66)

Other female devotees reported punishments such as isolation and deprivation when illness prevented them from witnessing on the streets:

> They then decided I couldn't be in a room where I could be seen, I'd have to be in the basement. . . . And in this particular basement, around

> every corner was a couple. So the place that was left in the basement was concrete floor beside a tank—a water tank. . . . And here they threw a mattress and told me I could stay here till I decided I was well enough to go on the streets. (Mytrash and Kent 1990: 15)

Still other forms of coercion were reported by members of the Love Family. A high-ranking devotee of that group gave an account of her teenage years in the movement, when Love Israel demanded sex from her and threatened to leave her by the side of the road if she refused (Balch 1991). In another case, a female follower of a tantric movement reported that when she declined an "invitation" to be the sexual partner of the leader, she was shunned by the spiritual hierarchy and was denied access to the teacher during religious rites and festivals (Jacobs 1989). These numerous accounts illustrate the use of negative and punitive sanctions in those circumstances where women refuse to comply with requests for sexual favors and demands for sexual liaisons.

Perhaps the most effective form of coercion within charismatic movements is the manipulation of fear. As the embodiment of God, the religious leader assumes the power of divine retribution, a power he uses to ensure conformity and maintain submission. Thus, when followers disobey the rules or challenge the authority of the leader they risk not only social rejection but the wrath of God as well. Because disobedience and criticism are interpreted as failures of faith, devotees who engage in such behaviors are threatened with both worldly punishment and eternal damnation.

This phenomenon is exemplified in the case of a female devotee who was pressured into becoming the secret mistress of her teacher. In discussing her experience, she spoke of the fears that characterized her life in the first few months after leaving the group. Prior to her departure, she had been warned that if she left the leader, she would be deserting God. Despite this threat, she chose to leave the movement. In the aftermath of her departure, she feared that she would be struck by lightning or hurt by an act of God. Other women expressed similar fears of divine retribution. For these women, noncompliance was equated with disobedience and forsaking the divine. Thus, they feared that their actions could result in their death or in the death of those they loved (Jacobs 1989). Within this system of social control, the abuse of power by the religious leader is contextualized by a culture of fear and coercion that serves to reinforce and strengthen charismatic authority within the movement.

Isolation, Insularity, and the Role of Religious Hierarchies

Feminist research on family violence has investigated the relationship between the privatization of the family in industrial society and the prevalence of wife-battering and sexual abuse (Schneider 1994). These studies conclude that the isolation of women and children within male-dominated families creates conditions under which violence is more likely to occur. Within incest families in particular, Herman found that "the fathers consolidated their power within the family by isolating their wives and children from the outside world" (Herman 1981: 73). Such forms of isolation are reminiscent of charismatic movements where the abuse of power has been prevalent.

In groups such as the Peoples Temple and the Branch Davidians, for example, the leaders took extreme measures to ensure that their followers would be both socially and physically isolated. Through this isolation, the leaders maintained sovereignty over an encapsulated community of believers. Within the compound in Waco, Texas, and in the remote countryside of Guyana, the rights of the devotees could be violated without fear of outside interference as the leaders constructed their own systems of social control in which they were accountable to no one but themselves. Thus, the exploitation of women and children was sanctioned by an ideology of male supremacy that developed within an insular social structure that afforded the devotees little protection.

Even among the less isolated groups who formed ashrams and communes throughout the United States, the organization of members into distinct communities provided an encapsulating environment wherein the worldview of the leader could go unchallenged as he redefined the norms of social relations within the group. When demands for sexual service became part of his worldview, insularity limited the influence of conflicting definitions of social reality that might challenge the leader's "right" to the women and children who came under his authority. Further, as Balch (1991, 1995) points out in his study of the Love Family, charismatic movements frequently develop hierarchical social arrangements that help to sustain the leader's power by insulating the leader within the community. In this regard, Balch describes the inner workings of a group of high-ranking devotees, those who were known as elders and priests among Love Family members:

> Members of the inner circle functioned as gate keepers who screened the flow of information between Love and the rest of his followers. . . . The inner circle provided Love with a remarkably effective shield. Even when the Family had fewer than 30 members living in just two houses, many people were unaware that Love was using toulene [a type of drug] virtually every day. About the same time, Love was secretly sexually involved with two or three women in the group, even though members had agreed to become celibate. Later when Love became addicted to cocaine, most rank and file members had no idea that he was free-basing, nor did they realize that Love had members buying and selling cocaine for him. Most inner circle members knew about these indiscretions, but they kept the information to themselves. There were many reasons for their silence: loyalty to Love, hope that he would change, doubts about their own judgment and fear of losing their position. . . . (Balch 1991: 24–25)

The hierarchical structure described by Balch is characteristic of many charismatic movements. Typically, the group will have a three-tier system, with the "ordinary" devotees at the bottom, the leader at the top, and a cadre of elite or high-ranking followers forming an intermediary level of authority. As a separate sphere of control, the elite corps, known variously as elders, guards, or initiators, will sometimes procure women for the leader (as well as for themselves) and will frequently initiate sanctions against those who criticize the leader or question his authority to demand sexual favors. In their role as gatekeepers, these high-status devotees protect the leader from exposure and provide a structural support system that can foster the abuse of power. Thus, they may fail to disclose abuse and/or admonish followers who refuse to be silenced. In the case of the leader who transmitted AIDS, for example, at least two of the elite members of the group knew of his condition for two years prior to disclosure (Butler 1990). In keeping the "secret" of sexual violence, the hierarchy helps to sustain the leader's authority while reinforcing rigid boundaries of group separatism that serve to strengthen the isolation of the movement as well as the insularity of the leader.

Conclusion

This analysis of charismatic authority and the abuse of power has sought to establish a theoretical framework for assessing the prevalence of sexual violation within diverse charismatic settings. In presenting a structural analysis of authoritarian religious communities, this chapter has focused on the relationship between male domination and the formation of patriarchal institutions that commodify and sexually objectify women and children. In noting the parallels between incestuous fathers and abusive charismatic leaders, the analysis interrogates the structural characteristics of religious movements that provide a social context for the perpetration of sexual as well as other forms of male violence. Within this approach, violence against women and children is explained from an interactive perspective that examines the relationships among charisma, coercion, sanctions, and insularity.

In focusing on the structural dimensions of authoritarian control, this analysis does not address the psychological issues that also influence the development of charismatic movements and particularly their appeal among individuals who are in search of a strong male authority figure. Before drawing this discussion to a close, it is therefore important to consider, albeit briefly, the dynamics of devotion that also inform the perpetration of violence within patriarchal religious communities. Just as leaders exhibit characteristics of incestuous and abusive fathers, followers will frequently be drawn to movements with religious authority figures whose control over devotees replicates the patriarchal structure of their families of origin. In many cases, the families of the converts I studied were characterized by abusive and controlling fathers who were not unlike the charismatic leader. Yet what attracted the convert to the group was not a desire for another abusive parent, but a longing to create affective bonds with a father figure who was strong, loving, and nonabusive.

The tendency on the part of leaders to exploit the emotional vulnerability of these devotees, many of whom had disclosed their family histories to the leader, contributes to the abuse of power within alternative religious communities. Accordingly, the relationship between charismatic authority and sexual violation is defined by a complex set of interactions that involve both the structural dimensions of authoritarian control and the psychosocial dynamics of devotional needs. Taken together, these interrelated aspects of religious commitment and abuse provide a more complete lens through which to assess diverse forms of clergy malfeasance in contemporary society.

NOTES

1. The data on Keri Jewell's testimony were derived from the transcripts of the congressional hearings into the events in Waco, Texas, July 1995.

2. While the majority of charismatic religious groups are headed by males, there are a number of new religious movements that have female leaders. For this study of sexual abuse, only the male-dominated groups are included.

REFERENCES

Anthony, D., and T. Robbins. 1995. "Religious Totalism, Violence and Exemplary Dualism." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 7, no. 3: 10–50.

Balch, R. 1991. "Charismatic Leadership and the Corruption of Power." Unpublished paper.

———. 1995. "Charisma and Corruption in the Love Family." In *Sex, Lies and Sanctity: Religion and Deviance in Contemporary North America*, ed. Mary Jo Neitz and Marion S. Goldman, 155–79. Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press.

Bucher, G. R. 1983. "Worlds of Total Meaning." *Soundings* 64: 274–85.

Butler, K. 1990. "Encountering the Shadow in Buddhist America." *Common Boundary*, May/June, 15–22.

Driver, E., and A. Droisen, eds. 1989. *Child Sexual Abuse: Feminist Perspectives.* London: Macmillan Education Ltd.

Edwards, C. 1981. "The Dynamics of Mass Conversion." *Marriage and Family Review* 4: 31–41.

Engels, F. 1884. *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.* New York: International Publishers.

Hatcher, C. 1989. "Cults, Society and Government." In *New Religious Movements, Mass Suicide, and Peoples Temple*, ed. R. Moore and F. McGehee III, 179–95. Lempeter, England: The Edwin Mellen Press.

Herman, J. L. 1981. *Father-Daughter Incest.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Imbent, A., and I. Jorker. 1992. *Christianity and Incest.* Trans. C. McVay. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress.

Jacobs, J. L. 1989. *Divine Disenchantment: Deconverting from New Religions.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

———. 1990. Unpublished interview with religious devotee, Boulder, Colorado.

———. 1992. Unpublished interview with religious devotee, Boulder, Colorado.

———. 1994a. Unpublished interview with religious devotee, Boulder, Colorado.

———. 1994b. *Victimized Daughters: Incest and the Development of the Female Self.* New York: Routledge.

Jones, C. 1989. "Exemplary Dualism and Authoritarianism at Jonestown." In *New Religious Movements, Mass Suicide, and Peoples Temple*, ed. R. Moore and F. McGehee III, 209–27. Lampeter, England: The Edwin Mellen Press.

Lévi-Strauss, C. 1949. *The Elementary Structures of Kinship.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Mytrash, K., and S. Kent. 1990. "Social Control in the Children of God: Rewards, Punishments, and Deviant Attributions." Unpublished paper.

Puttick, E. 1997. *Women in New Religions*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Reston, J. 1981. *Our Father Who Art in Hell.* New York: New York Times Books

Robbins, T., and D. Anthony. 1972. "Getting Straight with Meher Baha: A Study of Drug Rehabilitation, Mysticism and Post Adolescent Role Conflict." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 11: 122–40.

Schneider, E. 1994. "Society's Belief in Family Privacy Contributions to Domestic Violence." In *Violence Against Women,* ed. K. Swisher and C. Wekesser, 26–38. San Diego, Calif.: Greenhaven Press.

Tipton, S. M. 1982. *Getting Saved from the Sixties*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Weber, M. 1968. *On Charisma and Institution Building*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Wegner, J. R. 1988. *Chattel or Person? The Status of Women in the Mishnah.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Chapter 7

The Politics of a Sexual Harassment Case

Ronald R. Stockton

This is a study of a church conflict that got out of control. It is not a pleasant story, but it is one repeated around the country. The underlying facts are familiar: a pastor is accused of power abuse and sexual harassment; inexperienced congregational leaders fail to act; district leaders prove inconsistent and ineffective; members file charges in the church courts; those who raised concerns are seen as the problem and are subject to retaliation; there is a civil lawsuit; the church is wrecked.[1]

The key questions are why this conflict went on for three years, why it went so far awry, and why it led to such destruction. District officials said there was no credible evidence that the minister had done wrong, and they supported him in his successful effort to find another church. They concluded that the complaining women and their supporters were at fault. While the church was Presbyterian and the specifics reflect the unique polity of that denomination, what happened seems to illustrate an institutional pattern that goes well beyond one denomination (see Shupe 1995 for a comparative analysis of cases).

Some Research

A standard work on pastoral abuse and why such problems are mishandled by church leaders is Marie Fortune's 1989 study, *Is Nothing Sacred?* It involves a minister who was a sexual predator. Local leaders failed to deal with him and district leaders tried to negotiate with him. The minister began a campaign to discredit his accusers and mobilize support. The congregation was severely damaged.

Fortune says that to blame the leadership misreads the problem. She believes organizations go wrong for reasons that have little to do with the merits of those in charge. Most people want to do what is right but use a logic that leads them astray. An institution "acts first on what it perceives to be its self-interest. Seldom does it identify its self-interest to be the same as the interests of the people it is supposed to serve" (p. xiv).

Officials confronted with allegations of abuse often make three mistakes, according to Fortune. They shoot the messenger, misname the problem, and blame the victim (p. 120). They redefine the problem as conflict to be mediated and speak of reconciliation or forgiveness. But pastoral abuse is "not a conflict between individuals." One person has "caused harm to others, to the church, and to the profession of the ministry" (p. 66). By engaging in a pattern of evasion, equivocation, misrepresentation, and denial, officials construct a "stone wall" against resolution.

Shupe (1995), who analyzed scores of cases, says church leaders confronted with complaints of clergy malfeasance "act to protect either their own clerical prerogatives or the larger religious group itself" (p. 80). They use three types of techniques to "neutralize" grievants. Normative techniques involve symbolic or emotive appeals to victims not to press for redress. Remunerative techniques propose some financial settlement in exchange for dropping an action. Coercive techniques threaten physical, legal, or moral sanction if the action is pursued. "[H]aving abandoned the rhetoric and logic of the first two types of appeals, [coercive appeals] stress fear and reprisals of ecclesiastical discipline." In other words, "the gamut of tactics ranges from cajoling to strong arming" (p. 87).

Rutter (1989), who has done research on male professionals who abuse females in their care, thinks male-dominated authority structures cover up violations less out of wickedness than to protect system legitimacy. The problem grows from a paternal mindset in which fathers try to control sons. "The effort to maintain authority takes precedence over truth, both emotional and factual. Suppression of truth is seen as necessary to preserving order" (p. 119).

Rutter says religious organizations "desire to handle their ethical problems far away from the public eye," and may even conceal codes of conduct and disciplinary procedures (p. 186). They make the investigation process so difficult that women avoid it if possible. Men considering boundary violations are emboldened by the knowledge that "most women never speak out" (p. 165).

These findings echo tendencies in the writings of John Calvin, the ancestor of Presbyterian polity. His views on patriarchy and authority are particularly relevant. Calvin noted approvingly that the institutions of society—family, church, state—were all led by men. This was natural because God is called Father and there is "something divine in every father." Fathers are, "next to God, most deeply to be reverenced" (Bouwsma 1988: 77). Paternal authority is religious and political as well as familial. "Every human being looks up at once to God the Father and the spiritual fathers who represent him, to the father of his country or his city fathers, and to the father who sired him. This paternal chain from heaven to earth means that no father is strictly secular, and thus that there can be no ultimate separation of realms" (p. 77).

Calvin believed that maintaining authority was more important than correcting injustice. Any government, "whatever deformity and corruption it may have, is always better than the absence of princely authority" (Forrester 1987: 338). Even officials who behave unjustly have been sent by God "to punish our ingratitude." Following Romans 13, Calvin said resisting authority was "resisting God himself" (Calvin 1960: 4, xx, 23).

A Synopsis of the Case

A new minister was hired to lead a large congregation. It soon became obvious that he was ill-prepared for the job by wisdom, experience, or emotional strength. He snapped at people, got into disputes, spoke critically of his predecessors, complained about and berated church staff and leaders. He rebuked a grieving family over their request that an associate minister do their mother's funeral, and refused to baptize a member's baby on the grounds that the member did not attend frequently enough. Elders talked to him privately to try to stabilize the situation but the problems persisted. Members began to leave.

After fifteen months, issues of sexual harassment emerged. Women reported vulgar comments, unwelcome touching, allegations of lesbianism, statements about physical traits, and conversations about sexual topics. One took her concerns to Presbytery and was told she should reconcile. Three departing female employees talked to the congregational Personnel Committee. One seemed to have a legal case. Stories spread. Many members became fearful and angry.

The panicky minister asked for Presbytery intervention. This could be done because a minister is a member of Presbytery and not a member of the congregation.[2] An official from the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry met with select Elders, but this meeting was not reported to Session. When the stories surfaced, there was a Session clash. Two Elders left and the minister announced he would file formal discipline charges against one in the ecclesiastical courts. Two successive Presbytery-inspired Reconciliation Committees received more than two dozen complaints but failed to resolve the problems.

Ten months had passed since the first mention of sexual misconduct. The congregation was in emotional turmoil. Several Elders had resigned. At this point a female Elder filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment. She said the minister had brushed her breast in a "nonaccidental incident" and had sexualized conversations in a way that, if unchecked, would have erased the boundaries between them and led to unwanted intimacy. The minister was suspended. The Executive Presbyter sent a letter to each member of the congregation announcing the suspension and identifying sexual harassment as the alleged offense. This letter (which seemed to violate the rules of confidentiality surrounding an investigation) caused great distress among the membership. Five more women soon filed. Four were church employees. One spoke of unwelcome physical contact, one described full body hugs and comments about the appeal of a large penis, and two spoke of provocative sexual comments; a fifth woman described nonsexual verbal abuse.

An Investigating Committee of Presbytery[3] made a formal inquiry and dismissed the accusations as having no merit. Its report, which was made public through the minutes of Presbytery, contained three elements that would appear repeatedly in the organizational response: there was no evidence of wrongdoing, the motives of the accusers were unworthy, and there was a conspiracy to cause harm. Specifically, the report said some of the complaints were "frivolous" and that the judicial process was "being abused by persons whose true motivation is to harass the minister." It recommended that Presbytery appoint an Administrative Commission to deal with the problems, especially those involving "tensions within the staff." This last phrase targeted certain persons as the likely accusers in the presumably confidential investigation and left them exposed to retaliation from angry members.

Meanwhile, a second set of accusations were made, and a second Investigating Committee called. Three members alleged professional misconduct by the minister and malfeasance by Presbytery officials. When four women in the first case said their names had been leaked and they were being subjected to retaliatory abuse, their complaints were referred to this new committee. Eight months later, this second Investigating Committee made its report. It did not prosecute, but said that it had found un-Christian behavior and that Presbytery leaders had failed to do their duty. It said the first Investigating Committee should itself be investigated because of its inadequate efforts and because of a breach in confidentiality. This recommendation—the only one calling for action—was ruled out of order on the advice of the national legal office.

But before this Investigating Committee completed its work, the minister agreed to resign and the Administrative Commission recommended that six employees be fired—four women who had made what the Commission called "false" allegations and two men who had supported them. It also arranged that disciplinary countercharges be filed against certain Elders, who were accused of failure to reconcile and of taking concerns to Presbytery. This was the third set of legal charges filed in the ecclesiastical courts.

A bitterly divided Session approved the recommendation to fire the employees. Half the members of the congregation petitioned the Session to reverse the vote. It declined. The six terminated employees (and another female whose complaint had been leaked to the congregation) sued the minister, Session, Presbytery, and General Assembly. They alleged negligent supervision and retention (knowing of possible problems but failing to investigate—e.g., Bisbing et al. 1995), violation of the state civil rights act (for retaliating against employees who alleged sexual harassment), and defamation of character. (At a congregational meeting, the pastor said a named church employee had told a local television station that the minister was a child molester. The employee emphatically denied any contact with the media.) The plaintiffs also alleged a "false light tort," that the minister and Presbytery officials spread discrediting versions of the facts.

As the lawsuit progressed, so did the ecclesiastical countersuit against the Elders. When the civil suit began, all the accused but one were dropped from the church suit, but the Investigating Committee indicted the remaining Elder. He had reported stories of personal and sexual misconduct to Presbytery officials and was to be a witness in the civil suit. He resigned from the church rather than go to trial.

The lawsuit was settled with a significant cash payment. The church was devastated. Forty percent of the members left. After three ecclesiastical investigations, a civil suit, three years of tension, a small fortune in expenses, and a loss of community, nothing had been resolved. The entire affair was a model of what not to do.

Seven Key Problems

Problem I: Defining and Dealing with Sexual Misconduct

Problem: Nonstandard definitions and process can malfunction and leave the institution legally exposed.

Many church leaders are ill-prepared to deal with sexual misconduct issues and often handle them badly. Many deny the problem exists even though the Presbyterian Church estimates that as much as 23 percent of clergy engage in "inappropriate sexual behavior or inappropriate sexual contact" (PCUSA 1993b: 1).

Civil law recognizes two types of offense. *Quid pro quo* harassment occurs when sexual activity is a condition of employment or a factor in an employment decision. Hostile environment harassment is associated with offensive comments or actions (*EEOC Guidelines* 1980; *Harris v. Forklift Systems* 1993). The courts established the "reasonable woman" test to measure "conduct which a reasonable woman would consider sufficiently severe or pervasive" to create a hostile environment (*Ellison v. Brady* 1991). The justices in the *Ellison* case concluded that men may lack "a full appreciation of the . . . underlying threat of violence that a woman may perceive," so that "conduct that many men consider unobjectionable may offend many women." Conduct can be unlawful "even when harassers do not realize" its impact.

Denominational guidelines for sexual misconduct policy focus upon "sexual misconduct by persons in positions of religious leadership," but they emphasize that "those who are innocent" should be protected from "flimsy or false" claims (PCUSA 1993b: 1, 3). The guidelines reflect the tension between the right to accuse and the right to be protected from false accusations. Their suggested solution lies in due process, careful counseling, and alternatives to formal action.

The local Presbytery sexual misconduct policy document, in contrast, had four serious flaws that seemed almost to encourage escalation and continuing litigation. First, it twice mentioned countercharges. Before an investigation begins, the Stated Clerk must "counsel those contemplating filing allegations that false or unwarranted allegations are punishable by church law and may be grounds for civil suit." Afterwards, "persons shown to have filed false accusations are subject to disciplinary action."

Second, it listed "steps" an accuser should follow before filing. These included saying no at the time, keeping a journal, telling an abuser to stop, and sending an abuser a list of "specific things which were offensive." And these were not just useful tips. Before initiating its investigation, an Investigating Committee was obligated to determine whether the steps had been followed. In an arena where confusion, indecision, and self-doubt are common, this assumed an unrealistic level of decisive self-confidence and implied wrongdoing by a woman not in compliance.

Third, the policy imposed a gag order so that "only the responsible parties" could be told of the incident. This rule, which specifically applied to accusers, meant an abused woman could not even talk to her friends. The intent was unequivocal: "If confidentiality is breached, to preserve the peace and unity of the Church, the governing body may take disciplinary action."

Finally, the policy called for compulsory administrative leave in the event of an allegation against a minister. The denomination's General Assembly had advised against such a provision on the grounds that it would be "unwise" (PCUSA 1993a: D-7.0200). Because the Presbytery policy listed a range of sexual offenses from "merely offensive" to severe, the suspension policy established a very low threshold for what would be a very severe response. Thus a minister accused of rape and another minister accused of telling a vulgar joke would both be suspended from the pulpit. Treating all cases the same was a high-risk policy that guaranteed a major escalation of any problem.[4]

THE POLICY IN PRACTICE

When the women tried to raise their concerns, they encountered roadblocks. Even getting a copy of the Presbytery's sexual misconduct policy was difficult. When they asked at the church office, they were told they had to sign it out. When they asked at the Presbytery office, they were told they had to talk personally to the Executive Presbyter. They began to feel as though they were under surveillance.

The women discovered that by coming forward they had left themselves open to retaliation. Their names were leaked, often with lightning speed. One woman's registered accusation letter arrived in the Presbytery office in the afternoon. By the end of the day the Interim Minister had three telephone calls from members telling him of the filing. A damaging whisper campaign resulted in the women being shunned and subjected to harassing calls. Members sympathetic to them got similar treatment. Several received anonymous hate mail. One employee had a letter secretly placed in her personnel file stating that she sat during services with someone "known to be critical of the minister." Unauthorized compassion became an offense.

Equally important was what happened judicially. In the eyes of the church, the women had brought "false" accusations. When they refused to drop the matter, they became guilty of "failure to reconcile." And when they complained that their confidentiality had been violated and that the Investigating Committee had not conducted a serious investigation, they were accused of polity violations, of disrupting the church, and of persisting in a dispute that had been "dealt with." (The women said the Investigating Committee had not pursued rumors of problems in previous churches, had not interviewed others subjected to unprofessional behavior, and had not interviewed Elders or two previous chairs of the Personnel Committee regarding complaints they had received.) Even though the second Investigating Committee recommended a formal inquiry into the flaws of the first, the women were seen by some as having been in the wrong in pursuing the matter. Their "failure to reconcile" was to become the basis of legal retaliation.

Problem II: Presbyterian Polity

Problem: Presbyterian polity has multiple levels of authority, none with clear responsibility.

If a good decision process is one in which, when things go wrong, you know whom to blame, then Presbyterian polity with its divided government is not a good process. Concerned members could not figure out how the system worked or how to get it to respond. Part of the problem was the ambiguous boundary between Session and Presbytery. The Session governs the congregation, but the Presbytery has oversight and can step in to offer "advice" or take control if things do not go as they wish. If an allegation becomes formal, the Session is pushed aside and the matter is investigated by Presbytery. When a minister is *not* under formal investigation, the boundary is particularly ambiguous: then the Session has responsibility but not authority. The policy of having a minister be a member of Presbytery, not the congregation, is designed to protect pastors from abusive congregations, but it means a Session cannot remove its minister without Presbytery approval.[5]

A second trap is the absence of a designated official responsible for pastoral behavior. The Executive Presbyter has neither responsibility nor authority, being little more than a chief of administration who manages the budget, coordinates committees, and oversees process (*Book of Order*—PCUSA 1998: G-9.0701). The Committee on Ministry is charged with supervising ministers, but it may have two dozen members. Its sensitive activities may be conducted by two or three persons who give the committee only a general outline of a problem. The integrity of the whole polity may depend on the judgment of a few individuals making tightly-held decisions in the name of the organization.

Officials also operate under rules that seen to encourage nonresponsiveness. The *Book of Order* (G-11.0502.j) says the Committee on Ministry "shall exercise wise discretion in determining when to take cognizance of information concerning difficulties within a church." Regarding complaints, the committee "shall be open to communication at all times with the ministers, elders who are members of sessions, and sessions of the Presbytery" (G-11.0503). There is no obligation even to acknowledge letters from members.

As soon as the congregational Personnel Committee learned of the concerns of the women, the minister appealed to the Committee on Ministry. From that point on, the Presbytery supervised the activities of Session, giving them instructions and telling them what to do and what not to do. For example, when the Session asked its Personnel

Committee to investigate allegations of wrongdoing, that Committee was not allowed to meet without the minister present unless they told him in advance of their plans and gave reasons. This severely restricted their operations.

When members contacted Presbytery to complain, to appeal local decisions, or even to ask that Presbytery investigate possible wrongdoing, they were accused of bypassing Session. Letters of concern to the Executive Presbyter and Committee on Ministry often went unanswered. One female Elder who filed a formal complaint received no response. People who wrote about what they considered unfair procedures were never acknowledged. Some members received written rebukes and official threats of ecclesiastical prosecution for even taking issues to Presbytery. Presbyterian legal specialists who have read this manuscript say these threats were not in order, but members assumed they represented realistic dangers since they were made by church officials.

The Presbyterian governance system has much to commend it, but its rules are so complex that they can entangle members in technicalities and procedures to the point that nothing gets done. There is a good case for having an individual at the top with both authority and responsibility. The lack of such a person is a severe impediment to effective decision making, to the guarantee of due process, and to administrative responsibility. There also is no mechanism for removing a minister without prejudice. The Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian mother church, has a provision regarding “congregations in an unsatisfactory state” because of “defects or errors personal to the minister.” A Scots Presbytery can remove such a minister without a finding of wrongdoing (United Free Church 1952: 59–60).

Problem III: The Concept of Discipline

Problem: In conflict situations, the legal concept of discipline is ultimately nonpastoral. Its application in ecclesiastical courts escalates conflict and impedes the resolution of problems.

The *Book of Order* (D-1.000) says the purpose of discipline is to “nurture” members, provide “constructive criticism,” “restrain wrongdoing,” and remove “causes of discord and division.” It is “for building up the body of Christ, not for destroying it, for redeeming, not for punishing." It should be exercised as "a dispensation of mercy and not of wrath."

But John Calvin, founder of the Presbyterian system, had a different concern. To him, the organized Church was simultaneously holy and profane. The profane (organized) dimension included "hypocrites . . . who have nothing of Jesus Christ but the title and the appearance" (Calvin 1960: IV, 1, 7).

Calvin believed that monitoring, regulating, and disciplining members was essential: "the body of Christ . . . cannot be contaminated by dissolute members without a part of the shame being cast upon its Head" (1960: 12, 5). While private sinners or minor offenders could receive private admonition in "friendliness" so as "to do them no harm," those who persisted or caused serious offense were to be considered "despisers of God" and given strong and public discipline (Dillenberger 1971: 241–42).

The Presbyterian political system recognizes two kinds of corrective discipline: pastoral guidance and punishment for offense. For those found guilty by a judicial tribunal, there are four levels of punishment: a rebuke; temporary exclusion from membership or ordained office (Minister, Elder, Deacon) for up to two years; supervised exclusion from office; and permanent removal from ordained office or membership (*Book of Order*, D-12.0100).

But the two parts of discipline are often confused, with a prosecutorial mindset driving out the pastoral dimension. In the late nineteenth century the General Assembly expressed concern at this tendency and the "great harm" growing from reliance on "discipline in its sterner and more terrifying forms" (Peck 1994:586–88).

The existence of ecclesiastical courts compounds the problem. These courts are independent of the governing process and, once engaged, cannot be stopped unless the accuser withdraws the accusation. Put another way, judicial authority overrides political authority. Presbyterians only wrote mediation into their discipline process in 1997, and then only as a recommended option once an Investigating Committee has found probable cause and is prepared to take the case to trial (*Book of Order*, D-10.0202). This is in contrast to other Calvinist churches such as the Church of Scotland (United Free Church 1952) and the Cumberland Presbyterians (1984), which have traditionally required attempts at mediation as a first step.

If the primary purpose of discipline is to guide believers into a gentle spirit, then in the case under analysis the Presbyterian courts subverted that objective. Everyone emerged feeling defiant and wronged. Many people involved in these legal proceedings left the church. Others saw friends targeted in ecclesiastical and administrative counterstrikes against those raising concerns and felt the message was for them as well. One couple noted in their resignation letter that they knew the accused in the countersuit against the Elders and were probably also guilty of whatever the others had done.

It is worth positing an operational thesis: except in cases of grievous offense where public justice may be required for healing, ecclesiastical courts inhibit solutions.[6] The very existence of courts where members accuse one another serves not to guarantee justice or promote unity but to impede their achievement. Even those not convicted in a trial may leave the church.[7] Why, after all, would anyone stay in a faith community where people sue each other and the leadership does nothing to stop the action?

Problem IV: The Helpful Neutrality of Institutional Officials

Problem: Accusations of pastoral wrongdoing can generate a defensive-aggressive reaction among the leadership that affects system neutrality and system performance.

The Fortune thesis that leaders instinctively act to protect the institution is not unrecognized. In 1990, the Presbyterian General Assembly (PCUSA 1990, Part I: 139) warned that officials "inappropriately become adversaries of those seeking to use the system, viewing them as troublesome intermeddlers or surfacers of embarrassment."

This would not surprise the Ormerods (1995: 77–78), who say officials carry reticence to extremes. "They fail to respond to letters or phone calls . . . insulate themselves from [concerned women] by refusing them interviews and label them as vindictive, as interested only in compensation, as 'disturbed' or as 'feminists.'"

One example of compromised neutrality in the current case involved the Stated Clerk, who had been named for malfeasance before the second Investigating Committee. The normal principle of law is that a party to a case cannot be neutral in another case involving the same issues or the same personalities. Nevertheless, the Stated Clerk continued to serve as liaison between the Presbytery and the national legal office and relayed the judgment of the national office that the recommendation for further investigation of the case was not in order. She also continued to preside over the third (retaliatory) Investigating Committee even though the issues and some of the parties in that case were also involved in the second Investigation, to which she was a party.

The Clerk of the Permanent Judicial Commission is another example of compromised neutrality. As Clerk, he advised an Elder who had heard through gossip that she was accused. He also advised several Elders who petitioned the PJC for a "stay" of implementation on the firings. (Such a stay is allowed when a Session vote is split—ee *Book of Order*, D-6.0103). Petitioners in the "stay" case became concerned when telephone messages to the Clerk went unanswered; not until eighty-nine days after they filed did he offer them a date for a hearing. This was just short of the ninety-day limit when the case would be remedial and could be appealed to the Synod PJC.

Unbeknownst to members, the Clerk had become the minister's attorney at a time when it appeared the minister might himself file a civil suit. (The minister had told a congregational meeting that he was considering a lawsuit against one or more members.) The Clerk soon left the PJC to become defense attorney in the civil lawsuit against the minister, then left the lawsuit to become Stated Clerk of Presbytery. In this latter position, he managed the ecclesiastical countersuit that accused Elders of abusing his client. This shift from judge to advocate to presumably neutral Stated Clerk in the same controversy seemed to violate the American Bar Association's Code of Conduct regarding potential conflicts of interest (Dzienkowski 1991: 207–319). But whether or not such a violation occurred, the shifting role of the Clerk seriously undermined the confidence of members in the neutrality of the Presbytery leadership and the fairness of its legal proceedings. It was not a result that Fortune, Shupe, the Ormerods, or the Presbyterian General Assembly would have found surprising.

Problem V: Issues of Due Process

Problem: There were serious flaws regarding due process. To members in this dispute, no corpus of universally applied procedures ever filtered down. In a body that prides itself on conducting its business in a way that is decent *and "in order" (I Corinthians 14:40), what emerged was something quite different. Procedures prohibited elsewhere were tolerated here, and rights guaranteed outside the church were ignored inside it.*

One problem was that procedural rights fall into three categories: things required, things prohibited, and things allowed but not required. This last category contained rights granted or not at the discretion of those in charge. A Stated Clerk who decided to be generous—or to play hardball—could produce very different results in different cases. The statement in the *Book of Order*'s judicial preamble (D-1.000) that "members are to be accorded procedural safeguards and due process" does not specify equal safeguards. Nor does it say those rights apply at the investigation stage.

Since none of the three ecclesiastical cases went to trial, there is no way to know what robed judges would have decided was proper and what was not. But the law is not just what is practiced in a quiet chamber. It is what we encounter at the grass roots. The law described herein is that which was applied and explained by officials in the various cases.[8]

DISCRETIONARY RIGHTS IN A TWO-STAGE PROCESS

A discipline case has two stages, investigation and prosecution, with participants guaranteed different rights at different stages. When an accused Elder wrote to complain about how she was being treated and to ask about her rights, the Clerk of the PJC explained the concept: an Investigating Committee "investigates and then decides whether to press charges." Due process is obligatory only at the second or trial stage "if the committee brings charges." To another concerned member the official wrote that "there are variations in procedures. As long as the guidelines and requirements of the Form of Government are met, an Investigating Committee is acting correctly." At the investigation stage, even the right to raise concerns is proscribed: "It is not the position of the accused to evaluate the rules by which Investigating Committees operate."

This two-stage rule meant that during an investigation due process rights were guaranteed only if the Stated Clerk guaranteed them. The way the accused were treated under the three formal investigations showed exceptional variation. When the minister was first accused, he was informed immediately and was given spiritual and legal counsel. In the second investigation, also against the minister, a two-page letter emphasized the commitment to provide "procedural safeguards and due process to the accused." It specified all guarantees in the Bill of Rights including the right to "be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation" and to have a signed copy of those accusations. In the countersuit against the Elders, the accused were never contacted by the Stated Clerk and some were not even told they had been accused. Their rights were those two specified in the *Book of Order* (D-7.0900): the right to remain silent and the right to have legal counsel. The two-stage rule created a gray zone that gave investigators exceptional latitude and led to considerable variation in the rights of the accused.

THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION

The accused in an investigation have limited rights to information. There was no requirement that they even be told of the investigation unless they were taken to trial. When one Elder heard from gossip that she had been named and asked why she had not been told, the Stated Clerk ruled that while "ordinarily" the Investigating Committee would inform the accused, "they are not required to do so." While the right to be informed of an accusation at the beginning of the investigation process was later added to the *Book of Order* (D-10.0202), at least two accused persons were never informed of the accusations against them, and have not been so informed even to this day. This was true in spite of the fact that many members knew or had heard that they were under investigation. The unfairness of a secret accusation is obvious.

Likewise, identifying accusers was discretionary. The rules said accusers' names could be withheld to protect "the accused and the accuser" or to prevent "further harassment," a phrase that implied a presumption of guilt. The minister was told the names of his accusers in both of the ecclesiastical investigations that named him. The Elders were not told the names of their accusers (although they were widely known), and the accusers were assured that their names would be kept secret. The Stated Clerk wrote that if the case went to trial, those accusers *called as witnesses* would be identified.

Withholding the identity of accusers might be good in the criminal justice realm when the accused is a drug kingpin with a penchant for murder, but in a congregation where people know each other and the alleged goal is to restore community, it is a formula for disaster. In the countersuit, rumors abounded as to the identity of the accusers, and innocent people were suspected. Secrecy also led to a generalized fear that more people were to be accused. This made members suspicious of each other and damaged the quality of interaction in the already wounded congregation.

Finally, because an Investigating Committee functions as a grand jury, none of the parties has a right to its report and some of the women were never told they had been accused in the written record of Presbytery of colluding to abuse the minister. Nor did they have the guaranteed right to copies of the Presbytery minutes containing the report, even though those minutes go to hundreds of people. As the Stated Clerk wrote, "I am required to provide copies of minutes when requested by a governing body. Otherwise I am not. I am providing you a copy. It would not be out of order to refuse."

CONFIDENTIALITY REDEFINED

Confidentiality meant different things to different people. We are not talking here about loose lips, which appear to be a universal problem. All key parties were concerned about discretion, and persons at all levels felt their conversations had been reported to others in ways that caused harm. But some officials saw confidentiality in a way that bordered on secrecy. For example, when the congregation's annual report said that only one woman had filed misconduct accusations, a member asked that the report be corrected since Presbytery minutes mentioned several accusers. She received a written rebuke from Session saying Presbytery minutes were confidential, and she was subjected to disciplinary action for the violation. Clearly "confidentiality" was not the issue.

A ruling that confidentiality "is binding upon the governing body" did not prohibit sharing information within the organization. Those who spoke to the Reconciliation Committee and Administrative Commission understood (and, in the case of the Reconciliation Committee, were specifically promised) that their communications would be confidential. What happened was not what they expected.

The six fired employees had complied with the Administrative Commission request that they put their concerns in writing. Later those statements were cited to support a recommendation that they be terminated. The Session was told that the statements revealed a "failure to reconcile" but that to explain further would violate confidentiality. Similarly, a letter to the Reconciliation Committee by one Elder was turned over to the third Investigating Committee and was the basis of an indictment against him that he violated Matthew 18:15–17 by taking concerns to a committee rather than directly to the minister.

A chief accuser in the countersuit was also the head of the Stephen Ministry. That organization was described to the congregation as "a Christian caring ministry in which clergy and laity work together to provide care to persons in need. It extends the pastoral care of our ordained staff by providing empathy and support to members in crisis or distress." The Stephen Ministry head had approached two Elders out of what she wrote was "care and concern for you." One Elder met her, another did not. Both were punished for their actions, the first for declining to "reconcile," the second for declining to meet. The Stephen Ministry's pledge of confidentiality did not deter its head from filing accusations. Nor did the Investigating Committee exclude her testimony, even though the *Book of Order* (D-9.0300d) prohibits persons with counseling duties from being witnesses before such bodies without the permission of the affected person.

Most churched people assume that if they discuss a problem "in confidence" with a church official that conversation will not be shared unless they agree. They also assume that the information will not be used against them. As when they speak to a doctor, they assume that what they say will be used to help them. But doctors perform only one duty: they look after their patients. Presbyterian polity in contrast has a dual function—pastoral and disciplinary. Officials are part of a legal system that controls the behavior of members and has the right (even the duty) to discipline or punish them for what they say or do. Presbyterian officials are obligated to maintain the system against those seen as challenging or disrupting it. Their two functions overlap in ways not always obvious. Sadly, in times of crisis, the obligation to protect the organization may take precedence over the pastoral obligation.

Problem VI: The Concept of Reconciliation

Problem: As a legal principle, reconciliation is ambiguous and manipulable. It can become a weapon to retaliate against persons who embarrass the institution by refusing to drop their concerns.

To most Christians, reconciliation is a central goal of the faith, implying the removal of all sources of tension and the restoration of full, healthy relationships. But those who think this way are thinking pastorally, not legally. As a legal concept, reconciliation is something far different. It is dangerous and potentially damaging, not to mention potentially illegal.

The Christian concept of reconciliation has its roots in the Gospels. Luke (17:4) advises those in disputes to deal with their adversaries directly: "If your brother wrongs you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him." Matthew (5:23–24) suggests that when making an offering, "leave your gift where it is before the altar. First go and make your peace with your brother." Disputants should try time and again to solve problems.

Unfortunately, secular versions of reconciliation affect our understanding of the word: competing bills in Congress are reconciled behind closed doors by removing controversial elements; a carpenter reconciles a joint by cutting away uneven parts to make the surface smooth; and a wife reconciles herself to the belief that she may have to endure a beating from time to time to save her marriage.

When reconciliation is seen in a case of alleged abuse as a conflict resolution process, it can go awry. A conflict resolution paradigm assumes both sides are wrong and should meet in the middle with mutual regrets. It also assumes a level playing field with all parties equal. This cannot be true when one party is a pastor.

Fortune (1995) believes a flawed understanding of reconciliation is endemic to Christian thinking. Religious people often overlook the fact that accountability precedes forgiveness. They "get uncomfortable when we talk about accountability. They want to begin with forgiveness, mercy, and grace. But this is bad theology and worse exegesis. . . . There is a whole lot that precedes forgiveness here, for the offender's sake and for ours" (p. 47).

Shupe (1995) goes a step further. He sees reconciliation as part of a strategy of neutralization: "Religious elites want nothing better than an end to bad feelings and hostilities with victims, and the 'God-talk' of forgiveness, reconciliation, mediating, restoration, repentance, renewed covenants, prayerful reconsideration, and so forth are rhetorical tools used to defuse victim anger and restore trusted authority." He found that calls for reconciliation were often nothing more than "subtle, indirect 'blame-the-victim' schemes." Reconciliation thus becomes less a corrective than a "pseudo-balm to assuage victims without fundamentally altering power inequities or opportunity structures that further such abuse. Reconciliation is cheap short-run justice—to the advantage of ecclesiastical elites" (pp. 90–91).

During the time when the minister was temporarily suspended, the Session adopted a reconciliation policy proposed by the interim minister. The interim explained that "the church is not a social club" and its procedures are "not negotiable." The "protection of the church is paramount," including protection from "insurrection, mutiny, divisiveness, gossip, rumor mongering, and undisciplined complaint." Following Matthew 18, anyone with a concern must meet the other party three times: first alone, then with a member, finally with an Elder.

This policy turned biblical advice into binding rules, so that a woman who took a problem to an Elder or to the Presbytery or even to a Reconciliation Committee was definitionally an offender. Someone "who makes a complaint to any official or member" without following these steps "shall be identified as disturbing the unity and tranquillity of the church." The Session will then proceed "until reconciliation or excommunication is achieved."

There is a strong distinction between Christian reconciliation—rooted in justice and protection of the weak—and what we might call polity-driven reconciliation, or the forced ending of a dispute. As a legal concept, reconciliation follows the second definition rather than the first. Absent the Christian dimension, it can lend itself to abuse by those who hope to push problems aside or declare them "dealt with." Far from being a guide to peace, it can become a weapon to punish those who refuse to be silent. To tell a woman who says she was touched or verbally abused that she must "reconcile" with a pastor who denies everything is not a satisfactory solution, nor a Christian one. And to accuse her of "failure to reconcile" and punish her when she refuses to abandon her complaint is both morally wrong and a violation of civil law.

Problem VII: The Concept of Spiritual Warfare

Problem: When the leadership comes to see members as evil or to see a conflict in terms of spiritual warfare, resolution ceases to be likely.

As Kuhn (1962) points out, the right to explain is ultimately a political struggle, since whoever explains a problem is allowed to offer a solution. One paradigm promoted among leaders in this case was Rediger's "clergy killer" or "CK" model. Because Rediger's book (1996) was published by the Presbyterian press and because the circulation of his article (1993) was cited in the civil lawsuit as evidence of official abuse, it deserves fuller discussion.

Rediger identifies three types of conflict: normal conflict, conflict from psychological distress, and clergy killer conflict. His article says that clergy killers "insist on inflicting pain" and are driven by "intentional destructiveness." Their "statements and negotiations are not trustworthy" and "do not yield to patience and love, or honor human decency." Those dealing with them get "an intuitive feeling that evil, pain, and destruction" are their goals.

With clergy killers, "conflict management methods alone will not restore health," since such conflict grows from "evil" perpetrated by "demonic and cunning pseudo-believers." Leaders must remember that the church "was born in the universal struggle between good and evil, and that this struggle is incarnated in our midst, whether we recognize it or not." Moreover, "evil is real and powerful, and it is not expressed nor managed in purely rational ways." It may be necessary to "excise the cancer," remove the "clergy killer infection," and "cut off" CKs from membership.

The lawsuit alleged that the circulation of the Rediger article constituted a "false light tort." This meant that the women were cast in such a negative and distorted way that they suffered harm. It became impossible for their concerns to be treated as legitimate, made them appear demonic, and made it virtually impossible for them to remain in the church. They considered the clergy killer model to be defamatory, discrediting, and nonfalsifiable.

An alternate approach is that of Leas (Beatie 1992). He writes of five levels of conflict and how to handle them. Level I is called Problem to Solve: members disagree over a policy or budget. Such conflict is normal and uneventful. Level II is Disagreement. Tensions escalate; there is distrust, withholding of information, focus on personality. If everyone takes a deep breath, tension may dissipate without further harm. Level III is Contest. People become the enemy. Emotions are held back and personal attacks increase. "There is a tendency to attribute evil, ulterior motives to the other side." A mediator is needed. Level IV is Fight/Flight. Parties focus "on getting rid of the others." Level V is Intractable. "The conflict is out of control. There is an effort to destroy the enemy who is seen as harmful to the church." At this point, outside management is required.

In the Leas model, outsiders should step in when the parties start seeing others as "evil" or "harmful to the church" or someone to expel. And yet this was the point reached by several officials, including the spokesman for the Administrative Commission, who told a congregational meeting that there was a "cancer" in the body that had to be removed. Alas, no one has answered the question asked by the Romans, "Who will guard the guards?"

Some Final Thoughts

There were serious spiritual, political, and judicial failures in this case. How to correct them is unclear. Since it is not possible to write pastoral compassion into a constitution, any change will have to come on the political and judicial sides. We have already discussed the need for early mediation and for clear lines of administrative responsibility. In the judicial realm, two things are obvious: there has to be an understanding of civil law, lest it be violated, and there has to be some mechanism to bypass local malfunction. A good place to start would be to guarantee accurate, neutral, common information to all parties in a dispute—accuser, accused, and Investigating Committee. Appointing an informed advocate for each party at the very beginning of a legal dispute might be another good first step. It would also help to incorporate into the judicial process the failsafe mechanisms of civil law. One thinks of dismissal or mistrial in cases where officials fail to do their duty or do not guarantee due process. Presbyterians do not permit summary dismissals in spite of frequent requests. Nor do they allow appeals against procedural irregularities prior to trial.

We must also return to the tension between institutional and pastoral impulses. The pastoral dimension was noticeably lacking in this case. The women received no counseling before, during, or after the investigation. On the last Sunday before the terminations went into effect, scores of faithful members walked out along with the women. Many never went back and few were ever contacted. Clearly the organizational mentality had triumphed. In their hour of greatest need, members found the pastoral heart of the church closed to them.

NOTES

1. This case is presented in the interests of scholarly discourse and for those who might learn from the mistakes of others. It should not be used to harm to any person, nor should there be any attempt to identify any party mentioned herein. By way of disclosure, the author was a member of the congregation in which the case occurred. Originally a supporter of the minister, he eventually joined his detractors and was among those who left the church.

2. Presbyterians have a very structured form of government. Elected *Elders* serve on a *Session* that governs the congregation. Ministers and Elders go to a regional Presbytery assembly to set policy. The *Presbytery* serves as a collective bishop. Its administrative head is an *Executive Presbyter*. A *Stated Clerk* makes procedural rulings. Above Presbyteries are *Synods* and a *General Assembly*, both a mix of Elders and ministers. There are ecclesiastical courts called the *Permanent Judicial Commission* (PJC). Members or ordained congregational officials (Ministers, Elders, Deacons) can file accusations against others in these courts. If a conflict becomes serious, Presbytery can appoint an *Administrative Commission* to oversee congregational affairs. The Presbyterian system is very legalistic, with hundreds of rules, procedures, and guidelines. There is a lengthy constitution called the *Book of Order,* with extensive legal supplements, commentaries, and binding rulings. The denominational headquarters has a legal office to advise on process.

3. When a minister is accused, the Presbytery appoints an Investigating Committee. It functions as a grand jury to decide whether the evidence warrants prosecution. If it returns indictments, its role shifts to that of prosecutor. The trial would be heard before the Presbytery's Permanent Judicial Commission.

4. Defining thresholds is central to sexual harassment law. In *Jones v. Clinton* (1998), the most famous of all such lawsuits, the case hinged on what constitutes a violation where there is no "persistent" pattern of abuse or "severe" incident or evidence of career damage. The judge ruled that a single incident of rude, boorish, or offensive behavior was not sufficient to warrant a financial award. Jones said her goal was to extract an apology from Clinton. Clearly, that was less a legal issue than an ethical one.

5. Goetz (1996) found that 23 percent of pastors had been forced out of their previous positions and many churches were "repeat offenders." The Presbyterian system is designed to limit such abuse.

6. In a recent year (with 122 of 172 Presbyteries reporting), there were 58 judicial cases nationally, of which 47 were sexual in nature. Sixty-six other problems were handled short of the judicial process. Of 51 formal investigations completed during that particular year, 20 had no charges filed and 9 persons left the church prior to the completion of the process. Thirteen con-

victions led to temporary exclusion from office, 6 to removal from office, 3 to removal from membership. None involved the minimal rebuke (personal communication, Zane Buxton, Office of Judicial Process, 1996).

7. Miyakawa (1964) reproduces a nineteenth-century case in which a member was accused by "common fame," i.e., public rumor, of unethical business deals. When the alleged victims testified on behalf of the accused the member was officially vindicated. Nevertheless, at the next Session meeting, he asked that his name be removed from the roll.

8. Two Presbyterian legal specialists who read this manuscript said there were several irregularities in how the case was handled. These are discussed at length in the author's book on the case(Stockton 2000).

REFERENCES

Beatie, Frank A. *A Companion to the Constitution*. Louisville: Office of the General Assembly, 1992.

The Bible. Citations are from the *New Revised Standard Version.* Nashville: Cokesbury, 1990.

Bisbing, Steven B., Linda M. Jorgenson, and Pamela K. Sutherland. *Sexual Abuse by Professionals: A Legal Guide*. Charlottesville, Va.: Michie, 1995.

Bouwsma, William J. *John Calvin: A Sixteenth Century Portrait*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. 2 vols. Edited by John T. McNeil. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960.

Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America. *Confession of Faith and Government*. Memphis: Office of the General Assembly, 1984.

Dillenberger, John. *John Calvin: Selections from His Writings*. Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1971.

Dzienkowski, John S. (ed.). *Selected Statutes, Rules and Standards on the Legal Profession*. St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1991.

Kerry Ellison v. Nicholas F. Brady, Secretary of the Treasury. 924 F.2d 872 (9th Cir 1991).

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). "Sexual Harassment Guidelines." 29 CFR XIV, Part 1604.11 (a), 1980.

Forrester, Duncan B. "Martin Luther and John Calvin." In Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey (eds.), *History of Political Philosophy.* Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1987.

Fortune, Marie M. *Is Nothing Sacred? When Sex Invades the Pastoral Relationship*. New York: Harper, 1989.

———. "Picking Up the Broken Pieces." *Church and Society* (January/February, 1995): 36–47. (Published by PCUSA, Louisville, Ky.)

Goetz, David L. "Forced Out." *Leadership* (winter 1996): 40–50.

Harris v. Forklift Systems, Inc. U.S. Supreme Court, 114 5. ct 367, 371 (1993), 1–10.

Jones v. Clinton. Reproduced in the *New York Times*, 2 April 1998, A18–19.

Kuhn, Thomas S. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.* 1962. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973.

Miyakawa, T. Scott. *Protestants and Pioneers: Individualism and Conformity on the American Frontier*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964.

Ormerod, Neil, and Thea Ormerod. *When Ministers Sin: Sexual Abuse in the Churches.* Alexandria, N.S.W., Australia: Millenium Books, 1995. (Distributed by Seven Hills Book Distributors, Cincinnati.)

Peck, Thomas E. "The Powers of the Several Church-Courts" (1880). In David W. Hall and Joseph H. Hall (eds.), *Paradigms in Polity,* 585–602. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1994.

Presbyterian Church (USA). *General Assembly Journal*. Louisville, Ky.: PCUSA, 1990.

———. *Annotated Book of Order*. Louisville, Ky.: PCUSA, 1993a.

———. "Policies and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct." Louisville, Ky.: PCUSA, 1993b.

———. *Book of Order*. Louisville, Ky.: PCUSA, 1998–99.

Rediger, Lloyd. "Clergy Killers." *The Clergy Journal* (August 1993): 7–10.

———. *Clergy Killers*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1996.

Rutter, Peter. *Sex in the Forbidden Zone: When Men in Power—Therapists, Doctors, Clergy, Teachers, and Others—Betray Women's Trust.* New York: Fawcett Crest, 1989.

Shupe, Anson. *In the Name of All that's Holy: A Theory of Clergy Malfeasance*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Press, 1995.

Stockton, Ronald R. *Decent and In Order: Conflict, Christianity, and Polity in a Presbyterian Congregation.* Westport, Conn.: Praeger Press, 2000.

United Free Church of Scotland. *Manual of Practice and Procedure*. Glasgow: Offices of the United Free Church, 1952.

Chapter 8

Is Abuse about Truth or Story . . . or Both?

One Intentional Community's Painful Experiences with False Accusations

Jon Trott

> . . . every person defines the world differently. In order to explain these definitions and relate them to social behavior, sociologists must understand what events mean to the people experiencing them.
>
> —Helen Rose Fuchs Ebaugh, *Becoming an EX: The Process of Role Exit*

It is in an awkward position that I, neither a sociologist nor a disinterested observer in the issue of religious malfeasance, find myself. I am a member of a religious group accused of "abusing" its members by a sociologist, Ronald Enroth. I am also a journalist known in evangelical Christian circles as an exposer of malfeasance via my community's publication, *Cornerstone* magazine. So consider my retelling of my community's story as rough-hewn timber; I offer it, splinters and all, in four sections: a historical sketch of our community; a confrontation of accusations made against us by sociologist Ronald Enroth; the story of our and others' response to those charges; and an attempt at a philosophical overview.

Living within a religious communal group, as I have done for the past twenty-two years, one can't escape the overpowering importance of stories. My "group" is Jesus People USA—JPUSA—an evangelical Christian commune in inner-city Chicago. How does our history relate to the biblical story we use as a guide? How does what God imparts to us through His Word and other churches, fellowships, and Christian teachers influence our collective direction? How do we of JPUSA (Ja-POO-zah) see our role in the world? And how do individuals within JPUSA encounter our group's story? How does each continue to perceive her story in relationship to the group she has chosen, even in how she recontextualizes the story if at some point she decides to leave JPUSA?

When someone begins the exit process, his story must first be self-perceived as no longer having a part within our shared story. There is great complexity in that, since eventually the exiting individual makes it known he is leaving; at that time both he and we begin telling a story which seems to explain why the exit is occurring. Many people leave for reasons we wholeheartedly agree with: they are called to another mission field; a parent has cancer and needs a caregiver at home; their Christian growth here seems slow and they want to try another route. Others leave for reasons we find very painful, reasons that signify their rejection of our calling and even at times of Christ himself: a member leaves our interracial community and becomes a neo-Nazi; a woman leaves her husband and JPUSA to embrace lesbianism; a former addict goes back to his heroin and three months later is found dead in a hotel room. These are, from a traditional Christian point of view, tragic stories.

Other stories of exiting members fall between these extremes. In many cases, our interpretation won't match the leaving member's interpretation. The trick then is to maintain some level of mutual respect, to agree not to dehumanize one another. Nobody said living together was easy!

A Brief History of JPUSA

Robert Bellah et al. note the importance of a community's history as the shared memory helping to define that community in the present.[1] We certainly find our own history a compelling example of that truth.

Jesus People USA is a twenty-seven-year-old intentional evangelical Christian commune of 450 to 500 members, located in Chicago's inner-city Uptown neighborhood. JPUSA is somewhat unique as intentional communities go, not only within its own evangelical subculture, but also within the historical stream (the Jesus movement groups of the 1960s and 1970s) that was its source. Almost all the communal groups that emanated from the Jesus movement era faded away within a few years of their founding. A few others (notably, the Children of God/Family of Love) departed standard Christian categories for what evangelical and mainstream Christians have labeled heretical beliefs and practices. In contrast, JPUSA, which began in 1972 as a spinoff of Jesus People Milwaukee, not only aligned itself doctrinally with mainstream evangelical Christianity, but within a few months of its founding was already writing countercult materials (most published in the *Cornerstone* newspaper) explaining how the Children of God, Way International, Unification Church, and other such "new religions" strayed from historic Christian practices and beliefs.[2] That hard-nosed skepticism was not reserved for only nonbelievers in Christ, but also for others whose doctrine may have been standard, but whose personal lives and financial misdealings bespoke less than Christian values.

There was a reason for our blunt honesty. JPUSA itself had gone through a stressful period in 1974 when the group's then sole "elder," J. W. Herrin, attempted a sexual liaison with a JPUSA woman. She did not give in to his demands, and eventually told others in leadership of his attempts to seduce her. They took up her cause and confronted Herrin. The result was a six-month mixture of daily confrontation, counseling, and strict observation, but to no avail. When J. W. Herrin refused to stop approaching the woman, he was removed from leadership and sent to a Christian counseling center in Florida. Instead, he chose to opt out of both JPUSA and ministry.

This event was a watershed moment for the community. It further cemented within JPUSA members the desire to be forthright, not only about the failings of others but about our own failings and sins. "Confess your faults to one another" was not just empty verbiage, but a mainstay of our communal way of life. For instance, it is not uncommon to see two men, one asking for prayer and counsel, the other stopping and responding immediately, in a communal hallway. This twin approach—a fearless, questioning honesty paired with biblical standards of thought and life—seemed to work well for mature individuals as well as JPUSA's most needy members.[3]

After Herrin's expulsion, JPUSA leaders met and discussed ways to best live out our "calling." The first-century Christians, as do we, held all things in common and made provision according to individual need. Using a Book of Acts model,[4] the leaders (deacons and deaconesses) concluded that plurality of leadership was the biblically endorsed norm. Two of the deacons were appointed elders and a number of other deacons/deaconesses rounded out JPUSA's leadership council. Over the years the council grew to include eight "elders" (a term that later became interchangeable with "pastors").

The 1974 turmoil also witnessed the introduction of "adult spankings," a practice introduced to JPUSA by Jack Winters of Daystar Ministries based in Minneapolis. These spankings—four or five swats with a thin dowel rod—were voluntary, and were likely a carryover from the then-faddish Regression Therapy. It soon became apparent that many members were using spankings more as a form of penance, and this, along with the fact that no one in the evangelical community but Winters was promoting the practice, led us to abandon adult spankings. Unadvised? Yes. Immature? Undoubtedly. These spankings played nearly no role, however, in the controversy we would eventually face with Ronald Enroth.

As years passed and the young JPUSA members matured, *Cornerstone* (which had become a magazine) gained respect as a sensible and scholarly voice dealing with issues of the day and critiquing so-called "cults" from an evangelical (biblical theology and practice) perspective. Meanwhile, JPUSA's social involvement expanded from street ministry and feeding homeless individuals to political action that culminated in a bloc vote that was decisive in electing a local activist, Helen Shiller, to Chicago's City Council. JPUSA's sheltering of the homeless began with offering space on our 47407 N. Malden lobby floor to a few individuals. It quickly escalated into providing space, mats, blankets, counsel, and food to 90 women and children, and 50 to 70 men, each winter night. At present JPUSA runs the Cornerstone Community Outreach shelter, a women's and children's transitional shelter, along with our Leland Project, a second-stage apartment building that helps previously homeless women with children transition into the social mainstream.

JPUSA's involvement in music and the arts expanded. From the original JPUSA rock'n'rollers, REZ Band, music groups within the community multiplied to more than a half dozen, covering the musical spectrum. In 1983, JPUSA began an annual four-day music and arts festival, the 1999 installment of which drew 23,000 attendees. *Cornerstone* magazine's art staff received various awards for artistic merit. Our magazine's exposé of evangelical mega-star Mike Warnke's fraudulent story of satanic involvement was lauded by the Evangelical Press Association as the evangelical "story of the year." Our Warnke story was, of course, deemed a true story and not merely one magazine's opinion or perception. In both the article and the later book, *Selling Satan: Mike Warnke and the Evangelical Media*, we focused on historical facts, verified via an exhaustive investigation of Warnke's entire life, to prove that his bestselling testimony was untrue and his "ministry" a sham. And our series of articles on so-called "Satanic Ritual Abuse" and "Recovered Memories Therapy" led to the evangelical community's reassessing and largely rejecting these dubious (but for some, financially lucrative) concepts.

JPUSA technically functioned outside traditional evangelical structures, though often in cooperation with them. From our earliest years we rejected a sectarian "us vs. them" mentality in relating to surrounding churches and fellowships, and sought (though unsuccessfully) an official liaison with various mainstream denominations.[5] Then, in 1989, the community cemented close ties with the Evangelical Covenant Church, a relatively small but very vital denomination with its international headquarters and flagship university and seminary, North Park, located within a mile of JPUSA's 920 Wilson address. The Covenant saw in JPUSA a unique expression of corporate faith, while JPUSA saw in the Covenant a larger family who could both spiritually and physically aid us in our growth and outreach while offering us another church body to whom we could be accountable. Again, we clung to the idea that we could truly be "in the world" without losing our distinctive communal and individual identity(s).[6]

Ronald Enroth Accuses

We in America live in the most individualistic country and the most autonomous century of the past two thousand years. As Bellah et al. observe in their *Habits of the Heart*, this therapeutic society of ours has made war upon the community, the shared life. The history of American religion, and intentional religious communities in particular, underscores this tension between the corporate and the individual. As a member of JPUSA, I do believe this theme of extreme individualism has led to abuse of not only communities such as ours, but also more mainstream church pastors and leaders. Dave Jackson, member of the intentional community Reba Place Fellowship (Evanston, Illinois) and author of *Living Together in a World Falling Apart*, wrote in *Cornerstone* about such anticommunity sentiment. His 1978 article, a response to the Jonestown mass suicides, noted that the problem wasn't too much commitment; it was commitment to the wrong things.[7]

We consistently objected to the brainwashing paradigm, even in articles aimed at groups we consider cultic due to their theological manipulation of Scripture. When Ted Patrick's *Let Our Children Go!*[8] first was published in 1976, *Cornerstone* objected strenuously to its premise. We repeatedly challenged the secular anticultist interpretation of religious involvement, as in a 1979 article where we worried about the secular press attacking the cults on societal rather than theological lines, and cultivating fear and anger rather than love toward cultists.[9]

Ronald Enroth was a fixture in the religious (mostly evangelical) countercult movement of which we were a part; what we didn't realize was how closely Enroth identified with the views of such individuals as Ted Patrick, Steve Hassan, Margaret Singer, Conway and Siegelman, and others in the secular anticult movement. Even though I and other JPUSAs were personally present at the late 1970s countercult conference where Enroth received the Leo Ryan Award from the Cult Awareness Network, we failed to grasp the award's significance. When Enroth wrote about cult members in his *Youth, Brainwashing, and the Extremist Cults* that "the will to be self-determining is absent,"[10] he was talking about the same concepts promoted by Ted Patrick. But we missed it, focusing instead on Enroth's evangelical heritage. Though Enroth's eventual accusations against us did not explicitly use terms such as "brainwashing" or "mind control," and in fact even avoided the use of the word "cult," those ideas deeply affected his mode of thought regarding a religious group versus a lone individual: the individual is always abused, the "cult" or religious group always the abuser.

In June 1993, our denomination (the Evangelical Covenant Church, or ECC) informed us that they had received a letter from Ronald Enroth accusing us of abusing our members. The ECC faxed the letter to us. We were astonished and horrified, especially since Enroth had been well acquainted with us through *Cornerstone* magazine and our annual Cornerstone Festival. It was suggested that, through the stories of former members, Enroth had ascertained that we were mistreating JPUSA children, that we'd psychologically damaged some adult members, and that many former members bore scars. We hunted in vain for any specifics from Enroth to back such charges. Instead, Enroth described our alleged abuse of former members in a maddening way, beginning by touting his own sociological credentials. From there, he noted that he was doing his sociological duty by hunting for patterns of behavior among our former members, who, he claimed, showed every sign of psychological and spiritual abuse. Some, he asserted, were confused, doubting, angry, disillusioned, mistrustful of authorities and religion in general, undergoing identity crisis, suffering from lack of self-esteem, lacking social and work skills, unable to deal with noncommunal life, feeling abandoned, and unable to make choices.[11]

Enroth initially noted that this abuse was no doubt "unconsciously" delivered, but by letter's end his tune seemed to have changed. He claimed that the Covenant Church was potentially being duped by a well-thought-out public relations façade put up by JPUSA.[12]

In typical JPUSA fashion, news of Enroth's accusations circulated throughout our dorm-like living quarters and hallways. Some members were affected little by the news, not knowing of Enroth's status as a bestselling evangelical author (*Youth, Brainwashing and the Extremist Cults* and *Churches that Abuse*) and frankly wanting little to do with what to them seemed nothing more than a minor controversy.

Others, particularly older members as well as the eight JPUSA pastors who were Enroth's main targets, felt the sting of such accusations in a very personal way. Then there came the tremendous struggle to maintain objectivity, to push the hurt far enough away to try and respond rationally, with gentleness, candor, and common sense. In addition, we had to try to go beyond the heat to find any legitimacy in what Enroth was alleging. All of this in the context of having to continue on with the business of ministry, raising families, and dealing with the various "normal" stresses of community life.

We were stunned. The charges seemed so broad, so overwhelming in scope. Yet they were also mysteriously undefined, other than containing all sorts of "scare" words. How did the phrase "doubts, anger, disillusionment" apply as an indication of abuse? Couldn't someone feel all those things, and even more, without having been abused in the least? We questioned ourselves, knowing that community life certainly can be stressful. We knew we were a community made of many people from dysfunctional backgrounds including drug use, sexual promiscuity, and radically broken families. Not all those wounds had been healed, nor all the rough edges rubbed off.

But it didn't add up. Each of us, whether a JPUSA pastor or a member of one week's standing, had at times erred in tone of voice or words presented. Was this abuse? We long-time JPUSA members had hurtful memories of our own regarding some former members, including documentation that took such stories beyond "you said/we said." But we were determined not to target former members. More frustration. We came up with alternative titles for Enroth's upcoming book: "Church Members Who Abuse" or "Sociologists Who Abuse." Gallows humor.

As a twenty-plus-year member deeply loving JPUSA and the Jesus movement from which it came, I involved myself in trying to sort through Enroth's allegations. I admit my initial response was one of anger and a deep sense of unfairness: how dare a man calling himself a scholar do what Ron Enroth was doing? I wrote an initial response to Enroth, but tore it up after realizing it was too filled with emotional rants. I asked others to read my second and third drafts and help me remove phrases that sounded haughty or offensive. We had to stay focused in our responses, remembering the Christian's call to love both our neighbor and our enemy, even though we felt bitterly torn by this man.

There was also hurt as we pondered the motives of former members, most of whom we had some—apparently friendly—contact with. That isn't to say they wholly agreed with our leadership structure or communal identity; but there was a sense of mutual respect that, though fragile, seemed real to us. A small number of former members we perceived as having what amounted to a destructive dislike for us; in at least a few of those cases, we had attempted to resolve outstanding issues with them, both on our own and using the ECC as intermediary, but without success. They believed they had wasted years of their lives living in a "cult," and such a radical reinterpretation of their past left us little room to attempt reconciliation. One doesn't reconcile with brainwashed zombies, which is how it seemed we were perceived. We reminded one another not to demonize them as they were demonizing us.

In light of the Enroth letter, ECC leadership sat down with our eight pastors and went over Enroth's charges. The meetings lasted for hours as we reviewed our own history as well as the portions of history we knew regarding some of the former members whose names Enroth had mentioned. The ECC's International President, Paul Larsen, then responded to Enroth's letter with a letter of his own, chiding Enroth for neglecting to visit either JPUSA or the ECC international headquarters when he was in Chicago for a week doing interviews with former members of JPUSA. Larsen perceived Enroth's bias as a middle-class one, aimed squarely at a group of people living as a countercultural community; Larsen's analysis seemed far more sociologically penetrating than Enroth's.[13]

Not only letters, but copies of letters, began circulating. This "communication by fax" became a multivoiced but ultimately futile dialogue involving JPUSA, the ECC, Enroth, and various interested others (including other evangelical countercultists). There is no way to represent the sheer volume of the correspondence, nor the painful task of continuing to respond to Enroth's voluminous but vague paper trail. Each new Enroth letter invariably answered our questions with questions and further vague accusations.

Enroth's methodology became the central issue, to us and many interested observers (including psychologist William Backus, countercult expert Ruth Tucker, CRI Journal editor Eliot Miller, UNLV philosophy professor Francis Beckwith, evangelical theologian Norman Geisler, veteran countercultists Bob and Gretchen Passantino, and sociologist Anson Shupe, all of whom I sent much of the Enroth vs. JPUSA correspondence). Enroth's methodology was most clearly articulated in his response to ECC's Paul Larsen, in response to Larsen's contention that Enroth's methodology was flawed because he'd failed to take into account our version of the facts. Enroth boasted that he would focus exclusively on those he claimed were recovering from spiritual and psychological abuse, and not the views or feelings of current leaders or members of the groups he was accusing. He asserted that his was a completely valid sociological method.[14]

We were astonished. Then Enroth quoted sociologist of religion James Beckford, in seeming contradiction to what Enroth had just said. The key sentence from Beckford cited by Enroth was this: "I therefore dissociate myself from those who, on principle, discount the stories that defectors tell . . . the testimony of ex-members should be taken *just as seriously as that of practicing members* . . . I reject the idea that ex-members' accounts can all be subsumed under the heading of 'atrocity tales'" (ellipses in Enroth's original letter; italics added).

As we understood him, Beckford seemed willing to listen to both current and former members' stories. That was all we wanted. Or, if Enroth wanted only former members' perspectives, why not quote them but *without* naming the churches they claimed had abused them? The latter seemed both methodologically sound and ethically appropriate.

Regarding Enroth's appeals to other experts, we noted that Enroth's *Churches that Abuse* cites Harvard social psychiatrist Robert Coles as his mentor "in terms of methodology."[15] Coles is best known for his moving "Children in Crisis" books and an excellent biography of Catholic novelist Walker Percy. It made no sense for Enroth to be citing Coles's research methods. The gentle depth of Coles also seemed absent from Enroth's approach.

More of Enroth's letters followed, and it became painfully apparent that he was not only listening solely to ex-members' worst stories, but was also unwilling to entertain the possibility of our being anything but a "church that abused." He had apparently found the story that was the most compelling to him. Preliminary advertisements for the Enroth book in which the material on our group was included appeared in Zondervan's catalogue; the ads linked the groups in the book with Jonestown and Waco. How much wider could this very wide brush get?

A meeting was finally forced when the ECC confronted Zondervan. We found ourselves sitting across the table from Enroth and his Zondervan contact, Stan Gundry. Paul Larsen lectured Enroth and Gundry about proper methods of research regarding ascertaining abuse; the ECC, Larsen contended, dealt with local church difficulties between pastors and membership continually. Larsen indicated that his understanding of our role vs. the role of some former members did not qualify as the role of an abuser. Rather, there were hurt feelings—real feelings, but feelings nonetheless. Additionally, it was obvious that the current members of JPUSA had been hurt to varying degrees by what some former members had been saying regarding us, especially via Enroth's correspondence. We believed it was one thing to disagree about callings and lifestyles; it was another to assault each other's motives and character.

Herb Freedholm, as Central Conference head for the Covenant, attended the meeting, and addressed an issue that to us underscored the witch-hunt nature of Enroth's accusations. Enroth had at one point floated the theory that JPUSA was in fact being run by Dawn Herrin (currently Dawn Mortimer), who is JPUSA's only female pastor. Freedholm, normally a quiet and gentle person, grew angry as he confronted Enroth and Gundry over the targeting of Herrin. His point was simple: she was the most vulnerable, and one of the least public, of all JPUSA's pastors. To target her as some sort of spiritual power-monger was more than unfair; it was, in the male-dominated evangelical subculture, highly sexist.

Enroth presented the ECC and JPUSA spokespersons with several documents alleged to support his own methodology, none of which seemed actually to do so. One was a xeroxed excerpt from Helen Ebaugh's *Becoming an EX: The Process of Role Exit*, and contained the quote that opened this chapter. Ebaugh's point was that subjective perspectives don't seem subjective to the persons espousing them. Another document explored sociological ethics, and was yet another "apples and oranges" example.[16]

Despite the meeting, which I attended and which lasted for somewhere between four and six hours, no resolution was reached. But Zondervan's Stan Gundry was shocked to discover that I had been sending nearly all the correspondence between Enroth, Zondervan, the ECC, and JPUSA to various Christian spokespersons. Gundry seemed most shocked when I mentioned having sent the entire correspondence (more than an inch thick even at that point) to professional acquaintances at *Christianity Today*, evangelicalism's flagship magazine. My response (as I recall it): "Did you think we wouldn't take this public? We're not afraid of scrutiny from the outside; we *want* it!"

And in fact, along with fellow journalists and members of the countercult community, I had called various sociologists, both evangelicals and their secular brethren, to see if I could get them involved in examining Enroth's methodology. One sociologist from a Midwestern evangelical college advised me to seek out Anson Shupe, a name I already knew about and had planned to call. Shupe agreed to visit us after reading the correspondence I'd sent him, and stayed two days and a night at JPUSA. Shupe got a sore back from sleeping in one of our rustic "loft beds," but despite that found us to be "an egalitarian and open community." Two days might not have been much time to make such a conclusion; still it was more than we ever received from Enroth, who despite repeated invitations never darkened our door.

Evangelical theologian Norm Geisler, who first visited JPUSA in the late 1970s, wrote Enroth regarding the correspondence I'd forwarded and bluntly warned him that the evangelical countercult community would not accept his methodology.[17]

Former members began dialoguing with us, and from our point of view it appeared Enroth was leading them into a prefabricated understanding of their experiences with us. For instance, former members received copies of "Coming Out of the Cults," a 1979 *Psychology Today* article by secular anticultist Margaret Singer.[18] (Enroth claimed later that this was after he had interviewed them.) The article contained various notations in longhand, presumably Enroth's, suggesting that while some parts of Singer's article might not apply to JPUSA, others certainly would. Which parts supposedly applied to us were, we supposed, left to the imagination of each former member.

Reading Singer's article, one is confronted by the same vague therapeutic definition of abuse that runs throughout Enroth's letters and eventual book section on JPUSA. Singer uses terms such as "total obedience to cult commands," "guilt," "fear," and "behavior conditioning practices." At least she has the decency (in this article anyway) not to mention the alleged "cults" by name. But like Enroth's accusations, hers are the stuff of a narrative, not of historical truth. How would any group so accused defend itself? The ugly truth regarding such vagueness is that the flamboyance of the accuser's vocabulary itself is enough to cause many folks to believe the charges are valid. It is the equivalent of being accused of child molestation. One might be completely innocent, but the charge itself is so horrific as to leave a permanent mark upon one's reputation. (I have a copy of an interview Enroth did with a former JPUSA member, who taped the phone call and later sent a copy to me. In that interview, despite the fact that not a single former member had or has made such accusations, Enroth bluntly asked if any JPUSA pastors had sexually abused children.)

Perhaps the clearest exposition of the procrustean bed Enroth was stretching us upon appeared, ironically enough, in a chapter edited by *Cornerstone* magazine's own countercult expert, Eric Pement. As Executive Director of Evangelical Ministries to New Religions, Pement was responsible for collating a number of papers presented at EMNR's 1989 conference. "Churches on the Fringe" was Enroth's contribution. Though Enroth lists ten ways to define a "fringe" church, the most telling may be the last, "Painful Exit Process."[19] This passage reflects Enroth's reliance upon emotive, nearly indefinable, terms. "Just as is often the case with an abused spouse, the victim of spiritual abuse has mixed feelings about cutting ties," he wrote. How was the spouse abused? How was the church member abused? Such things are simply not defined, or are defined with terms equally vague, and just as ominous.

Our Further Response to the Accusations

After a time, we despaired of Enroth hearing our concerns. It was then we considered our ultimate options. We did ponder legal action after others close to us recommended it. But the idea of suing a fellow Christian—though to us he didn't seem to be behaving like one—seemed Scripturally dubious.

We also considered doing what some of the other groups who were to be included in the book were doing—duck and cover. Wait for the book's release, then lay low and after a time all the publicity would die down. This option held very little attraction for us. We have always been forthright regarding our faults, whether real or alleged.

One option we rejected out of hand nevertheless bears mention. Due to our lives together, a level of transparency occurs that often bares a member's darkest, most problematic areas of life struggle. We categorically refused to use that knowledge against former members in a public venue. Our research on various sects and New Religions had acquainted us with cases in which high-commitment groups had indeed abused that pastoral privilege. While such a use of another's sins and weaknesses would undoubtedly have served us well in the court of public opinion, it would be unethical from a Christian point of view. We did at times share honestly about some former members with those to whom we are accountable in the ECC in order to give them context, especially since some of those ex-members had themselves gone to the ECC to discuss their perspectives.[20]

The option we decided on for a public response to Enroth was to use *Cornerstone* magazine, the very vehicle we had used to expose

Christian frauds and to examine New Religions. We would attempt to subject our own history and our own story to the methodology Enroth seemed to be ignoring. And we would study what the truly guilty subjects of our own research had done in response to avoid doing likewise ourselves. We would take all of this before the watching world.

To prepare, we examined our own methodology as "investigators" via *Cornerstone* magazine (investigator being the role Enroth seemed to be playing), and also examined the role of a few of our more celebrated "subjects" as the accused (the role we involuntarily had assumed). There have been at least five avenues through which *Cornerstone* verifies information regarding any religious group (I list them in no particular order): (1) Ex-members and/or other "whistle blowers." We don't discount ex-member testimony, but we do hunt for secondary verification of it. (2) Books, tapes, and magazines from the group itself. (3) Additional documentation from court proceedings or other legal channels such as tax returns. (4) Testimony from members and leadership within the group. (5) Writings about the group from both popular and scholarly sources, with emphasis on the latter. This of course is the researcher's basic laundry list; any good journalist knows that his sources need cross-verification from as many other sources as possible.

We determined that all accusations from Enroth should be subjected to the same rules of evidence we use in our own research—on "New Religions" such as the Children of God and Unification Church, and on evangelical fakes such as Mike Warnke, Lauren Stratford, Troy Lawrence, Alberto Rivera, John Todd, and others.

We decided not to wait for Enroth's book. We had nothing to hide, and believed Enroth's correspondence showed the essential nature of what he would eventually publish. By this time, dozens of packets of the entire correspondence (some forty letters, most more than one page) had been mailed to various evangelical and secular spokespersons. Any or all of those spokespersons could take us to task if we misrepresented or quoted—out of context—Enroth's claims.

The magazine, which normally we have tried not to use as a promotional tool for the community, now became our courtroom. We chose to construct the "Enroth issue" with various pieces of the very complex set of issues raised by Enroth's accusations. First, we introduced the problem with an editorial, “The Acid Test of Accountability,” which outlined the entire controversy in miniature.

We also included the entire “JPUSA Covenant,” a document each JPUSA member is asked to sign. This covenant covers rights and responsibilities of the individual and JPUSA toward one another. Again, the purpose was to provide historical and evidential context. But the covenant also provided that unseen, existential “feel” a group has. We hoped people would see us as flawed but healthy human beings joined together in a flawed but healthy community of believers.[21]

Long-time *Cornerstone* contributing editors Bob and Gretchen Passantino run their own California-based countercult ministry, Answers in Action. With me, they had researched and exposed Lauren Stratford’s story of ritual satanic abuse as false, forcing her publisher to drop her bestselling book. Our association with the Passantinos was long, and well before the Enroth controversy we had discussed with them the concepts behind “Mind Control.” The Passantinos were incensed over the Enroth letters, and researched an article on the Mind Control paradigm’s falsity. “Overcoming the Bondage of Victimization” dealt in-depth with concepts Enroth’s worldview was rooted in, and is to this day quoted in literature dealing with the debate over mind control. “Who’s Abusing Who?” was a thoughtful reflection from psychologist and author William Backus, who targeted the term “spiritual abuse” as one without real content.[22] He had visited our community many times, and assured us that both we and our children seemed quite healthy from his professional perspective.

“JPUSA is Family” came from Dr. Ruth Tucker, professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. As someone who also had visited us and known us for years, and who had researched cult groups for her book, *Another Gospel*, Tucker was offended by Enroth’s lack of scholarship. She had in fact refused to author an introduction to his previous book, *Churches that Abuse*, because of what she saw as unfair treatment in that book of one group she was familiar with. Tucker noted how ironic it was that JPUSA and *Cornerstone* were being attacked with methodologies we had strictly avoided in our own countercult research.[23]

Anson Shupe—who, as mentioned, had visited JPUSA upon finding out about the Enroth controversy—was interviewed by *Cornerstone*. He explained how sociological data are normally gathered in regard to religious groups with unhappy former members. Shupe did not discount ex-member testimony, but he reminded the reader that Enroth's "scholarly sin" was in treating narrative accounts as literal history.[24]

After puzzling for some time about how to close out our "Enroth issue," as we called it, we decided upon a lengthy open letter to Enroth from our countercult expert, Eric Pement. Eric, as mentioned, had edited Enroth's ten-point paper, "Churches on the Fringe." Responding to an Enroth letter to ECC's Paul Larsen, Eric dealt with nine areas where Enroth claimed we'd abused people. Then various others, both on the *Cornerstone* staff and on the pastoral board, gave input and co-signed the "Open Letter to Dr. Ronald Enroth." It was a respectfully worded, but rigorous, examination of the vague accusations made against us in the correspondence. Insensitivity regarding pastoral care; fostering dependency on control-oriented leadership; spiritual elitism; discouragement of dissent; manipulation of members; double standards; legalism/rigidity; painful exit process; shunning/ostracism—we explored these and responded to them as forthrightly as we were able. Trying to defend ourselves from Enroth's accusations still felt like pushing against a giant marshmallow; squishy but sticky.

Reaction to Enroth's Book

Enroth's book, *Recovery from Churches that Abuse*, was published by Zondervan in late spring 1994, nearly a year after his first letter had come to our attention. As we had suspected, the book's chapter on JPUSA consisted of the linking together of unverifiable stories from mostly anonymous sources. In addition, Enroth noted that he had at times melded stories together to make a more compelling narrative. Now we were being accused by ex-members who didn't even exist! A final irony: some groups included by Enroth had indeed sexually and physically abused members. This abuse was verifiable, and Enroth made sure to include "hard" evidence in that regard. Yet there we were, accused with no such evidence, unfairly grouped with other churches who were documentably abusive.

Various leaders at JPUSA are mentioned by name, accused of abusive behavior, and always in quoted stories that, we noted, left Zondervan and Enroth less culpable. Two former members are named; the rest are given pseudonyms. In a rambling closing chapter, Enroth complains that "the [JPUSA] leaders view problems of leaving largely in terms of transition from a communal setting to a noncommunal one. By limiting their concern to practical and utilitarian matters such as securing housing and opening a bank account, the leadership overlooks the painful interpersonal and psychological hurts that often accompany departure." This admission on Enroth's part that we did (and do) help leaving members with the various logistics of exiting JPUSA also revealed how Enroth placed us in a catch-22 situation. Enroth charged that we overdirected members' lives, yet he also criticized us for *not* further directing those leaving our community. Which was it, over-directing or under-directing? And of course we know the pain of leaving; some pain, both for JPUSA and for those leaving us, is unavoidable. Ending a relationship hurts. Enroth's seeming ignorance of this simple psychological truth glares from his book's pages.

The fact that Enroth's end product was somewhat anticlimactic in comparison with some of the far-out allegations included in the correspondence did little to soothe the pain of being publicly vilified in a supposedly evangelical publisher's book. We decided that our approach of publicizing Enroth's scholarly folly was the best defense we could muster. Other than that, Spurgeon's truism that "Falsehood strides around the world before truth gets its boots on" was likely going to be true in our case as well. It was time to move on with life. But as one last parting shot, *Cornerstone* did run a review of *Recovering from Churches that Abuse*, written at our request by sociologist James T. Richardson.

> Enroth reminds the reader several times that he is a sociologist, thus implying that he is doing sociology in the book, but this slim volume is *not* sociological. There is no attempt to sample properly, or to limit generalizations in any explicit way. There is no effort to discuss the issue of self-serving accounts that plague all such books of this 'anticult' bent, and there is a glossing over of the writer's own particular religious persuasion. Furthermore, there is virtually no recognition of the considerable scholarly research that might be used to counter the apparent thesis of Enroth, who seems to believe that religious groups that require heavy discipline and commitment should be avoided in favor of less demanding mainstream groups. There is no reference to scholarly work by other sociologists such as Stuart Wright, Norman

> Skonovd, Trudy Solomon, Jim Lewis, and David Bromley, or psychologists such as Carol Latkin who have done more scientifically defensible work on ex-members. Helen Rose Ebaugh's fine book, *Becoming an Ex*, is referenced, but the larger amount of work by other social scientists is ignored.[25]

A specific facet of the concept of story I've adopted here was touched upon by Richardson.

> Enroth's book can be viewed as another in a long line of popular books that *teach people how to become good victims by reinterpreting their past*. Ironically, this thoroughly non-sociological book makes use of a sociological truth—that people are constantly reinterpreting their past to make their view of that past more functional for their present—as he delivers the message that people's problems are not really their fault. Someone else is always to blame. This line of thought is controversial from several perspectives, of course, including the theological and the therapeutic.[26]

Further scholarly fallout against Enroth began almost immediately. UNLV philosophy professor Francis Beckwith delivered a stunning blow with his harshly negative review of Enroth's book in evangelicalism's most prestigious countercult publication, *CRI Journal*, versions of which appeared elsewhere. Beckwith also delivered a paper taking Enroth to task at the 1994 annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society. Alan Gomes, theology professor at Biola University, published a book in 1995 (ironically with Enroth's publisher, Zondervan) titled *Unmasking the Cults*. In that small book, Gomes devoted a chapter to a discussion of the brainwashing paradigm and to Enroth's methodology. Gomes was highly critical of such a methodology, and like Beckwith, he found it neither scholarly nor Christian.[27]

Mind Control and Other Stories

In understanding the background of what befell JPUSA, there is a story, or set of stories, that ought to be taken into account. Such stories involve the victimization of individuals by religious groups and, more particularly, religious leaders. Make no mistake that I believe abuse within religious groups occurs; it does, and we have written about and investigated such tragic events, as well as publishing stories (duly fact-checked) from former members of new religious groups.

But the victimization stories regarding some religious groups, particularly smaller groups involved in "high-commitment" lifestyles, take on a mythic quality of their own. These stories are, as was Enroth's concerning JPUSA, rooted in the brainwashing/mind control paradigm. The Cult Awareness Network (before going bankrupt, then being taken over by agents of the Church of Scientology) was the most vociferous promoter of this concept. Currently the American Family Foundation (AFF), headed by Michael Langone, offers the most public support for the mind-control story through its *Cultic Studies Journal.*

In considering the mind-control debate as it relates to so-called "new religions," psychiatrist and well-known author Robert Lifton is a key figure. Lifton has been adopted as the poet/philosopher of the anticult movement, speaking at various anticult functions over the years and having his book, *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism,* cited in nearly every major work supporting the concept of mind control. AFF's Michael Langone, for instance, defers to Lifton when it comes to defining the word "cult."[28]

Enroth also cites Lifton in his 1977 *Youth, Brainwashing, and the Extremist Cults*. And during the period when he was interviewing former JPUSAs, Enroth sent them copies of Lifton's "Eight Criteria of Mind Control."[29] A handwritten notation explained, "Dr. Lifton, psychiatrist (M.D.), has had a major impact on the scholarly writing on cult mind control. An interesting exercise would be for you to apply these 8 to JPUSA!" Enroth's public protestations to the contrary, this mailing certainly did cultivate the standard "thought reform/mind control" story line among his ex-JPUSA interviewees.

Lifton's take on mind control is a well-told story, a narrative used to dismiss high-commitment forms of religious expression as "totalism." In that light, I am interested in Lifton's self-described bias toward postmodernism and his own variant, which he calls "proteanism."[30]

Without an in-depth judgment on the right or wrong of Lifton's worldview, I would note that it is not value-free in orientation. Traditional religions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam would not (unless held in an ironical, "I don't really mean it, but these man-made symbols are comfortable for me" sense) be very tenable from the postmodern/protean viewpoint. And Lifton makes this clear by opposing his protean ideal to the "fundamentalist" man, loosely based upon Protestant evangelicals but including even Nazis. Such is Lifton's story.

What Lifton, in all his articulate (one might say romantic) longing, seems to be saying is that the human self is not a reality grounded in any absolute truth, but rather a self-defined entity. The problem (among others) with this is that one ends up with the self defining the self. Further, as a self defines itself, it inescapably begins defining *all* selves. Lifton does not escape this tendency. And in spite of discussing his protean model for an entire book, he is unable to formulate how a human being does find self-definition.[31] This view is profoundly individualistic, and nowhere in *Protean Self* does Lifton explain just how such men build a family, church, or society together. For further articulation of this, I turn to the team of five sociologists who authored *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*:

> Separated from family, religion, and calling as sources of authority, duty, and moral example, the self first seeks to work out its own form of action by autonomously pursuing happiness and satisfying its wants. But what are the wants of the self? By what measure or faculty does it identify its happiness? In the face of these questions, the predominant ethos of American individualism seems more than ever determined to press ahead with the task of letting go of all criteria other than radical private validation.[32]

This is the problem, from a philosophical viewpoint, with the anticult movement. Their worldview is radically therapeutic, radically centered on the lonely individual. And this worldview, as best exemplified by Lifton's disciples, is one which *in and of itself can and often does lead to tyranny*. Mass murderer John Wayne Gacy was, it could be argued, one successful example of a protean, self-defined individual. The Marquis de Sade was another. In a less sensational vein more directly applicable to this discussion, Lifton's disciples are eager to have us embrace their individualistic values, to the point that they would "reprogram," sometimes after kidnapping, members of groups unwilling to conform to the Liftonian metanarrative. If that isn't an inflexible, totalist worldview masquerading as freedom, what is? What they fear most is, in the end, what they themselves have become.

Christian sociologist Milton Reimer warns that worldview assumptions greatly influence the way sociologists perceive other human beings. Reimer perhaps paints with a broad brush in saying that all "secular" sociologists are guilty of reductionism. But he does make one point clear—namely, that both Christian and non-Christian sociologists carry assumptions that are scientifically unprovable yet lead to inevitable conclusions.[33]

This sociological given is a crucial point as regards charges of abuse. My idea of the word "abuse" may bear no resemblance to your idea of abuse, depending on whether or not we hold the same or different basic assumptions about reality. Who says what is and what is not abuse? How does the sociologist define abuse—from the viewpoint of the alleged victim, from that of the alleged victimizer, or from a third allegedly neutral "scientific" viewpoint? None of the three views listed, nor perhaps any other, is in fact value-free.[34] I am a journalist, not a sociologist, but I believe both disciplines must progress while gingerly embracing the apparent contradiction between unbiased research and strongly held beliefs. Ronald Enroth, on the other hand, seems to think that his Christian bias makes thorough research unnecessary. An ancestor of mine, Rebecca Nurse, was hanged in Salem, Massachusetts for witchcraft by good Christians who believed the unverifiable testimony of her alleged victims.

In closing, I note the obvious: It does hurt to be falsely accused. The pain is subjective, but real enough, and what transpired between JPUSA and Enroth is a matter of historical record. We choose not to call his behavior abusive toward us, though using a more substantive measuring stick than his own, we certainly could. From this layman's point of view, he abused the discipline of sociology. We look upon his version of science as akin to the bogus science of phrenology—measuring skulls—by which African Americans were alleged to be less intelligent than the white scientists who measured them.

There is the issue of Ronald Enroth's own story, which we cannot presume to know in full. But just as all men and women want to be the hero of their own stories,[35] certainly Enroth wishes to be the hero in his. He sees himself, as is made clear over and over in the JPUSA/Enroth correspondence, as the defender of disenfranchised victims of religious groups. "In this book I seek to be the voice of the voiceless," he wrote in *Recovery from Churches that Abuse*.[36] While a properly balanced advocacy is not wrong either in journalism or in sociology, we believe that this determination—one might almost say felt need—to be a victim advocate has harmed Enroth's ability to do good social science.

The final area in which we believe Ronald Enroth failed is in doing what a sociologist who is evangelical ought to do best. That is, he failed to synthesize sociological and biblical tools to grapple deeply with the meaning of our life together, a life affecting both former and current JPUSA members. Sociology, despite some sociologists' relativistic worldview, is not intrinsically an antireligious venture (as Peter Berger, among others, exemplifies). A growing number of evangelical sociologists have made and are making contributions to the science.[37] In light of this, Enroth's failure is painful not only for JPUSA but also for the Church, the sociological discipline itself, and the watching world.

What now for JPUSA? Despite the pain Enroth and other well-meaning "experts" may choose to inflict upon us, we are determined to remain and live as we believe we are called by Christ to live. We also will continue to grapple with the experiences of leaving members and ex-members, neither of whom we pretend to understand completely. We cannot completely understand them, any more than they can completely understand us. But we can work together toward a resolution that says, "Your story belongs to you. I may not be a part of your story any more. I may even have to grieve over leaving your story . . . or being left out of your story. But I affirm your individual right to tell your story."

On the other hand, we cannot deny who we are and what we believe. There are borders beyond which we cannot go. We will not affirm the moral legitimacy of a person's choices if those choices appear to contradict God's truth as revealed in Scripture and through his Holy Spirit, no matter what those choices are. We will, of course, affirm each individual's right to make those choices. And we will affirm a person's humanity as well as the value of their time with us, even if their present choices are, to us, unscriptural and/or unsound.

We hope that those former members feeling alienated from us will affirm our humanity as well. And we hope that one day perhaps they will look back upon our shared time together as a chapter in their own story worth remembering.

NOTES

1. "Communities . . . . have a history—in an important sense they are constituted by their past—and for this reason we can speak of a real community as a 'community of memory,' one that does not forget its past. In order not to forget that past, a community is involved in retelling its story, its constitutive narrative, and in so doing, it offers examples of the men and women who have embodied and exemplified the meaning of the community. These stories of collective history and exemplary individuals are an important part of the tradition that is so central to a community of memory. . . .

"But the stories are not all exemplary, not all about successes and achievements. A genuine community of memory will also tell painful stories of shared suffering that sometimes creates deeper identities than success. . . . And if the community is completely honest, it will remember stories not only of suffering received but of suffering inflicted—dangerous memories, for they call the community to alter ancient evils." *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, ed. Robert Bellah et al. (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 153.

2. The Children of God, for instance, hold that sex between consenting adults who are not married to one another, and who may in fact be married to someone else, is permissible providing the spouse agrees to the liaison. I suggest that the most objective sociologist could, with little fear of contradiction, note that such an idea is outside the framework of orthodox Christian belief and practice.

3. "So many things are absorbed in our large family, when one person hurts, everybody comes to the rescue with comfort and prayer. . . . We handle our own emotional, spiritual, and even marital problems. Yes, Christians, despite popular fantasies, are not immune to problems." "United We Stand," *Cornerstone*, vol. 3, issue 14 (1974): 6,7.

4. Acts of the Apostles, 6:1–6. This passage not only expounds on the genesis of deacons and deaconesses, but by inference (see also 1:21–26) shows the apostles working as a sort of board, with Peter often acting as spokesperson but not as sole or primary authority.

5. See for instance in *Cornerstone*, vol. 12, issue 69 (1984), the article "Denominations: Variety and Variance within the Christian Church." The article defended both denominations and the concept of denominationalism: "Denominations have historically been the vessels used by Jesus Christ to preserve and maintain the Christian faith, each serving a different function. Luther and his Lutherans lifted up the then-neglected banners of justification by faith and the priesthood of the believer. Calvin held high the sovereignty of God. Another generation, led by John Wesley's Methodists, emphasized holiness. . . . In the end it is apparent that we need each other."

Another example was how closely JPUSA worked with other churches and denominations, both Protestant and Catholic; JPUSA joined various umbrella groups of churches, including the Lakeview Evangelical Fellowship, a large group of churches representing Chicago's North Side.

6. For a lengthy treatment of JPUSA's history, see our web site: www.jpusa.org/jpusa/lessons.htm

7. "As the secular press has tried to help the public comprehend the recent horror in Guyana, there has been the frequent inference that the problem was too much commitment. They suggest that any time people give themselves totally to a cause, the product is likely to be as heinous. Is that true? And if it is, how should that affect our commitment to Jesus Christ and His Church? Is our safety a retrenchment into individualistic Christianity? . . . Commitment is not the problem, but the object of our commitment is critical." Dave Jackson, "Guyana: Was the Problem Too Much Commitment?" *Cornerstone*, vol. 7, issue 45 (1979): 2.

8. "Kidnaped: Let Our Children Go," *Cornerstone*, vol. 5, issue 33 (1977): 8. The review points out that Patrick ignores the often real problem of some groups being monetary rip-offs, focusing instead on the commitment level of individual members. "It seems his major objection to the cults is their level of dedication." Patrick, we noted, encouraged kidnaped NRM members in the midst of a deprogramming to "open sin, taking that as the sign that the victim is successfully deprogrammed. . . . Although we strongly oppose the cults and speak out against them, we feel that the Holy Spirit has more ethical loving ways of dealing with people than kidnaping and forced repentance. Even though there were many false religious teachings in His day, we cannot imagine Jesus kidnaping people and harassing them for days to change their mind. The Lord is a truthful persuader, not a gangster."

9. "The urge to scream 'fire!' has replaced that earlier silence that had greeted the eastern pseudo-religions of the sixties. Jim Jones made one contribution to American society: people have become aware of the cults as they never have been before. . . . The secular press was at first incredulous, then furious. . . . The attack has not basically been theological, but societal. Herein lies a great danger. While we too have a great concern for the subversive power of the cults (enough that we have carried a 'Cult of the Month' column for five years) we have as a primary goal love. We cannot ignore the cults; neither can we allow fear and anger to dictate our actions. . . . Let us expose false teachings and warn the cults, but in love." Eric Pement, "Cults: What to Say When the Tacks Are Brass," *Cornerstone*, vol. 8, issue 47 (1980): 36.

10. Ronald Enroth, *Youth, Brainwashing, and the Extremist Cults* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1977), 193; quoted in Alan W. Gomes, *Understanding the Cults* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 53.

11. Letter, dated 16 June 1993, from Ronald Enroth to ECC Central Conference head Herb Freedholm.

12. Ibid.

13. "They were challenged by [African-American evangelical] John Perkins to live among the poor as poor. And so they moved to communal life in the slums of Uptown many years before they joined the Covenant. I am no disciple of Deconstructionist Jacques Derrida or of Liberation Theologian Gustavo Gutierrez. But any critical reader of culture will have to agree that America's underclass is often abused and victimized by its cultural establishment. You and I are both prospering beneficiaries of that establishment. . . .

"In many ways Jesus People do not and should not meet the 'stereotype' of the middle-class Protestant establishment. But they are in dialogue with us and are trying to be responsive. We are, like many, a predominantly 'WASP' denomination seeking to overcome our own 'addictions' of insensitivity to the poor and the alienated. The Jesus people, clearly seeing our lack of wholeness as well as their own, humbly asked for help. We took the risk and will now accept the pain you apparently intend to inflict upon us both." Letter dated 13 July 1993.

14. Letter from Ronald Enroth to Paul Larsen, dated 19 July 1993.

15. Ronald M. Enroth, *Churches that Abuse* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1992), 30.

16. Caroline Purcell, "Policy Research and Ethical Issues," in *Understanding Sociology*, 3d ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1990), 42. We did not disagree with Purcell, of course—merely with Enroth's attempted use of her writings to justify his methodology. "Should researchers always reveal their identities, especially when doing participant observation?" she had written. Why Enroth had underscored this sentence was baffling. He'd never visited JPUSA's headquarters incognito or otherwise. The next sentence seemed to explain his thought processes. "There are certain groups that may not want researchers in their midst, such as *reclusive religious cults*, corporate boards, and certain criminal groups" (italics added). His selection of this section seem to revealed his hostility toward us, in that we are neither reclusive nor a "cult" by any standard definition. We'd allowed all sorts of researchers, including sociologists and journalists, into our midst.

17. "Ron, do we really have to write books attacking other Christians on such highly volatile and debatable topics such as 'abuse'? Frankly, I am tired of the word. It has become one of the most abused terms in our vocabulary. So far as I can see, the most abusive thing in this whole situation is your desire to publish this and Zondervan's willingness to do it. Is making money at the expense of the character of other Christians really ethical? I would urge you again as a brother in Christ to cease publication. You are not only going to hurt another group of sincere, dedicated Christians, but you are going to

hurt yourself. I do not know of anyone in the counter-cult ministry who agrees with you. You have already alienated the major groups and leaders that I know." Letter from Geisler to Enroth, 14 March 1994

18. Singer, in a 13 October 1993 letter to Philip B. Heymann, U.S. Deputy Attorney General of the Department of Justice, and Ronald K. Noble, Assistant Secretary (Enforcement) of the Department of the Treasury, recommends eleven individuals as experts on thought reform and cults. She includes Ronald Enroth's name. The letter concerned training regarding groups such as the Branch Davidians.

19. "It is not easy to leave fringe churches. This fact is difficult for nonmembers to comprehend. Just as is often the case with an abused spouse, the victim of spiritual abuse has mixed feelings about cutting ties. The group, for all its weaknesses, represents security. For some, it becomes a surrogate family. Not all experiences are viewed as negative or harmful. Furthermore, the participant (especially the long-term member) has been programmed against ever leaving. The repeated invoking of fear, guilt, and intimidation can be extremely effective with regard to any consideration of bailing out." Ronald Enroth, "Churches on the Fringe," in *Contend for the Faith: Collected Papers of the Rockford Conference on Discernment and Evangelism,* ed. Eric Pement (Chicago: Evangelical Ministries to New Religions, 1992), 196. See also Eric Pement, "Shepherd Without Compassion: Stewart Traill and the Church of Bible Understanding," *Cornerstone*, vol. 11, issue 60 (1983): 32. We went as far as to note that we had reevaluated our position somewhat on "mind control" due to the findings of our research on the COBU group, whose members were verbally abused in public for personal sin, but summarized this way: "[The ex-members' alleged] 'failures' were (and are) not either the result of carnal backsliding or hypnotic states induced by a bizarre cult. After hours of dialogue . . . and research, the members of the Church of Bible Understanding appear as young Christians, zealous to do God's will, who were twisted and savaged by one man's ego. . . . It's easy to point to [COBU leader] Stewart Traill's extreme, yet how *many* Christian leaders both large and small manipulate others to achieve pseudo-spiritual ends? The list unfortunately is not small."

20. In the JPUSA/ECC meeting with Enroth, we had discussed two or three of the more outlandish former members' stories, in order to show both Enroth and Zondervan's Gundry how easily disprovable those stories were. Enroth later wrote that we had, by bringing up those stories, failed to acknowledge the pain of these former members.

21. Jon Trott, "Life's Lessons: A History of Jesus People USA Covenant Church," *Cornerstone,* vol. 22, issue 102/103 (1994); for an on-line version of this article, see www.jpusa.org/jpusa/lessons.htm

"A covenant with JPUSA does not equal salvation, nor does it bring a person into a special 'elect within the elect,' a higher order of Christians. It is the agreement of an informed individual, the member, and one small expression of the Christian Church, JPUSA, that we see God leading us in service to him." "JPUSA Covenant," *Cornerstone,* vol. 22, issue 102/103 (1994): 19.

22. "The new definition of abuse has shifted. It does not include an objective description of abusive behavior. Rather, it tends to describe, as the major element in the definition, the subjective reaction of the [alleged] victim. In current parlance, abuse is any behavior which another person experiences as painful, regardless of the objective characteristics of that behavior." William Backus, "Who's Abusing Who?" *Cornerstone,* vol. 22, issue 102/103 (1994): 35.

23. Ironically, the group Tucker defended against Enroth, University Bible Fellowship, turned out to be located less than a mile from our Chicago address. We discovered that a member of UBF had been kidnapped and subjected to an attempted "deprogramming," and contacted her. The results of our research, which included visiting UBF's facility as well as attending their worship services, focused on Annie Kang's testimony as a victim of abuse at the hands of "anticult" forces. We also included interviews with the professional deprogrammers involved: Annie Kang with Jon Trott, "Enemies of the Heart: The Story of a Christian Woman's Deprogramming," *Cornerstone*, vol. 25, issue 110 (1997). "Whatever the setting or subject, the [invalid] research method is to treat the victim stories as truth without investigating counterclaims. The alleged victimizer is presumed guilty of the victim's charges without being given an opportunity to prove innocence or even challenge the assumption of guilt. . . . My serious concerns about Ron [Enroth's] work arose in 1991, when I was asked by his editor at Zondervan to write an endorsement for his book, *Churches that Abuse*. After I read over the manuscript I wrote back to the editor (and sent a copy of the letter to Ron) stating that I could not endorse the book. Of the churches featured in the book, I had personal knowledge of only one, and in that instance I felt that Ron had made some very unfair allegations. The one-sided testimonies on which he based his conclusions were old (primarily 1980 to 1984) and he seemed entirely oblivious to the cultural factors that gave the group its distinct non-western flavor." Regarding JPUSA, Tucker wrote: "What is so ironic about this latest attack is that *Cornerstone* magazine is widely recognized for its solid investigative reporting and for its persistent efforts to interview people on both sides of the story. Never has it offered up articles based solely on victim stories, claiming they were valid research. Yet the organization is being attacked by the very methods it strictly avoids." *Cornerstone,* vol. 22, issue 102/103 (1994): 41.

24. "If Enroth has committed a scholarly sin, it's that he has treated narrative accounts as literal . . . as history. But it seems to me he fails to take

into account the individual perspective of each observer of any event. Reality is complex. The average reader wants to be presented with something that either happened or it didn't. I mean, how would a book do if it were titled *Churches that Might or Might Not Be Abusing?" Cornerstone,* vol. 22, issue 102/103 (1994): 44.

25. "Book Reviews: Recovering from Churches that Abuse," James T. Richardson, *Cornerstone,* vol. 23, issue 105 (1994): 20.

26. Ibid.

27. Alan W. Gomes, *Unmasking the Cults* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1995), 72.

28. "Although the term cult is vague and controversial, it has firmly implanted itself in popular discourse. The term is often associated with 'thought reform' (popularly called 'mind control'), which, according to Lifton (1961), describes certain processes of behavior change used on civilians in mainland China and on Korean POWs." Michael Langone, "Introduction," in *Recovery from Cults: Help for Victims of Psychological and Spiritual Abuse*, ed. Michael D. Langone (New York: W. W. Norton, 1993), 2,3. Various other writers in this volume also cite Lifton, some at great length, in support of their brainwashing paradigm.

29. The mailing Enroth sent was copied from self-described "exit counselor" Steven Hassan's book, *Combatting Cult Mind Control* (Rochester, Vt.: Park Street Press, 1988), 201; Hassan includes a startling excerpt from Lifton on "cults," taken from the latter's 1987 book, *The Future of Immortality and Other Essays for a Nuclear Age*. That excerpt abundantly underscores Lifton's confusion regarding "fundamentalism," "totalism," and evils such as the People's Temple suicides and even Nazi Germany: "if one has an absolute or totalistic vision of truth, then those who have not seen the light—have not embraced that truth, are in some way in the shadows—are bound up with evil, tainted, and do not have the right to exist." Once again, note the difficulty for Lifton and his followers here, namely, that they too end up being totalists by deciding who else is a totalist, and so (to use his term) does not have the right to exist. The whole concept of "deprogramming" (exit counseling) is rooted in an attempt to destroy the personality that believes, replacing it with a personality that disbelieves. Lifton himself claims that there is a "second self" created within some "cults"; it is this second self that must, according to the anticultists, die. Responsibility for joining or leaving a religious group is thus removed from the individual who has joined and assigned elsewhere, namely, to the totalistic anticultists bent on undermining that individual's commitment.

30. See Robert Jay Lifton, *The Protean Self: Human Resilience in an Age of Fragmentation* (New York: Basic Books, 1993). I am only somewhat familiar with the "postmodernist" approach to truth and story, namely, that story is

basically man's subjective attempt to make sense of an unknowable objective truth. But at the heart of the postmodern worldview is the same horror Lifton feels toward the monolithic, whether philosophical, religious, political, or historical. Thus the postmodern rejection of "metanarratives," any story which claims to be the sole and only truth. (A wag might suggest that their own story appears to be a metanarrative.) Lifton sees an invariant connection between monolithic, or totalist worldviews, and societal evil. While fearing fundamentalism, Lifton welcomes pluralism, both societal and in the individual's inner life, as the antidote to totalism. Lifton's understanding of both Chinese Communism and Germany's Nazism as evil is especially problematic when applied to small, relatively powerless religious groups and individuals, despite how Langone and others attempt to rationalize away this glaring problem.

On a deeper level, Lifton could be accused of making a philosophical error, generalizing from evil examples of monolithic worldviews to conclude that *all* monolithic worldviews are evil. Are not pluralistic worldviews, at least those taken to their logical extreme, also problematic from a moral standpoint? The word "abuse," for instance, implies that there is a commonly held and thus monolithic consensus on the moral and/or ethical norms being violated by the abuser. If there is no moral norm, then by definition there can be no abuse, which at the least relies upon a societally defined moral norm for its own definition. The child abuser, for instance, is only an abuser if a moral norm (societal, religious, or both) is being violated. In a completely pluralistic society, how does one define such a norm?

31. Consider, for instance, this attempt by Lifton to distance himself from the obvious weakness of his position: "I must separate myself, however, from those observers, postmodern or otherwise, who equate multiplicity and fluidity with disappearance of the self, with a complete absence of coherence among its various elements. I would claim the opposite: proteanism involves a quest for authenticity and meaning, a form-seeking assertion of self." Lifton, *The Protean Self*, 8, 9. That last sentence is in danger of amounting to poetic-sounding nonsense.

32. Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart*, 79.

33. "The secular sociologist is almost always committed to a random/chance-evolutionary view of humanity. From this view it follows that a person *becomes* human as a result of socialization (Horton and Hunt, 1976: 88). Also, through socialization a person *becomes* either a man or a woman; a person *becomes* oriented either toward the opposite sex or to his own sex. The Christian, however, is compelled to begin with a biblical view of human nature. God created humans in His own image, and the reflection of God's image continues in all people regardless of age, sex, skin color, or moral condition. The child does not *become* human when he or she begins to assimilate

the cultural patterns of environment. Rather, the child *is* human by virtue of God's creative act (Gen. 1:26–27)." Stephen A. Grunlan and Milton Reimer (eds.), *Christian Perspectives on Sociology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1982), 21.

34. In this business of "values" as applied to studying religion, I obviously disagree with the relativist; a community's shared beliefs, as well as the beliefs of individuals within those communities, could be a socially constructed (to use Peter Berger's term) conspiracy of meaning involving not only men but also an all-powerful, loving God Who actually exists! We understand the difference between our finite understanding and God's infinite one, and keep that in mind when interpreting our history and our vision. We won't get it exactly right. But we also have a sturdy sense of self-identity, an understanding of who we are and why we have chosen to live together. We realize that our story is (to again borrow from Peter Berger) one we have built together. Because that story is humanly constructed does not mean it is untrue in an ultimate, even eternal sense; we believe it to have been coauthored by the Holy Spirit. Any sociologist could, without invalidating her or his objectivity, accede to that possibility.

35. Ernest Becker's *The Denial of Death* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1973) offers a thoughtful exposition on this human tendency.

36. Enroth, *Recovering from Churches that Abuse*, 11.

37. See, for instance, Grunland and Reimer (eds.), *Christian Perspectives on Sociology*.

Part III

Monitoring Clergy Malfeasance

Chapter 9

How Much Clergy Malfeasance Is Really Out There?

A Victimization Survey of Prevalence and Perceptions

William A. Stacey, Susan E. Darnell,
and Anson Shupe

The issue of victimization of religious congregants and believers by clergy persons has not been generally addressed by criminologists, those who write about elite deviance (e.g., Simon and Eitzen 1990), or sociologists of religion (for an exception, see Jacobs 1989). Other than Iadicola (1998), criminologists/sociologists of deviance have been silent on what Shupe (1998, 1995) has termed *clergy malfeasance*.

This lack of sociological interest in religious victimization is surprising. Karmen (1990: 38) describes the American penchant for constantly, even aggressively, expanding our awareness of victim exploitation:

> There is no end in sight to the process of discovering and rediscovering victims. . . . They are being rediscovered by investigative journalists, who put together feature stories, entrepreneurs who put out new lines of personal safety products, social scientists who explore their plight at conferences, legislators who introduce new laws to benefit them, and self-help groups that organize support networks to overcome the isolation that has divided them.

To be sure, there has emerged a journalistic/anecdotal literature covering sexual abuses by trusted clergy, much of it focusing (but not exclusively) on issues and instances of Catholic priest pedophilia (e.g., Burkett and Bruni 1993; Berry 1992; Fortune 1989). And there is a considerable therapeutic literature addressing, again, sexual violations of fiduciary responsibility by clerics which is not limited to pedophilia but also includes violating vows of celibacy, seduction, rape, and adultery (e.g., Gonsiorek 1995; Sipe 1995, 1990; Hopkins 1993, 1991; Laser 1992; Lebacqz and Burton 1991; Rosetti 1990; Rutter 1989). Moreover, there exists a provocative set of essays and editorials in popular publications as diverse as *Newsweek, Commonweal, Christianity Today, Christian Century*, and *Pastoral Psychology*.

In this chapter we address several issues posed by Jenkins (1996) and/or suggested by the limited social science literature on clergy malfeasance: (1) is the prevalence of such malfeasance (whether sexual, economic, or excessively authoritarian) the result of repeated offenses by a relatively small handful of widely publicized North American rogue clerics who can be thought of as the occasional "bad apples" who will inevitably infiltrate and exploit institutional opportunities to deviate; or (2), as Shupe (1995) suggested, is such deviance more widespread among the population than is generally recognized? In other words, do cases of victimization "cluster" due to a few notorious predators or are they diffused across populations of religionists?

There have been almost no previous polls or surveys on this topic. There is suggestive, if limited, quantitative data on the self-knowledge and behavior of seminarians, pastors, and laity regarding clergy sexual malfeasance. In July 1992, the *Boston Globe* commissioned a telephone survey of 401 Roman Catholics in Massachusetts and their attitudes toward Catholic priest pedophilia. A total of 96 percent claimed to be aware of recent news stories of sexual exploitation of minors by priests (Franklin 1992). Friberg and Laaser (1998: vii) surveyed 180 member institutions of the Association of Theological Schools and found clergy sexual misconduct a "significant issue" among respondents. And when Seat et al. (1993) surveyed a group of Southern Baptist ministers, approximately 14 percent admitted to "inappropriate" sexual activity while 10 percent revealed that they had been sexually involved with either current or previous members of their congregations.

However, a relatively widespread incidence of such malfeasance, as measured by self-reported victims, would argue against the "cluster" hypothesis put forth by Jenkins and would provide important information beyond the spectacular case studies featured in the media throughout the 1990s. In order to shed light on this issue, we will present quantitative findings from a random sample of Texans in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex on prevalence and awareness of such malfeasance, and will develop some sense of prevalence as well from content analyses of literatures on the subject.

Clergy Malfeasance: A Study of Prevalence

In our attempt to quantify clergy malfeasance we analyzed a judgmental sample of cases as reported by the victims in numerous national and local publications. The focus of our study was strictly sexual abuse as perpetrated by clergy. Prevalence of occurrence at present, without a total population of cases, relies on crude estimation. No previous large-scale attempt to quantify the frequency of occurrence has been made. Less still is known about the specifics of these crimes: what religion is most affected? who are the victims? when and where is this occurring? No clear sampling frame for such an endeavor exists. In a preliminary attempt to address these questions, we reviewed hundreds of publications, a plethora of literature citing specific reported cases of clerical sexual abuse. Quantitative coding was applied to the substantive content to generate our data and derive the subsequent content analysis.

Our intent is to more realistically portray the prevalence of clergy abuse. We acknowledge sampling bias due to inaccessibility of complete data. We recognize that this accounting is not all-inclusive, any more than it professes to be wholly accurate in cases included in the sampling, given the margin of error in truthful reporting by the "victims" or significant others. In illustration, Father Joseph Bernardin, the Archbishop of Chicago, was retained as one of the cases in our sample despite reports of "victim" Stephan Cook's withdrawal of the original accusation, due to conflicting reports that the recanting may have been coerced. Our sampling is thus composed of cases reflecting a diverse array of disposition: accusations, indictments, adjudications, and convictions. Reliability of results is hampered by the very nature of clergy malfeasance. It is a crime of spiritual deviance cloaked in a myriad of multifaceted justifications creating inaccurate, thus distorted, disclosure. Solid confirmation, even in cases of adjudication and conviction, is not always possible. Tragically, the data do not include the unreported cases, clearly indicative of greater numbers. We can reflect only the tip of the iceberg.

A detailed review of what we believe to be a limited but extensive collection of publications, books, and articles available on the topic provided a total study sample of 337 cases of clergy malfeasance. The resource list includes four (4) subject-specific books (Burkett and Bruni 1993; Shupe 1995; Jenkins 1996; Sipe 1995), and numerous articles from more than thirty diverse magazines, journals, newsletters of victims advocacy groups, and newspapers spanning roughly a decade of reporting. Sources included *Newsweek, USA Today, Christianity Today, Missing Link* (formerly *Link Up*, a victims' advocacy newsletters), *Survivor Activist* (formerly *The Survivor*), the Associated Press, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Los Angeles Times*.

While admittedly not exhaustive, the data compiled are extensive. Ambiguities in the data are abundant, making coding a monumental task. The information is often incomplete, clouded with vague details and inconsistent data. Among the perpetrators in our sampling, there are 6 cases listing "several" or "various" clergy, making a precise count impossible. The victim count in this sample does not include 93 cases reporting an "undetermined" number of victims. Father James Porter admittedly abused more than 200 children, yet how many more than 200 remains unknown, thus uncounted, as does the gender of those victims. Abuse is sometimes reported by indication of the specific perversion (e.g., exhibitionism, solicitation), eliminating all knowledge of these victims. The term "dozens" is used in reference to several victim pools, making a count beyond 24 impossible. Father Wilputte Alanson of Sherwood, in further illustration of vague accounting, allegedly committed "2,000 acts on various boys," yet beyond the addition of one perpetrator to the list, the specifics of his crimes could not be reflected in our data. While the statistical limitations are severe, the findings remain substantive.

Our research culminated in the study of 337 victim-reported cases of sexual abuse inflicted by clergy. We examine prevalence by recording perpetrators and victims. Cases are coded by religion (perpetrator affiliation), gender of victims, and geographic location of occurrence. Time (dates of occurrence) is charted in decades utilizing the date of onset, ignoring duration (some of the cases register thirty-plus years of impropriety). (See Appendices A and B.)

The findings seem to negate the "cluster" hypothesis (Jenkins 1996); minimally they indicate substantial occurrence at least within some states or regionally. Our sampling indicates the reported violation of 1,620+ victims by 409+ perpetrators. As mentioned above, 93 cases list an "undetermined" number of victims, which would make the actual final victim count substantially higher. Victim accounting, particularly in newspaper articles, often implies the possibility of additional victims, netting a plus notation in the data. Of 1,005 cases, 703 (70 percent) of victims are known to be male while 183 (18 percent) are known to be female. Of the 337 perpetrators, 237 are specified as Catholic (70 percent of this sample), 89 as Protestant/Other (27 percent of the total), and the remaining 11 as "unknown/not specified." The geographic locations of occurrence reflect 38 states reporting from 1 to 32 cases. Reports of 23 cases in New Mexico (a case being defined as a known perpetrator—for example, in one case Father David Holley accounted for 40 boys, and Father Jason Sigler accounted for 33 boys) could be attributed to the questionable Servants of the Paraclete's Villa Louis Martin, a less than successful Catholic "retreat" in Santa Fe for sexual deviants.

Another interesting finding is that 69 percent of the total victims are boys—78 percent of the total if unknown genders are factored out. It is clear in this sample that clergy sexual abuse is predominantly directed at boys. Girls make up only 18 percent of the total victim pool—20 percent when we factor out cases where the victim's gender is unknown. This also seems to indicate that reporting on girls is more specific, more "reportable." The time span of occurrence ranges from 1940 to the present. The number of reports annually increases with each decade; the 1940s and 1950s together netted 5 reports (1 percent of the total), while the incomplete 1990s show 91 (27 percent). It is unclear whether the consistent increase in reported cases is due to a rise in occurrence or (in part) to increased media attention.

We believe this sampling to be representative of much of North America. With no solid comparative frame of reference (no previous content analysis studies, no full count of clergy), the data at present simply indicate numerous reported cases. While further studies are needed to clarify the reasons for these statistics, the quantitative findings reflect substantial, widespread, and frequent occurrence.

Turning to the global level, we also have a credible body of evidence to challenge Jenkins's (1996: 170) hypothesis that clergy malfeasance is merely a media urban legend creation and, in constructionist fashion, really a North American "panic reaction," akin to parental Halloween concerns that strange neighbors are hiding razor blades in apples for trick-or-treat.

We analyzed a limited, but representative, number of issues of two newsletters published by North American pastoral victims' advocate groups (*The Survivor Activist*, published by Survivor Connections, Inc. from Vol. 4, Issue 1 [winter], 1996 to Vol. 6, Issue 2 [summer], 1998; and *The Missing Link*, from Vol. 2, Issue 2 [fall], 1994 to Vol. 6, Issue 3 [summer-fall], 1998, published by *The Linkup*.) These newsletters are mostly put together by volunteers who scout the national and international media for reports of clergy malfeasance. With the advantage of websites and the Internet, they have become formidable investigators. While we make no claim that these two publications track a fairly random sample of malfeasance cases, they do operate as clearinghouses of media information and attempt to alert the public in grassroots fashion about the problem.

We have only cited, or recorded, cases involving *sexual* clergy malfeasance. (*The Survivor Activist* reports broadly on malfeasance involving sex: female genital mutilation, rape, child molestation, child pornography and prostitution, pedophilia, and the worldwide sex slave market of young Asian women.) In this second literature review we have narrowed our survey to only internationally reported incidents of sexual clergy malfeasance as defined earlier, and omit mention of thousands of North American cases in order to test Jenkins's thesis. Newspaper and wire service articles are frequently terse and (from a scholarly standpoint) incomplete, but they provide some gauge to test Jenkins's constructionist, minimalist view of clergy malfeasance as allegedly a "North American problem."

The So-Called "Panic Reaction" in Global Perspective

Jenkins (1996: 170–71) defines a "panic reaction" as "a result of ill-defined fears that eventually find a dramatic and oversimplified focus in one incident or stereotype." On clergy malfeasance he goes on to say:

> The clergy abuse issue has attained the force it has because it epitomized the diverse interests and fears of a broad array of social con-

> stituencies at a time of dizzying transition in their expectations about matters as basic as gender relations and family structure.

More importantly, Jenkins (1996: 166–67) claims:

> The abuse crisis has had grave consequences for the Catholic Church in North America, an impact that is perhaps disguised by the inflated claims made by some commentators. . . . From a global perspective . . . "greatest crisis" language [regarding the pedophilia scandal] is fatuous. *The contemporary abuse issue directly affects perhaps a few hundred priests on one continent.* [italics ours]

In this part of our chapter we offer a simple content analysis of material in the newsletters mentioned above, identified by country. (As discussed earlier, a "body count" is particularly difficult for several reasons. First, many predatory clergy not only have multiple victims, but also repeatedly molest individual victims. The victim count is also not clear from media accounts because it is either not clearly known or not fully reported.) In addition we provide a "sampler" of verbatim excerpts, and descriptive anecdotes from our two newsletters to give readers the flavor of their contents.

The following countries witnessed cases of sexual clergy malfeasance in just our several years' sample:

Australia (such cities as Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Sidney)
Austria
Canada (cities such as Toronto and provinces such as Newfoundland)
England
France
Germany
Iceland
India
Israel
Italy
Mexico
Nepal
The Netherlands
Northern Ireland
The Philippines

Poland
Puerto Rico
Scotland
South America
Switzerland
Taiwan
Thailand
Trinidad
United Kingdom
Vatican City (and Rome)

We do know of some estimates that conflict with Jenkins's thesis that the entire clergy malfeasance issue is the product of a relative handful of rogue clerics in one culture. For example, in 1996 there were twenty victims of clergy abuse in Sydney, Australia. Between 1963 and 1978 there were thirteen in Brisbane, Australia by one priest alone (Father Desmond Lawrence Gannon):

> One of his victims was a 13-year-old boy, whom the priest abused after his confession. For the "sin of masturbation," the boy was told to submit to sexual acts with the priest. Gannon was released from prison last year after a previous conviction for molesting seven other boys. For the recent conviction, he was given a term of one year. . . . (*Survivor Activist* 1997: 3)

In Cornwall, Canada, Father Charles MacDonald was arrested for sexual assault on five males ages nine to twenty-one between 1967 and 1983 (*Survivor Activist* 1998: 3).

In 1995 Roman Cardinal Hans Herman Groei resigned after it was learned he had sexually assaulted monks, seminarians, and altar boys (*Survivor Activist* 1998: 3).

In the mid-1990s more than eighty Native Americans at the Harbor Springs, Michigan school Sister of Notre Dame claimed abuse (*The Missing Link* 1994: 3).

And at the Brothers of the Christian Schools of Toronto (a case that cost the Roman Catholic church $40 million in lawsuit damages):

> The lawsuit names 40 brothers and 24 laity who allegedly abused the former students between 1944 and 1979. The incidents included sodomy, physical abuse on an almost daily basis, emotional abuse. . . . (*The Missing Link* 1995: 11)

Other reports read similarly (without citation):

- A seventy-one-year-old priest has received a three-year prison sentence for sexually abusing fifteen girls under the age of twelve in east-central Saskatchewan.
- The Rev. Father Brendan Smyth was sent to Dublin to face charges of child molestation after being released from Magilligan Prison in Northern Ireland in 1997. He faced sixty charges of child molestation and had also been accused of such activity in Rhode Island. In fact, *The Survivor Activist* reports that singer Rickie Lee Jones withdrew from a scheduled performance on Irish television in 1995 when church-sensitive producers refused to let her sing a song titled "The Altar Boy."
- In Iceland in 1996 a Lutheran bishop opted for early retirement after his sexual affairs with three female congregants became known.
- *The Survivor Activist* newsletter (Vol. 6, No. 1, 1998: 6) maintains:

  > Since 1993, Survivor Connections, Inc. has received contact with over 3,300 individual survivors—or from their supportive, non-offendent parent or other relative—who have asked to be on our mailing list . . . *contact has mostly come from all 50 of the USA states, but also from survivors from Australia, Canada, Finland, France, India, Israel, New Zealand, South Africa, Trinidad, and the United Kingdom.* [italics ours]

A widespread pattern exists.

It should be noted that our survey of reported incidents of sexual clergy malfeasance in the two sampled newsletters reveals a distinct Roman Catholic bias. This should come as no surprise, since

1. the founders of both *The Linkup* and *Survivors Connections, Inc.* are Catholic;
2. the organizations' current managers and board members are disproportionately Catholic;
3. the Roman Catholic denomination, in the United States and throughout the world, is the largest single Christian group.

But increasingly both newsletters reflect the ecumenical nature of sexual clergy malfeasance. It is not a uniquely "Catholic thing," as Fortune (1989) and others have reminded us. The same could be said for the prevalence of economic clergy malfeasance. The televangelist scandals of the late 1980s (Hadden and Shupe 1988) highlighted fundamentalist Protestant complicity in corruption, but there have been Roman Catholic church embezzlements, scams, and so forth as well (Shupe 1998: 49–64).

In the remainder of this chapter we examine a random sample of 1,067 Texan homeowners drawn from the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. We focus on three types of clergy malfeasance by priests, pastors, and rabbis—sexual, economic, and authoritative excess—though there is accumulating research on economic clergy exploitation (e.g., Shupe 1998) and abuse of spiritual authority over congregants (e.g., Anderson and Allred 1997, 1996; Johnson and Van Vonderen 1991). Later we will make reference to self-reported prevalence of abuse in other institutions for comparison and to present the overall methodological context of this study.

We address two questions:

First, how widespread is self-reported victimization by clergy within a sample of one Bible Belt region's general population? This part of our study is exploratory and descriptive.

Second, within that sample, what are popular perceptions of the extent of clergy sexual malfeasance? Perception and public opinion are not the same as experience, but there is a logical relationship at some level. Here we want to examine public awareness of the clergy malfeasance problem. Therefore we offer three hypotheses on perceptions:

1. Level of formal education will be positively related to awareness of clergy malfeasance at both local and national levels.
2. Religiosity will be positively related to both level of formal education and awareness of clergy malfeasance.
3. Roman Catholics will be more aware of clergy malfeasance than Protestants.

This trio of hypotheses is based on several assumptions: that higher levels of education will be associated with a likelihood of exposure to media reports about clergy malfeasance (as well as a greater sensitivity to social controversies in general); that religiosity also increases opportunities to learn about such malfeasance through gossip in the pews as well as from possible denominational initiatives in policies and publications to forewarn congregants about the boundaries of appropriate pastoral behavior (e.g., Shupe 1995: 5, 102); and that Roman Catholics, because of the preponderance of media coverage of the Catholic priest pedophile scandal, will be more aware of and sensitized to clergy malfeasance than will Protestants. The third hypothesis in particular, if supported, would tend to lend support to the Jenkins constructionist "cluster" hypothesis that sexual malfeasance in particular is not systemic to religious institutions per se, but is rather a perception created by a small number of rogue Catholic clerics who locally created a sizable number of victims. The implications, we believe, could be significant.

The Survey Methodology

Sample

The sample design used is a multistage sampling procedure. Researchers refer to the procedure as an interpenetratory replicative subsample design. That is, the initial stage of the process requires that the researcher designate a specific variable as important in the research question. In this study, income was considered one of the more relevant variables. The metropolitan area of Dallas-Fort Worth in 1996 was delineated by U.S. census tracts and classified by income. A wide range of incomes was represented by the different tracts, from lower income to upper middle class.. In order to obtain a representative sample from each of the income areas, we selected a random sample of city blocks from each. In the city blocks that were randomly selected, we attempted to interview residents from every single dwelling unit. No multiple dwelling unit (duplex or apartments) was included in the sample. This process was then replicated in each of the census tract areas. In the end, we had five subsamples from the metropolitan community. This sampling procedure yielded 597 completed interviews.

Employing the same sampling procedure, we also collected data from fifty subsamples (approximately ten respondents in each sample) selected from the entire Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, yielding 470 respondents. This additional sample combined with the initial sample yielded an overall sample of 1,067 respondents.

Selected characteristics were compared with the GSS (1996) national sample. There were no significant differences between our sample and the GSS sample on a number of demographic characteristics, including age and education. The sample of 1,067 respondents was characterized by the following:

- 62.8 percent of the sample were married
- Median age was 39 years old
- 55.9 percent of the sample were female
- 76.5 percent were employed
- 63.4 percent were in white-collar occupations
- Modal education category was some college (309 or 30.1 percent)
- 77.7 percent were white
- 67.8 percent of the spouses were employed outside the home
- 50.1 percent reported their neighborhood was middle-class
- 42.9 percent reported their neighborhood was working-class
- 70.3 percent voted in the 1992 national election
- 82 percent reported they had lived in Texas ten years or longer
- 70.1 percent were homeowners
- 54.1 percent responded that a crime watch program was active in the neighborhood
- 21.9 percent attended crime watch meetings

We used four factors to measure the extent of awareness of clergy abuse in the metropolitan sample. They were: (1) having heard of clergy abuse through the national media; (2) having heard of clergy abuse through the local media; (3) having discussed incidences of clergy abuse occurring at the national level with other people; and (4) having discussed incidences of clergy abuse occurring at the local level with other people. A correlation matrix was constructed for the purpose of factor analysis. The factor analysis identified one factor. Cronbach's Alpha was determined to be .753. This level of reliability was considered acceptable (see Table 1).

Data

The respondents' religious involvement is relevant to this study. Religious involvement was measured by attendance, serving the church, and importance of religious instruction to the family. In this metropolitan sample 85 percent of respondents reported that they attend church, 57 percent serve the church in a volunteer capacity (21 percent serve frequently), and 93 percent feel that religious instruction is important to family life (see Table 2 for more detailed statistical data).

Table 1

The Dependent Variable "Awareness of Clergy Abuse"

*Correlation Matrix**

		rel06	rel07	rel08	rel09
Heard of abuse at national level	(rel06)	1.000			
Heard of abuse at local level	(rel07)	.406	1.000		
Discussed clergy abuse at national level	(rel08)	.478	.410	1.000	
Discussed clergy abuse at local level	(rel09)	.263	.585	.450	1.000

*significance level = .001

Factor Analysis

Variable	Communality	Factor	Eigenvalue	Pct. of Var.
rel06	.47417	1	2.30095	57.5
rel07	.64382			
rel08	.59459			
rel09	.58838			

Cronbach's Alpha = .753

The first basic questions we addressed concern the self-reported prevalence by victims of clergy abuse and awareness of abuse. We assessed awareness of abuse by looking at the influence of the media (national and local) and at interaction with other people through discussion of incidences of clergy abuse. In our sample, 93 percent had heard of clergy abuse in the national media, while 60 percent had heard of local abuse in the local media. Seventy-four percent were involved in discussions of clergy abuse occurring at the national level. At the local level, 43 percent engaged in discussions of clergy abuse occurring in the local metropolitan community (see Table 2).

In order to gauge prevalence we must assess actual behavior that is inconsistent with our expectations of the roles of the clergy. Deviations from expected behavior involve three forms of abuse—mental, sexual, and physical. Respondents were asked in a discreetly indirect, third-person style (which pretests revealed was important to minimize reactance) if they had a friend, relative, or neighbor who had been abused by the clergy. Forty-seven respondents (4.6 percent of the sample) knew someone who personally had experienced some form of ministerial abuse. Most of these individuals were either friends or coworkers (66 percent) of the respondents. Among the individuals interviewed in our sample, 29 (2.8 percent) had personally experienced mental, sexual, or physical abuse by a clergyman. Very few

Table 2
Summary of Respondents' Religious Involvement

Item	Number	Percent
Attend church		
Less than 1 year	135	15.9
1–5 years	159	18.7
Over 5 years	557	65.4
Frequency of church attendance		
Never	145	15.0
Seldom	207	21.4
Occasionally	235	24.3
Frequently	379	20.5
Served church in volunteer capacity		
Never	409	42.7
Seldom	145	15.0
Occasionally	216	22.3
Frequently	199	20.5
Importance of religious instruction		
Not at all important	69	6.8
Somewhat important	181	17.7
Important	291	28.5
Very important	481	47.0
Heard of clergy abuse in national media	950	93.1
Heard of clergy abuse in local media	649	60.0
Heard of clergy abuse at national level through discussion with other people	757	73.8
Heard of clergy abuse at local level through discussion with other people	441	43.3
Knows friend, relative, or neighbor who was abused by clergy	47	4.6
Victim's relationship to respondent		
Family/relative	16	34.0
Friend/coworker	31	66.0
Victim's complaint of abuse		
Mental	12	27.3
Physical/sexual/mental	32	72.3
Respondent personally abused by clergy	29	2.9
Abuse occurred in respondent's congregation	10	34.5
Respondent stopped attending that ministry	14	48.3
Nature of abuse		
Mental/sexual	16	67.0
Physical	8	33.0
Reported incidences to religious authorities	5	22.7
Reported incidences to civil authorities	4	11.4

TABLE 3
Institutional Abuse

	Frequency	Percent
Minister abuse in a metropolitan sample		
Respondent knew someone who was a victim	47	4.6
Respondent was a victim	29	2.8
Abuse in education, by teacher, coach, or administrator, in a metropolitan sample		
Respondent knew someone who was a victim	92	8.9
Respondent was a victim	24	2.5
Abuse by lawyer, police, judge, or public official in a metropolitan sample		
Respondent knew someone who was a victim	113	11.2
Respondent was a victim	125	12.8
Abuse or exploitation in business and industry		
Respondent knew someone who was a victim	431	43.4
Respondent was a victim	212	21.4

of the victims (23 percent) reported incidences to the religious authorities; only 11 percent reported to the civil authorities.

Our research thus shows that 76 respondents (7.4 percent of the total sample) had intimate knowledge, from friends', coworkers', or relatives' reports or from their own experiences, of some form of clerical abuse. Since this is one of the first surveys focusing on prevalence of clergy malfeasance, we have no immediate way of knowing whether the percentage we obtained is high or low. For example, one comparable poll conducted by the Twin Cities *Star Tribune* in February 1993 found that 2 percent of Minnesotans claimed to have been physically touched by church workers "in a way that made them feel uncomfortable"—a figure close to the percentage of respondents in our sample who said they had personally been abused by clergy (though our definition of abuse was broader). We do have comparative evidence for other institutions: for example, in education we found 11.4 percent; abuse by lawyer, police, judge or public official was reported at a rate of 24 percent; and in corporations we found 64.8 percent of the respondents reporting experience of abuse either personally or through someone they knew (see Table 3). Later we discuss the implications of a 7.4 percent reporting rate.

The second research question we posed involved the relationship between education, religiosity, and religious affiliation and the public's perception of the extent of the clergy malfeasance.

Education and Clergy Abuse

An empirical assessment of the relationship between level of formal education and four indicators of public awareness of clergy malfeasance is presented in Table 4. The four indicators include awareness of clergy abuse through the national media, the local media, and discussions with other people of incidences of abuse involving clerics at both the national and the local level. The data in Table 4 strongly support the proposition that *education and awareness of clergy abuse are positively correlated*. Almost all of the college graduates (98.3 percent) were aware of clergy malfeasance at the national level, with 78.9 percent engaging in discussions centered around the problem. The relationship is not as strong at the local level. This is probably due to the

TABLE 4
Level of Education in Relation to Awareness of Clergy Abuse

	Education of respondent									
	<HS		HS		Some College		Col Grad		Post Grad	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of clergy abuse through national media										
Never	17	13.0	21	8.1	20	6.9	3	1.7	3	2.5
Yes	114	87.0	239	91.9	271	93.1	178	98.3	117	97.5
Total	131	100	260	100	291	100	181	100	120	100
Total Sample: N = 983, χ^2 = 20.29, Pr. = .0004										
Aware of clergy abuse through local media										
Never	54	40.9	114	43.8	112	38.2	55	29.7	29	24.0
Yes	78	59.1	146	56.2	181	61.8	130	70.3	92	76.0
Total	132	100	260	100	293	100	185	100	121	100
Total Sample: N = 991, χ^2 = 19.32, Pr. = .0007										
Aware of clergy abuse at national level through discussions with people										
Never	42	32.1	81	31.2	65	23.8	39	21.1	26	21.5
Yes	89	67.9	179	68.8	221	76.2	146	78.9	95	78.5
Total	131	100	260	100	290	100	185	100	121	100
Total Sample: N = 987, χ^2 = 10.42, Pr. = .03										
Aware of clergy abuse at local level through discussions with people										
Never	86	65.6	153	60.0	162	56.1	98	53.6	52	43.3
Yes	45	34.4	102	40.0	127	43.9	85	46.4	68	56.7
Total	131	100	255	100	289	100	183	100	120	100
Total Sample: N = 978, χ^2 = 14.84, Pr. = .005										

influence of local elites in the church resisting any public attention to deviance within the ranks of the clergy as well as the higher profile in national "feature" coverage of such malfeasance (print and electronic) compared to more sporadic local coverage.

Religiosity and Clergy Abuse

Religiosity is the product of several indicators that theoretically would allow one to be more active in church-related activities. Our second proposition stipulates that there is a *positive relationship between religiosity and awareness of clergy abuse*. The data presented in Table 5 empirically support this proposition. For example, in each measure of awareness of clergy abuse, individuals high in religiosity were more aware of clergy abuse than persons classified as moderate or low in religiosity. Further elaboration shows that among individuals high in religiosity, 97.9 percent had heard of clergy abuse in the national media; 84.4 percent were aware of clergy abuse through discussions with other people; 68.7 percent were aware of clergy abuse through the local media; and 47.5 percent were aware of clergy abuse at the local level through discussions with other people.

As postulated earlier, both level of education and religiosity are significantly correlated. The data in Table 6 illustrate this relationship. Among high school graduates, 25 percent were categorized as high in religiosity while among college graduates, 33.6 percent were high. Among individuals with post-graduate education, 43.5 percent were high in religiosity.

Religious Affiliation and Awareness of Clergy Abuse

The third proposition we examined concerns the relationship between religious affiliation and awareness of clergy abuse. We hypothesized that *Roman Catholics would be more aware of clergy abuse than Protestants*. We based our assumption on the tremendous amount of media coverage of the Catholic pedophile scandals. Only one of the four indicators of awareness of clergy malfeasance was significant (heard of minister abuse through local media). The data in Table 7 show that, in fact, it is the Protestants, not the Catholics, who are

Table 5

Religiosity and Awareness of Clergy Abuse

	Religiosity of respondent*					
	Low religiosity		Moderate religiosity		High religiosity	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of clergy abuse through national media						
Never	36	10.9	15	5.9	5	2.1
Yes	295	89.1	238	94.1	238	97.9
Total	331	100	253	100	243	100
Total sample: N = 827, χ^2 = 17.67, Pr. = .00015						
Aware of clergy abuse through local media						
Never	150	44.6	85	33.5	76	31.3
Yes	186	55.4	169	66.5	167	68.7
Total	336	100	254	100	243	100
Total sample: N = 833, χ^2 = 13.11, Pr. = .001						
Aware of clergy abuse at national level through discussions with people						
Never	103	30.7	72	28.6	38	15.6
Yes	232	69.3	180	71.4	205	84.4
Total	335	100	252	100	243	100
Total sample: N = 830, χ^2 = 18.46, Pr. = .0001						
Aware of clergy abuse at local level through discussions with people						
Never	204	61.3	136	53.5	127	52.5
Yes	129	38.7	118	46.5	115	47.5
Total	333	100	254	100	242	100
Total sample: N = 829, χ^2 = 5.55, Pr. = .06						

*Religiosity was measured by creating a likert scale. The scale consists of length of time as a member of a congregation, frequency of attendance, if one has served the church, and importance of religion to family. A maximum score is 15. Low religiosity scores 1–10; moderate religiosity scores 11–13; high religiosity scores 14–15.

Table 6

Relation between Level of Education and Religiosity

	Education level									
Level of religiosity	<HS		HS		Some College		Col Grad		Post Grad	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Low	57	55.9	94	46.1	94	39.5	50	32.9	29	26.9
Moderate	31	30.4	59	28.9	74	31.1	51	33.6	32	29.6
High	14	13.7	51	25.0	70	29.4	51	33.6	47	43.5
Total	102	100	204	100	238	100	152	100	108	100

Total sample: N = 804, χ^2 = 33.75, Pr. = .00005

TABLE 7
Religious Affiliation and Awareness of Clergy Abuse

	Religious affiliation of respondent			
	Catholic		Protestant	
	N	%	N	%
Aware of clergy abuse through national media				
Never	16	9.3	44	6.4
Yes	156	90.7	639	93.6
Total	172	100	683	100
Total sample: N = 855, χ^2 = 1.72, Pr. = .189				
Aware of clergy abuse through local media				
Never	79	45.7	258	37.3
Yes	94	54.3	434	62.7
Total	173	100	692	100
Total sample: N =865, χ^2 = 4.09, Pr. = .043				
Aware of clergy abuse at national level through discussions with people				
Never	56	32.7	184	26.6
Yes	115	67.3	507	73.4
Total	171	100	691	100
Total sample: N = 862, χ^2 = 2.56, Pr. = .109				
Aware of clergy abuse at local level through discussions with people				
Never	106	62.0	388	56.6
Yes	65	38.0	298	43.4
Total	171	100	686	100
Total sample: N = 857, χ^2 = 1.65, Pr. = .198				

more aware of minister abuse. In all four dimensions, more Protestants are aware of clergy abuse at the national level through media, national level through discussion, and more have heard of clergy abuse through discussion at the local level. These latter relationships are not statistically significant, but the direction is nevertheless there. It may well be that over the years, Catholic leadership has been successful in keeping discussion of controversy and media influences out of the church, as some have argued (e.g., Jenkins 1998; Blanshard 1958), or that Catholics deliberately avoid the various investigative news and "talk" shows that dwell on such scandals, or that the typical Protestant's and Catholic's ritualistic quasi-regular attendance at church services does not attune them much to issues beyond the Sunday sermon. While to many Protestants priest-acolyte sexual molestation is merely an unfamiliar, grotesque notion, to some Catholics it is a source of coarse humor that undermines (at least indirectly) ecclesiastical authority. Thus, we conclude that we failed to confirm our third hypothesis.

Discussion and Implications

In this preliminary study we have the disadvantage of possessing almost no comparable survey data. While the National Crime Survey and the Uniform Crime Report catalogue categories of crimes like assault, rape, and robbery, there is no breakdown by occupation or profession. Even if there were, however, the concept of clergy malfeasance may or may not include criminal or felonious activity. Sexual seduction during pastoral counseling, for example, may be immoral but is not against civil law. And Karmen (1990: 11) has written of the "radical-critical tendency within victimology" that suggests "the scope of the field should not be limited simply to the study of the casualties of criminal activity." This tendency is akin to the inclusive perspective of elite deviance advocated by Simon and Eitzen (1990), and thus is relevant to the study of clergy malfeasance.

Our study's purpose was twofold: first, to gain an initial estimate from self-reported victims of how much clergy malfeasance, broadly defined, can be discovered in the general population; and second, to determine how aware members of a random sample of the public are of the problem of clergy malfeasance at national and local levels. These perceptions are potentially important, as they could sensitize members of the public to the malfeasance issue and contribute to recognition of it.

Our measures of prevalence of clergy malfeasance were both direct (one's self-report) and indirect (receiving reports from one's friends, relatives, and neighbors). Mindful of the limitations of self-reported victimization, in both over-reporting and under-reporting (because of memory decay, for example—see Karmen 1990: 53), we still discovered a telling pair of statistics. Almost three percent of the sample reported direct personal abuse by a clergyperson, while approximately four and one-half percent claimed to know someone who had been so victimized. Thus, 7.4 percent of our 1,067-person sample in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex believed they knew of or had experienced clergy malfeasance in their immediate lives. This compares, for example, to statistics from the 1987 National Crime Survey regarding robbery (5.2 percent), rape (7 percent), and aggravated assault (7.8 percent—see Karmen 1990: 60).

As Table 3 indicates, self-reported clergy malfeasance ranks lower than self-perceived victimization at the hands of other institutions (education, criminal justice, business and industry), but it is still considerable. Though to this point we have eschewed anecdotal cases, 7.4 percent of respondents to our questionnaire provided specific (sometimes quite graphic) examples of clergy malfeasance: from rape to sexual seduction to sexual harassment to economic fraud. One respondent, for example, ceased attending church when a priest kept repeating lewd propositions to her in the confessional. Another told how, during a pastoral counseling session, his girlfriend was forced down on a desk by a Protestant minister and vaginally penetrated. Excessive pastor manipulation of fiduciary responsibility, though not expressed in precisely those terms, was not unusual. These did not seem to be individuals, once victimized by clergy, with "memory decay."

Thus, we tentatively reject Jenkins's (1996: 167) "cluster" argument that, even narrowly limiting the concept of clergy malfeasance to sexual exploitation by Catholic priests, "the contemporary abuse issue directly affects perhaps a few hundred priests on one continent." The problem is international, even just within Christendom. Krebs (1998: 15–32) convincingly demonstrates that even within that single denomination the problem is indeed international. And if we add the other two forms of abuse (economic and authoritative), then clergy malfeasance appears widespread (though perhaps not recently epidemic) across our society. Shupe (1998: 5–6) suggests that the phenomenon has a considerable legacy in Western Christianity and perhaps in all religions. We conclude that victims do not occur simply in localized pockets in a single parish or congregation.

Moreover, our polling of public awareness of clergy malfeasance revealed several important findings. Following our hypotheses we found, first, that better educated (and presumably better informed) citizens are more attuned to the existence (nationally and locally) of this problem; second, the more often respondents attended church, the more likely they were to be aware of the problem; third, higher education and higher religiosity were significantly related, and the relationship increases awareness; and fourth, contrary to our expectations, Protestants rather than Catholics were more aware of clergy malfeasance. In one sense this failure to confirm the last hypothesis is logical in light of what was learned from previous findings: despite intense media coverage of Catholic priest pedophilia scandals in the early to mid-1990s, there are simply many more Protestants than Catholics, and the twin factors of education and religiosity amplify their opportunities to learn of such malfeasance. This finding should also help put to rest the notion that clergy malfeasance is some uniquely Roman Catholic problem. As Jenkins (1996) himself has argued, it has been occurring for a long time in various groups in this country.

Finally, while according to self-reports abuse seems to occur in a variety of institutions (see Table 3 above), nevertheless a not insignificant amount also seems to occur in churches. Until now most behavioral science studies of clergy malfeasance have been qualitative and anecdotal (Sipe 1990 being an exception and Shupe 1995 being more typical). What we need are more systematically collected quantitative data for more rigorous theorizing on a topic that combines both relevance from current events and conceptualizing potential from the sociological subdisciplines of criminology/deviance and religion.

Appendix A: Clergy Malfeasance, A Study of Prevalence

Total study sample netted 337 cases with inconsistent data . . .

PERPETRATORS:	409 + numerous several/various Note: "several/various priests" cannot be documented within these figures.
VICTIMS:	
specified in report(s)	1,620+
exact # unknown	93 Note: "2,000 + acts committed" by one (1) perpetrator are not included in these statistics.

TIME SPAN: 1940–present

Note: a single figure of 1 noted by a decade onset category does not portray the reality of cases reflecting 30+ years of abuse, or denote repeat offenders who skip a decade and resume.

PERPETRATORS BY RELIGION:

Catholic:	237	70% of total
Protestant/Other:	89	27% of total
Unknown (not reported/specified):	11	3% of total
Total reported cases:	337	

VICTIMS BY GENDER:

Male:	703	70% of total
Female:	183	18% of total
Unknown (not reported/specified):	119	12% of total
Total reported cases:	1005	

Gender/age:	men	women	boys	girls
Reported:	15	104	688	79
% of total:	1	10	69	8

TIME SPAN OF REPORTING:

Cases are listed by decade of onset

Decade:	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	unknown
# of cases reported:	1	4	31	67	80	91	63
% of total:	0	1	9	20	24	27	19

Appendix B: Clergy Malfeasance by State

Alabama	0
Arizona	3
Arkansas	0
California	29
Colorado	3
Connecticut	6
Delaware	1
District of Columbia	4
Florida	21

Georgia	4
Hawaii	1
Idaho	1
Illinois	32
Indiana	15
Iowa	3
Kansas	2
Kentucky	2
Louisiana	7
Maine	0
Maryland	16
Massachusetts	20
Michigan	8
Minnesota	4
Mississippi	0
Missouri	1
Montana	1
Nebraska	1
Nevada	0
New Hampshire	2
New Jersey	10
New Mexico	23
New York	17
North Carolina	5
North Dakota	0
Ohio	10
Oklahoma	2
Oregon	0
Pennsylvania	8
Puerto Rico	0
Rhode Island	7
South Carolina	0
South Dakota	0
Tennessee	1
Texas	10
Utah	0
Vermont	1
Virginia	2
Washington	4

West Virginia	0
Wisconsin	9
Wyoming	0
UNKNOWN	48

Total no. of states (including DC)	51	
# of reported instances in sample:	344	
Cases reported with state information:	296	86% of total
States reporting clergy malfeasance:	38	74% of total

States with high prevalence:

Illinois	11%
California	10%
New Mexico	8%
Florida	7%
Massachusetts	7%

REFERENCES

Andersen, L. F., and J. M. Allred, eds. 1996. *Case Reports of the Mormon Alliance: Volume 1, 1995*. Salt Lake City: Mormon Alliance.

———. 1997. *Case Reports of the Mormon Alliance*: *Volume 2, 1996.* Salt Lake City: Mormon Alliance.

Berry, J. 1992. *Lead Us Not into Temptation: Catholic Priests and the Sexual Abuse of Children*. New York: Doubleday.

Blanshard, P. 1958. *American Freedom and Catholic Power*. 2d edition. Boston: Beacon Press.

Burkett, E., and F. Bruni. 1993. *A Gospel of Shame: Children, Sexual Abuse, and the Catholic Church*. New York: Viking.

Fortune, M. M. 1989. *Is Nothing Sacred?* San Francisco: HarperCollins.

Franklin, J. L. 1992. "Mass. Catholics fault church on handling of sex charges." *Boston Globe*, 26 July, 8.

Friberg, Nils C., and Mark R. Laaser. 1998. *Before the Fall: Preventing Pastoral Sexual Abuse*. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press.

Gonsiorek, J. C., ed. 1995. *Breach of Trust: Sexual Exploitation by Healthcare Professionals and Clergy*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.

GSS. 1996. *General Social Science Survey*. Ann Arbor: National Opinion Research Center, University of Michigan.

Hadden, J. K., and A. Shupe. 1988. *Televangelism: Power and Politics on God's Frontier*. New York: Henry Holt.

Hopkins, N. M. 1991. *The Congregation Is Also a Victim: Sexual Abuse and the Violation of Pastoral Trust*. Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute.

Hopkins, N. M. 1993. *Clergy Sexual Misconduct: A Systems Perspective*. Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute.

Iadicola, P. 1998. "Criminology's contributions to the study of religious crime." In A. Shupe, ed., *Wolves within the Fold: Religious Leadership and Abuses of Power,* 212–29. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Jacobs, J. L. 1989. *Divine Disenchantment: Deconverting from New Religions*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Jenkins, P. 1996. *Pedophiles and Priests: Anatomy of a Contemporary Crisis*. New York: Oxford University Press.

———. 1998. "Creating a culture of clergy deviance." In A. Shupe, ed., *Wolves within the Fold: Religious Leadership and Abuses of Power,* 118–32. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Johnson, D., and J. Van Vonderen. 1991. *The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Bethany House.

Karmen, A. 1990. *Crime Victims: An Introduction to Victimology.* Pacific Grove, Calif.: Brooks/Cole.

Kisala, R. 1998. "The AUM Spiritual Truth Church in Japan." In Anson Shupe, ed., *Wolves within the Fold: Religious Leadership and Abuses of Power,* 33–48. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Krebs, T. 1998. "Church structures that facilitate pedophilia among Roman Catholic clergy." In Anson Shupe, ed., *Wolves within the Fold: Religious Leadership and Abuses of Power,* 15–32. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Laser, M. R. 1992. *The Secret Sin: Healing the Wounds of Sexual Addiction*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan.

Lebacqz, K., and R. G. Burton. 1991. *Sex in the Parish*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/Jolinknow Press.

Rochford, E. Burke Jr. 1998. "Reactions of Hare Krishna devotees to scandals of leaders' misconduct." In Anson Shupe, ed., *Wolves within the Fold: Religious Leadership and Abuses of Power,* 101–17. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Rosetti, S. J. 1990. *Slayer of the Soul: Child Sexual Abuse and the Catholic Church*. Mystic, Conn.: Twenty-Third Publication.

Rutter, P. 1989. *Sex in the Forbidden Zone*. Los Angeles, Calif.: Jeremy P. Tarcher.

Seat, Jeff T., et al. 1993. "The prevalence and contributing factors of sexual misconduct among Southern Baptist pastors in six Southern states." *Journal of Pastoral Care* (winter): 363–72.

Shupe, A. 1995. *In the Name of All That's Holy: A Theory of Clergy Malfeasance*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

———. 1998. "Economic fraud and Christian leaders in the United States." In Anson Shupe, ed., *Wolves within the Fold: Religious Leadership and Abuses of Power,* 49–64. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Simon, D. R., and D. S. Eitzen. 1990. *Elite Deviance*. 3d edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Sipe, A.W.R. 1990. *A Secret World: Sexuality and the Search for Celibacy*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

———. 1995. *Sex, Priests, and Power: Anatomy of a Crisis.* New York: Brunner/Mazel.

Chapter 10

Clergy Malfeasance, Victimization, and National/Local Awareness

Their Effects on Church Attendance and Financial Giving

William A. Stacey, Anson Shupe, and Susan E. Darnell

In the previous chapter, we established the prevalence of clergy malfeasance in one metropolitan area. We found that over 7 percent of the general population of adults either have experienced clergy abuse (whether sexual, economic, or authoritarian) or have a friend, coworker, or relative who has experienced it.

Virtually all the research literature on financial philanthropy to churches and attendance by laity deals with demographics, denominational affiliation (e.g., Hoge et al. 1996; Hoge 1994), or the dynamics of financial mobilization by either new religious movements (e.g., Richardson 1988; Bromley and Shupe 1980) or corrupt, avaricious clergypersons (Shupe 1998, 1995). In this chapter we ask, "What about *after* revelations of clergy malfeasance are made?" Do victims, their sympathizers, and possibly other church members punish churches because of malfeasant clergy? Do they curb attendance, deemphasize religious instruction as the cornerstone of family solidarity, reduce financial contributions, or decline to serve the church in a volunteer capacity? These four possible consequences could have important repercussions for the survival of organized religion in the twenty-first century.

It is within this context that we explore the possible outcomes of the public's level of awareness of clergy malfeasance at national and local levels. We examine the effect these perceptions have on church attendance, financial giving, and volunteer service. Financial considerations are no small aspect of the public response to awareness of clergy misbehavior. As Hoge et al. (1996: 11) point out, the majority (63 percent) of all philanthropic giving in the United States goes to churches: "The phrase 'give generously' is a reminder most American churchgoers have always heeded well. Full collection plates and baskets have traditionally testified to a sense of loyalty toward one's church, matched by few other institutions in society" (1996: 11).

We define "national level awareness" and "local level awareness" as respondents' "knowledge" through media or personal discussions of scandalous behavior, whether illegal or simply immoral, by clergy with either national or local reputations. We also expect that attention to national-level scandals will impact local levels.

During the revelations of televangelistic misbehavior in the late 1980s, "The ministries themselves subsequently reported sharp declines in contributions. Three months after the scandals broke, Oral Roberts . . . claimed his ministry's revenues were off $1.5 million per month, Jerry Falwell reported income losses of $2 million monthly, while Jimmy Swaggart reported a month decline of $2.5 million. . . . [In 1988 the Rev. Pat] Robertson told his viewers, CBN's [the Christian Broadcasting Network's] revenues were down $12 million, and they were forecasting revenue losses of $28 million by year's end" (Hadden and Shupe 1988: 16–17).

Based on these events, we formulated the following general hypothesis: *As the level of awareness of clergy malfeasance at national and local levels increases, religious involvement by the laity declines.*

Methodology

The Sample

Our study to test this theory was based on the same multistage sampling procedure described in chapter 9.

Data

We first determined the extent of the public's knowledge of clergy abuse by assessing the extent of the national/local media's influence

TABLE 1
Summary of Religious Involvement and Awareness of National Clergy Abuse

Item	Number	Percent
Frequency of church attendance		
Never	145	15.0
Seldom	207	21.4
Occasionally	235	24.3
Frequently	379	20.5
Served church in volunteer capacity		
Never	409	42.7
Seldom	145	15.0
Occasionally	216	22.3
Frequently	199	20.5
Importance of religious instruction		
Not at all important	69	6.8
Somewhat important	181	17.7
Important	291	28.5
Very important	481	47.0
Send contributions to TV/radio ministry	121	12.6
Heard of clergy abuse in national media	950	93.1
Heard of clergy abuse at national level through discussion with other people	757	73.8

on public awareness. For example, in our sample, 93 percent of the metropolitan sample had heard or read of clergy abuse in the national media, while 74 percent had discussed clergy abuse occurring at the national level. In Table 1 we present the results of awareness of national, and then later, local scandals.

Findings of National Awareness

This research focuses on the effect of clergy malfeasance on the structural components of organized religion. The increased availability of information in the public forum in the twentieth century was the result of tremendous advances in the electronic and print media at both national and local levels. And the more provocative and sensational the event, the greater the coverage. The past twenty years have witnessed an explosion of information concerning effects of violent movies and television on the youth of society. It is logical to theorize that misdeeds of clerics, when publicized to virtually every household in America via television and newspapers, will have a negative effect on the life of church congregations. The general hypotheses stated earlier may be restated as four general propositions:

Proposition I: Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance is related to church attendance. As the level of awareness increases, church attendance declines.

We tested this proposition empirically by working with two hypotheses:

- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance through the national media is related to church attendance. As level of awareness increases, church attendance declines.
- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance at the national level through discussions with people is related to church attendance. As level of awareness increases, church attendance declines.

Eighty-five percent of the sample say they attend church. Among those attending church, about one in five responded that they attend church frequently.

TABLE 2

Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via National Media to Church Attendance

	Attends church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via national media								
No	18	26.9	40	14.1	57	11.9	26	21.5
Yes	49	73.1	244	85.9	423	88.1	95	78.5
Total	67	100	284	100	480	100	121	100

Total sample: N = 952, χ^2 = 15.39, Pr. = .001

TABLE 3

Relation of Awareness of National-Level Clergy Abuse through Discussion to Church Attendance

	Attends church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of national-level ministerial abuse through discussion								
No	42	16.7	45	12.4	43	14.9	14	27.5
Yes	210	83.3	319	87.6	246	85.1	37	72.5
Total	252	100	364	100	289	100	51	100

Total sample: N = 956, χ^2 = 8.71, Pr. = .03

The data presented in Tables 2 and 3 measure the effects of the national media's exposure of clergy abuse around the nation. Table 2 depicts respondents' answers to the question, "How often have you heard or read of ministerial exploitation or abuse (sexual, physical, financial, or by authority) of a church-goer or parishioner in the national media?" in relation to their church attendance. Of the 952 persons responding to this question, almost 8 percent indicated they frequently heard or read of ministerial abuse through the national media. Of those answering "frequently," only 78.5 percent reported attending church, compared to 88 percent of those who answered "occasionally."

Table 3 details responses to the question, "How often have you heard of ministerial exploitation or abuse (sexual, physical, financial, or authority) of a church-goer or parishioner through discussions with other people?" Of those who frequently discuss ministerial abuse at the national level, 72 percent attend church, as compared with 85 percent of those who discuss such abuse "occasionally." This represents a significant decline.

Proposition II: Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance is related to the frequency of laity's volunteer service to the church. As the level of awareness increases, the frequency of laity serving the church in a volunteer capacity declines.

We employed two hypotheses to test this proposition:

- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance through the national media is related to serving the church in a volunteer capacity. As level of awareness increases, frequency of serving the church declines.
- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance at the national level through discussion with people is related to serving the church in a volunteer capacity. As level of awareness increases, frequency of serving the church declines.

The church is involved in a large number of community activities. This involvement requires that laity volunteer to help in everything from leading Bible reading to coordinating singles groups. Without volunteers, many churches would be unable to meet the community's social and religious needs. The data presented in Tables 4 and 5 test these two hypotheses.

The evidence presented in Tables 4 and 5 indicates considerable sup-

Table 4
Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via National Media to Serving the Church

	Serves the church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via national media								
No	39	58.2	127	44.6	185	38.2	51	42.1
Yes	28	41.8	158	55.4	299	61.8	70	57.9
Total	67	100	285	100	484	100	121	100

Total sample: N = 957, χ^2 = 10.83, Pr. = .01

Table 5
Relation of Awareness of National-Level Clergy Abuse through Discussion to Serving the Church

	Serves the church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of national-level ministerial abuse through discussion								
No	132	51.8	141	38.5	108	37.4	25	49.0
Yes	123	48.2	225	61.5	181	62.6	26	51.0
Total	255	100	366	100	289	100	51	100

Total sample: N = 961, χ^2 = 15.32, Pr. = .002

port for Proposition II. Referring back to Table 1, we recall that about 20 percent of the respondents indicated they frequently serve the church in a volunteer capacity. Statistically significant relationships were observed in Tables 4 and 5. Again, we see that respondents who frequently are involved in discussions of ministerial abuse at the national level are less likely to volunteer their services to the church than those who frequently hear of such abuse through the media. Even though the number of respondents engaging in discussion is lower, the percentage of laity volunteering is smaller (only 51 percent).

Proposition III: Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance is related to the importance of religious instruction for the family. As the level of awareness increases, the importance of religious instruction declines.

The two hypotheses we used to test this proposition were:

- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance through the national media is related to the importance of religious instruction for the family. As level of awareness increases, the importance of religious instruction for the family declines.

- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance at the national level through discussions with other people is related to the importance of religious instruction for the family. As level of awareness increases, the importance of religious instruction for the family declines.

Religion, regardless of denomination or basic philosophy, serves as the foundation on which principles of morality and ethics are passed from generation to generation. Today's emphasis on family values is imbedded in the teachings of the church. However, it is logical to hypothesize that when the leadership of the church is engaged in misconduct, a negative reaction (e.g. disillusionment, a sense of betrayal) will be observed among the church membership. The data presented in Tables 6 and 7 examine the consequences of clergy malfeasance.

The respondents were asked, "How important do you feel that religious instruction is for your family." The categorical response ranged from "not at all important" to "very important." The data presented in Tables 6 and 7 offer support for Proposition III. Table 1 indicates that 92.5 percent of the total sample feel that religious instruction is important for their family. The data presented in Table 6 show that among the respondents frequently hearing or reading about ministerial abuse, only 87.1 percent feel that religious instruction is important for their family. And of respondents who frequently engage in discussion of clergy misconduct, only 74.5 percent feel that religious instruction is important.

Proposition IV: Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance is related to financial contributions to radio and television ministries. As level of awareness increases, financial contributions decline.

We tested this proposition with the following two hypotheses:

- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance through the national media is related to financial contributions to radio and television ministries. As level of awareness increases, financial contributions decline.
- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance at the national level through discussions with other people is related to financial contributions. As level of awareness increases, financial contributions decline.

TABLE 6

Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via National Media to Importance of Religious Instruction

	Religious instruction							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via national media								
Not important	9	12.9	13	4.4	27	5.3	17	12.9
Important	61	87.1	281	95.6	481	94.7	115	87.1
Total	70	100	294	100	508	100	132	100

Total sample: N = 1004, χ^2 = 16.57, Pr. = .0008

TABLE 7

Relation of Awareness of National-Level Clergy Abuse through Discussion to Importance of Religious Instruction

	Religious instruction							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of national-level ministerial abuse through discussion								
Not important	14	5.3	16	4.2	25	8.1	14	25.5
Important	252	94.7	366	95.8	282	91.9	41	74.5
Total	266	100	382	100	307	100	55	100

Total sample: N = 1010, χ^2 = 36.02, Pr. = .0000

For religious institutions to flourish, perhaps even to survive, in this country, financial giving is essential. We asked the respondents, "How often do you send a financial contribution to support any television or radio ministries?" Tables 8 and 9 present our findings.

When we refer back to Table 1, we see that about 12.5 percent of the respondents do send contributions. These results are not statistically significant; the data do not support Proposition IV.

However, this research is part of a much larger study on victimization and institutional trust in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. In the larger study we asked the respondents, "Have you personally ever been sexually, physically, financially, or by clerical authority been exploited, intimidated, or abused by a clergy person?" We reported in chapter 9 that about 3 percent of the respondents reported they had been personally abused. This small subsample was asked, "Did the abuse result in stopping your attendance or financial gifts to that

TABLE 8

Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via National Media to Financial Contributions to Radio and TV Ministry

	Financial contributions							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via national media								
No	59	92.2	255	87.6	419	86.7	108	87.1
Yes	5	7.8	36	12.4	64	13.3	16	12.9
Total	64	100	291	100	483	100	124	100

Total sample: N = 962, $\chi^2 = 1.54$, Pr. = .672

TABLE 9

Relation of Awareness of National-Level Clergy Abuse through Discussion to Financial Contributions to Radio and TV Ministry

	Financial contributions							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of national-level ministerial abuse through discussion								
No	227	89.4	320	86.0	256	88.0	44	86.3
Yes	27	10.6	52	14.0	35	12.0	7	13.7
Total	254	100	372	100	291	100	51	100

Total sample: N = 962, $\chi^2 = 1.69$, Pr. = .640

ministry?" When the responses were tabulated, 54 percent of the 24 persons answering the question indicated that they stopped attending or stopped giving money to that ministry. The conclusion is obvious. Victims of clergy abuse, even if not widespread, seem to alter their religiosity.

The Effects of Gender, Race, and Denomination on the Relationship between Awareness of Clergy Abuse and Religious Involvement

Major institutions in American society are currently engaging in research to understand the demographics of their clientele. The use of focus groups and other marketing strategies is widespread among institutions of higher learning, political organizations, and business and industrial entities.

The study of the dynamics of religious institutions follows a similar strategy. In this research our major focus is on assessing the impact of clergy malfeasance on the basic operational structure of organized religion. Table 10 summarizes three important demographic characteristics.

Our research has already established that national media coverage of clergy malfeasance has a significant effect on church attendance, volunteer service to the church, and the importance of religious instruction for the family.

Thus far, we have empirically tested eight hypotheses concerning the effects of the national media and discussions with other people on religious involvement among a sample of metropolitan residents. We now turn to analyzing the effects of gender, race, and denomination on religious involvement. Only significant relationships are reported.

Church Attendance

When we introduce gender as a control variable, we find that the relationship changes. The original hypothesis was supported by the data; however, as we add specificity to the analysis, we see that the interpretation of the original relationship must be modified to apply

TABLE 10

Demographic Characteristics and Denominational Affiliations of the Metropolitan Sample

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	468	44.1
Female	594	55.9
Race		
White	829	77.7
Minority*	181	17.0
Other	57	5.3
Denomination		
Protestant	707	80.2
Catholic	174	19.8

*Hispanic and African American only.

TABLE 11
Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via National Media to Attendance among Males

	Attends church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via national media								
No	9	39.1	21	15.4	29	14.3	17	36.2
Yes	14	60.9	115	84.6	174	85.7	30	63.8
Total	23	100	136	100	203	100	47	100

Total sample: N = 409, χ^2 = 19.39, Pr. = .0002

TABLE 12
Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via National Media to Attendance among Whites

	Attends church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via national media								
No	14	31.8	33	15.0	47	12.5	22	22.9
Yes	30	68.2	187	85.0	330	87.5	74	77.1
Total	44	100	220	100	377	100	96	100

Total sample: N = 737, χ^2 = 15.44, Pr. = .001

only to males. The data in Table 11 offer clarification and specificity. The data presented previously in Table 2 show that 78.5 percent of the sample frequently hearing or reading of ministerial abuse attend church. In Table 11 we observe that only 63.8 percent of the males in the sample attend church. The relationship is statistically significant for males, but not for females.

In Tables 12 and 13 we find that race is also an important factor in understanding the effects of media coverage of clergy malfeasance. Our data show that there is a statistically significant relationship between hearing and reading of ministerial abuse in the national media and church attendance; a significant relationship is also indicated between discussion of clergy abuse with other people and church attendance. This relationship does not hold for minorities.

Part of this finding may be due to the unique role the church plays in many African American communities. For example, even when it became embarrassingly apparent to members of the black National Baptist Convention that its president, the Rev. Henry J. Lyons, was guilty of multiple counts of conspiracy, bank fraud, money laundering, and adultery (he was later convicted and is in prison at this writing), parishioners at one annual convention rallied behind him, and Lyons claimed all the charges against him were trumped up as a result of media racism (see for example Associated Press 1999; Hardnott 1988). The part religion generally plays in a minority subculture when clergy misconduct occurs deserves further investigation (see for example Lincoln 1974).

Religious denomination is also an important variable affecting church attendance. Reading or hearing of ministerial abuse in the national media significantly affects the church attendance of Protestants. Catholic church attendance is not affected by media coverage.

This finding may reflect the Roman Catholic "It can't happen here"

TABLE 13
Relation of Awareness of National-Level Clergy Abuse through Discussion to Church Attendance among Whites

	Attends church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of national-level ministerial abuse through discussion								
No	36	18.4	38	13.2	31	14.6	13	31.7
Yes	160	81.6	251	86.9	182	85.4	28	68.3
Total	196	100	289	100	213	100	41	100

Total sample: N = 739, χ^2 = 10.44, Pr. = .02

TABLE 14
Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via National Media to Church Attendance among Protestants

	Attends church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via national media								
No	12	28.6	32	16.3	40	12.3	21	25.6
Yes	30	71.4	164	83.7	285	87.7	61	74.4
Total	42	100	196	100	325	100	82	100

Total sample: N = 645, χ^2 = 13.66, Pr. = .003

attitude or the greater Protestant suspicion that religious leaders are likely to have feet of clay, just like their congregants. Put another way, Protestants may build shorter pedestals on which to place their clergy, though this suggestion is open to dispute (see for example Bratcher 1984).

Serving the Church

Earlier in this chapter we pointed to the importance of laity serving the church. Without volunteers to assist the ministry, many of the church's activities would not be possible. However, research has documented that women play a much larger role among the laity in serving the church. As the data presented in Table 15 show, it is the women who are most affected by news of clergy misconduct, especially through discussion with other people.

TABLE 15
Relation of Awareness of National-Level Clergy Abuse through Discussion to Serving the Church among Females

	Serves the church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of national-level ministerial abuse through discussion								
No	69	47.3	68	32.9	55	34.0	9	39.1
Yes	77	52.7	139	67.1	107	66.0	14	60.9
Total	146	100	207	100	162	100	23	100

Total sample: N = 538, $\chi^2 = 8.75$, Pr. = .03

TABLE 16
Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via National Media to Serving the Church among Minorities

	Serves the church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via national media								
No	12	80.0	22	44.0	30	39.5	8	38.1
Yes	3	20.0	28	56.0	46	60.5	13	61.9
Total	15	100	50	100	76	100	21	100

Total sample: N = 162, $\chi^2 = 8.79$, Pr. = .03

TABLE 17
Relation of Awareness of National-Level Clergy Abuse through Discussion to Serving the Church among Whites

	Serves the church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of national-level ministerial abuse through discussion								
No	103	51.5	108	37.1	77	36.0	21	51.2
Yes	97	48.5	183	62.9	137	64.0	20	48.8
Total	200	100	291	100	214	100	41	100

Total sample: N = 746, χ^2 = 14.83, Pr. = .002

TABLE 18
Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via National Media to Serving the Church among Protestants

	Serves the church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via national media								
No	25	61.0	94	47.7	125	38.5	33	40.2
Yes	16	39.0	103	52.3	200	61.5	49	59.8
Total	41	100	197	100	325	100	82	100

Total sample: N = 645, χ^2 = 10.18, Pr. = .02

TABLE 19
Relation of Awareness of National-Level Clergy Abuse through Discussion to Serving the Church among Protestants

	Serves the church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of national-level ministerial abuse through discussion								
No	91	52.3	103	40.7	72	37.5	15	48.4
Yes	83	47.7	150	59.3	120	62.5	16	51.6
Total	174	100	253	100	192	100	31	100

Total sample: N = 650, χ^2 = 9.39, Pr. = .02

The data presented in Tables 16 and 17 indicate that whites are more likely to be influenced by their discussions with other people.

Data in Tables 16 and 17 demonstrate that Protestants are affected by discussions with other people about clergy malfeasance, whereas Catholics are not affected.

Importance of Religious Instruction

Perhaps the most important role of the church is to provide religious instruction to its congregation. Congregations are predominantly made up of families seeking religious instruction. As noted, the effect of national media reports and discussions of clergy misconduct are especially significant among whites and Protestants. See Tables 20–22.

Discussions of National Levels of Awareness

Generally our four propositions, from which we derived eight hypotheses, found support. Level of awareness of national clergy malfeasance adversely (inversely) affected church attendance, lay volunteerism, and lay religious instruction in the home. We did not, however, find support for our hypothesis that financial giving would decline

TABLE 20

Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via National Media to Importance of Religious Instruction among Whites

	Religious instruction							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via national media								
Not important	7	15.2	11	4.8	23	5.7	16	15.1
Important	39	84.8	218	95.2	379	94.4	90	84.9
Total	46	100	229	100	402	100	106	100

Total sample: N = 783, χ^2 = 17.41, Pr. = .0005

TABLE 21

Relation of Awareness of National-Level Clergy Abuse through Discussion to Importance of Religious Instruction among Whites

	Religious instruction							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of national-level ministerial abuse through discussion								
Not important	12	5.8	14	4.6	19	8.2	14	31.1
Important	195	94.2	290	95.4	212	91.8	31	68.9
Total	207	100	304	100	231	100	45	100

Total sample: N = 787, χ^2 = 40.89, Pr. = .0000

Table 22
Relation of Awareness of National-Level Clergy Abuse through Discussion to Importance of Religious Instruction among Protestants

	Religious instruction							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of national-level ministerial abuse through discussion								
Not important	11	6.0	10	3.8	20	9.8	6	18.2
Important	171	94.0	253	96.2	184	90.2	27	81.8
Total	182	100	263	100	204	100	33	100

Total sample: N = 682, $\chi^2 = 13.37$, Pr. = .004

with increased awareness of clergy malfeasance. Nor did such awareness affect financial giving to radio and television ministries, though there is suggestive (if not statistically significant) evidence in the opposite direction. However, there is evidence that the originally hypothesized relationship between awareness of clergy malfeasance and religious involvement is affected by gender, race, and denomination.

We now turn our attention to awareness of clergy abuse at the local level. Two factors were used to measure the extent of awareness of clergy abuse in our metropolitan sample. Mirroring our look at awareness of clergy abuse at the national level, they are (1) having heard or read of clergy abuse through the local media; and (2) having discussed incidences of clergy abuse occurring at the local level with other people.

Again, we examined church stability by looking at financial contributions, church attendance, laity volunteer service to the church, and the importance of religious instruction for the family, this time in light of levels of awareness of clergy abuse at the local level.

Data

We first determined the extent of the public's knowledge of clergy abuse at the local level, by assessing the extent of the influence of the local media on public opinion. In our sample, 60 percent of respondents had heard or read of clergy abuse in the local media; 43 percent had engaged in discussions of clergy abuse occurring in the metropolitan community. Table 23 presents a statistical summary of these and other data relevant to this research.

We assessed religious involvement by measuring attendance, serving the church, importance of religious instruction to family life, and financial giving. In this metropolitan sample 85 percent of respondents attend church, 57 percent serve the church in a volunteer capacity, 93 percent feel that religious instruction is important to family life, and 12 percent make financial contributions to television or radio ministries. 7.4 percent of the respondents reported having been victimized or knowing someone personally who has been victimized.

Church Attendance

Proposition I: Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance at the local level is related to church attendance. As the level of awareness increases, church attendance declines.

TABLE 23

Summary of Religious Involvement and Clergy Abuse

Item	Number	Percent
Attend church		
Less than 1 year	135	15.9
1–5 years	159	18.7
Over 5 years	557	65.4
Frequency of church attendance		
Never	145	15.0
Seldom	207	21.4
Occasionally	235	24.3
Frequently	379	20.5
Served church in volunteer capacity		
Never	409	42.7
Seldom	145	15.0
Occasionally	216	22.3
Frequently	199	20.5
Importance of religious instruction		
Not at all important	69	6.8
Somewhat important	181	17.7
Important	291	28.5
Very important	481	47.0
Send contributions to TV/radio ministry	121	12.6
Respondent knew someone who was a victim	47	4.6
Respondent was a victim	29	2.8
Heard of clergy abuse in local media	649	60.0
Heard of clergy abuse at local level through discussion with other people	441	43.3

TABLE 24

Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via Local Media to Church Attendance

	Attends church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via local media								
No	57	16.1	55	15.6	27	12.4	4	11.8
Yes	296	83.9	298	84.4	191	87.6	30	88.2
Total	353	100	353	100	218	100	34	100

Total sample: N = 958, χ^2 = 1.91, Pr. = .591

TABLE 25

Relation of Awareness of Local-Level Clergy Abuse through Discussion to Church Attendance

	Attends church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of local-level ministerial abuse through discussion								
No	72	13.6	45	16.5	17	13.0	5	29.4
Yes	459	86.4	227	83.5	114	87.0	12	70.6
Total	531	100	272	100	131	100	17	100

Total sample: N = 951, χ^2 = 4.55, Pr. = .21

Our two working hypotheses were:

- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance through the local media is related to church attendance. As level of awareness increases, church attendance declines.
- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance at the local level through discussions with people is related to church attendance. As level of awareness at the local level increases, church attendance declines.

The data concerning the hypothesized relationship between awareness of clergy abuse at the local level and church attendance are not statistically significant. As we inspect them, we find that as awareness increases, frequency of church attendance increases. This is true for exposure to information about clergy abuse both through local media and in discussions with other people. It may very well be that when an incidence occurs at the local level, at least some congregations tend to sympathize with the pastor. Ambivalent reactions appear often (e.g., Fortune 1989; Stiles 1987). The data show that among individuals who frequently hear of local incidences of clergy malfeasance, 88 percent attend church. However, we find a slightly different pattern when individuals engage in discussions about the incidences of clergy misconduct, with the proportion who attend church declining to only about 71 percent. This pattern is very different from the findings of our previous data citing a statistically significant relationship between the influence of the national media and church attendance.

Volunteer Service to the Church

Proposition II: Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance is related to the frequency that laity volunteer to serve the church. As the level of awareness increases, the frequency of laity's volunteer service to the church declines.

Our two working hypotheses were:

- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance through the local media is related to serving the church in a volunteer capacity. As level of awareness increases, frequency of serving the church declines.
- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance at the local level through discussions with people is related to serving the church in a volunteer capacity. As level of awareness increases, frequency of serving the church declines.

The results are presented in Tables 26 and 27.

The data presented in Tables 26 and 27 show statistically significant relationships between the effect of the local media and serving the church in a volunteer capacity. However, the relationship is very different from our original proposition. It seems that learning through the local media of clergy malfeasance may produce a defensive, "support our minister" effect. We recognize that individuals serving the church in a voluntary capacity are much closer to the ministry and certainly more involved in church activities. To a great extent the church represents a community of individuals and families seeking spiritual gratification. It is likely that when it is rumored that one of their own (their clergy person) has abused a leadership posi-

TABLE 26

Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via Local Media to Serving the Church

	Serves the church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via local media								
No	178	50.9	145	40.4	73	33.0	10	29.4
Yes	172	49.1	214	59.6	148	67.0	24	70.6
Total	350	100	359	100	221	100	34	100

Total sample: N = 964, χ^2 = 21.14, Pr. = .0001

TABLE 27

Relation of Awareness of Local-Level Clergy Abuse through Discussion to Serving the Church

	Serves the church							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of local-level ministerial abuse through discussion								
No	254	47.4	100	36.2	43	33.1	3	18.8
Yes	282	52.6	176	63.8	87	66.9	13	81.3
Total	536	100	276	100	130	100	16	100

Total sample: N = 958, χ^2 = 17.96, Pr. = .0004

tion in the church, they become protective and reinforce their commitment to their church by increasing their service to the church. We must note, however, that the size of the subsample is relatively small, the findings therefore necessarily tentative.

Importance of Religious Instruction

Proposition III: Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance is related to the importance of religious instruction for the family. As the level of awareness increases, the importance of religious instruction declines.

We tested this proposition with the following two hypotheses:

- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance through the local media is related to importance of religious instruction for the family. As level of awareness increases, the importance of religion in the family declines.

- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance at the local level through discussion with people is related to importance of religious instruction for the family. As level of awareness increases, the importance of religion in the family declines.

Data concerning this proposition are presented in Tables 28 and 29.

Religious instruction for the family is one of the building blocks of community life. We hypothesized that as the frequency of incidences of clergy abuse in the local community increased, respondents would place less importance on religious instruction. The clergy is a bastion of high ethical and moral conduct. The results of the analysis show that these hypotheses are supported by the analysis. Among the respondents who frequently hear of clergy misconduct in the local media, about 83 percent feel that religious instruction is important for the family. Among the respondents who frequently engage in discussion about incidences of clergy abuse, only 76 percent indicate that

Table 28

Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via Local Media to Importance of Religious Instruction

	Religious instruction							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via local media								
Not important	19	5.0	24	6.5	19	8.3	6	17.1
Important	359	95.0	347	93.5	211	91.7	29	82.9
Total		100		100		100		100

Total sample: N = 1014, χ^2 = 8.72, Pr. = .03

Table 29

Relation of Awareness of Local-Level Clergy Abuse through Discussion to Importance of Religious Instruction

	Religious instruction							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of local-level ministerial abuse through discussion								
Not important	29	5.1	16	5.7	16	11.6	4	23.5
Important	539	94.9	265	94.3	122	88.4	13	76.5
Total	568	100	281	100	138	100	17	100

Total sample: N = 1014, χ^2 = 16.18, Pr. = .001

TABLE 30

Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via Local Media to Financial Contributions to Radio and TV Ministry

	Financial contributions							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via local media								
No	332	91.5	315	87.7	177	81.9	26	78.8
Yes	31	8.5	44	12.3	39	18.1	7	21.2
Total	363	100	359	100	216	100	33	100

Total sample: N = 971, $\chi^2 = 13.64$, Pr. = .003

religious instruction is important, compared to about 95 percent of the respondents who seldom engage in such discussions.

Financial Giving to the Ministry

Proposition IV: Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance is related to financial contributions to radio and television ministry. As the level of awareness increases, financial contributions decline.

Our working hypotheses were:

- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance through the local media is related to financial giving. As level of awareness increases, financial giving declines.
- Level of awareness of clergy malfeasance at the local level through discussion with people is related to financial giving. As level of awareness increases, financial giving declines.

The relationship between level of awareness of clergy abuse and financial giving, presented in Table 30, is statistically significant. However, our hypothesis of a negative relationship did not hold. Indeed, as the data indicate, there is a positive relationship between the two variables. As the level of awareness increases, contributions also increase. Among the respondents who never hear or read of clergy abuse, about 9 percent make financial contributions to radio and television ministry. However, among the respondents who frequently hear or read of ministerial abuse in the local media, 21 percent make financial contributions to radio or television ministry. This is a curious finding in light of our

TABLE 31
Relation of Awareness of Clergy Abuse via Local Media to Financial Contributions to Radio and TV Ministry among Women

	Financial contributions							
	Never		Seldom		Occasionally		Frequently	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Aware of ministerial abuse via local media								
No	199	91.3	165	88.2	93	79.5	14	87.5
Yes	19	8.7	22	11.8	24	20.5	2	12.5
Total	218	100	187	100	117	100	16	100

Total sample: N = 538, χ^2 = 9.85, Pr. = .02

assumptions. The hypothesis concerning the relationship between awareness of clergy abuse through discussions at the local level and financial giving was not statistically significant.

Since our analysis concerning the relationship between heard or read of ministerial abuse in the local media and financial giving produced a positive relationship, we decided to introduce gender as a control variable. The results are presented in Table 31.

We found that the predicted negative relationship is supported by the data. Our original proposition must be modified to hold only for women. In many ways this makes for a stronger argument, since women are certainly more sensitive to many forms of clergy malfeasance, typically including sexual harassment as well as other forms of sexually offensive behavior.

Discussion

The most interesting finding from this research is the small percentage of the population that is aware of clergy abuse occurring locally. Our data shows that about 7.4 percent of the sample have been victimized by clerics or know someone (family, friend, or relative) who has experienced abuse from the ministry. The conclusions drawn from this research are similar to the findings presented in our previous work evaluating the influence of the national media on attitudes and behavior. We found conclusive evidence that the local media significantly influence laity's service to the church, attitudes on the importance of religious instruction for the family, and financial giving. The data concerning the relationship between the local media and church attendance was not statistically significant. It is quite possible that religious commitment in a Southern metropolitan community is unaffected by the misconduct of ministers—i.e, that congregants perceive clergy malfeasance as truly a case of a "few bad apples" and not, as our theoretical position argues, a systemic, structural phenomenon.

The data presented in this chapter and the preceding one are from the first clergy malfeasance victimization survey conducted anywhere. Much to our regret, there are as yet no comparable studies. Yet clergy misconduct appears to be neither a recent phenomenon nor a short-lived social problem involving religious deviance. We are nevertheless encouraged: there is grist here for easily a hundred ambitious doctoral dissertation projects and research grants.

We believe anecdotes and case studies have accumulated long enough at the expense of quantitative analyses. As researchers we continue to pursue the latter, as we hope the next generation of social scientists will. Clergy malfeasance is currently the least examined subject in the related subdisciplines of deviant behavior and criminology.

REFERENCES

Associated Press. 1999. "Lyons Apologizes but Gets 51 Years." *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, April 1.

Bratcher, Edward B. 1984. *The Walk-on-Water Syndrome*. Waco, Tex.: Word.

Bromley, David G., and Anson D. Shupe Jr. 1980. "Financing the New Religions: A Resource Mobilization Approach." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 19: 227–39.

Fortune, Marie M. 1989. *Is Nothing Sacred?* San Francisco: Harper San Francisco.

Hadden, Jeffrey K., and Anson Shupe. 1988. *Televangelism: Power and Politics on God's Frontier*. New York: Henry Holt.

Hardnott, Carolyn. 1988. "Dozens of Parishioners Turn Out to Support Lyons." *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, July 7.

Hoge, Dean R., ed. 1994. "Special Issue: Patterns of Financial Contributions to Churches." *Review of Religious Research* 36, no. 2 (December): 99–244.

Hoge, Dean R., Charles Zech, Patrick McNamara, and Michael J. Donahue. 1996. *Money Matters: Personal Giving in American Churches*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster-John Knox Press.

Lincoln, C. Eric, ed. 1974. *The Black Experience in Religion*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday.

Richardson, James T. 1988. *Money and Power in the New Religions*. Lewiston, N.Y.: The Edwin Mellen Press.

Shupe, Anson. 1995. *In the Name of All that's Holy: A Theory of Clergy Malfeasance*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

———. 1998. August 2, "Economic Fraud and Christian Leaders in the United States." In Anson Shupe, ed., *Wolves within the Fold: Religious Leadership and Abuses of Power,* 49–64. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Stacey, William, Susan E. Darnell, and Anson Shupe. 1998. "How Much Clergy Malfeasance Is Really Out There? A Victimization Survey of Prevalence and Perception." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, August, San Francisco. [A revised version of this paper appears as chapter 9 of the present volume.]

Stiles, Hilary. 1987. *Assault on Innocence*. Albuquerque, N.M.: B & K Publishers.

Part IV

Epilogue and Overview

Chapter 11

Incidence and Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse

Andrew M. Greeley

In this epilogue I propose to exercise my role as a commentator by first presenting original data analysis on the subject of childhood sexual abuse and its impact, and then, from the perspective of that analysis, commenting on the papers presented in this "symposium." I engage in this analytic exercise to support my position that (a) sexual abuse is not a new phenomenon, (b) both men and women are victims, and (c) the abuse has serious effects later in life. The data are from the National Opinion Research Center's so-called National Health and Family Life Survey (the first and still the only national probability sample of American sexual behavior). Respondents were asked about "touching" of the genitals by others before puberty. I will define this "touching" as "abuse" for the purposes of this paper without excluding the possibility that some sort of consent might be involved in some such incidents. Seventeen percent of the respondents reported that they had been subject to such abuse. (Within this category are 2 percent who engaged in prepuberty vaginal intercourse and 2 percent anal intercourse.) The proportion was the same for men as for women. Obviously some abuse has probably gone unreported. There was no correlation between the age of the respondent and the report of prepuberty genital touching. Thus there does not seem to have been an increase in such abuse over time.

On average, the abuse began for men at 10.33 years of age, and for women at 10.55; it ended at 11.98 years for men and 10.78 years for women. A total of 42 percent of the men and 70 percent of the women reported that this abuse had an effect later in their lives. Sixty percent of the men and 10 percent of the women reported that they had been abused by women, the rest by men. Sixty percent of the abused men were abused by women? Can this be possible? Might the reported touching have been merely prepubescent exploration? Perhaps it was. However, 80 percent of the men who reported touching said that the women who touched them were over fourteen (20 percent said that the women were over eighteen). I report this finding cautiously since I know of neither a body of literature nor anecdotal information about the abuse of boys by women.

Thirty-six percent of the men who reported "touching" by women said it had an effect on their later lives, as opposed to 54 percent of those "touched" by men. For women the comparable rates were 54 percent of those touched by women and 71 percent of those touched by men. I shall return to this issue later when I consider the apparent effects of sexual abuse. I am inclined to think, however, that there is some victimization of younger boys by older girls, more perhaps than anyone has suspected. Most of the abuse came from relatives and family friends. Five percent was attributed to fathers; 5 percent more to stepfathers; and 5 percent more to older brothers. (No question was asked about older sisters.) Two thirds of those who had been "touched" genitally reported that no one else knew about the abuse. Nineteen percent said their mothers knew about it and 10 percent said their fathers knew. Eleven percent said that a sibling knew. The picture that emerges then is of a fairly high incidence of prepuberty sexual abuse which respondents tend to think affected their later lives, beginning around the age of ten and ending on average a year and a half later, some of which is abuse of young boys by girls or women older than them.

What impact does this abuse have on the subsequent life of the person involved? Obviously the correlations between abuse and present life and sexual satisfaction would demand more detailed searches for explanatory variables. The data set does not provide the tools for such analysis. Therefore the reader must consider the word "effect" as it is used here a substitute for "correlation." It may well be that there are antecedent and/or intervening structural, cultural, and psychological variables that relate both to being abused and to the outcomes in Tables 1 and 2, thus making the apparent correlations spurious. In the ordinary course of social research, however, differences the size of those between the abused and the nonabused are usually too robust to be eliminated, though they may be diminished

TABLE 1
Correlates of "Abuse"

	% of those not abused	% of those abused	Correlation for men	Correlation for women
Happy	60	43	-.12	-.12
Would have sex only for love	68	55	-.14	.05
Have been harassed on job	33	54	.10	.12
Feel guilty about sex	17	23	.04	.05
Would enjoy forced sex	10	15	.06	.03*
Would like to watch sex	24	39	.13	.11
Had orgasm last time had sex	87	80	-.04	-.04
Are emotionally satisfied	84	75	-.06	-.08

*not significant

TABLE 2
Correlates of "Abuse" by "Effect on Life"

	% answering "No effect"	% answering "Effect"	Correlation for men	Correlation for women
Happy	52	39	-.10	-.19
Would have sex only for love	49	63	-.17	.08*
Have been harassed on job	56	53	-.06*	-.09*
Feel guilty about sex	17	28	.13	.14
Would enjoy forced sex	20	10	.01*	-.07*
Would like to watch sex	42	34	-.08*	-.05*
Had orgasm last time had sex	82	77	-.06*	-.06*
Are emotionally satisfied	43	34	-.13	-.08*

*not significant

somewhat. It is worth nothing, however, that social class is a poor candidate for such a model. There is no correlation between education and either the reporting of abuse or the belief that the abuse had an impact on later life. Those who have been abused (Table 1) are less likely to say that they are either extremely happy or very happy, less likely to say that they are content, that they would have sex only for love, more likely to say they have been sexually harassed on the job (two-fifths of all women and a third of all men report sexual harassment on the job), more likely to say they would enjoy forced sex, more likely to say they had an orgasm the last time they engaged in sex, and less likely to say that they find their present relationship emotionally satisfying. While one would like to be able to tease out an elaborate explanatory model that might account in rich detail for these correlations, these results are generally in the direction that clinicians who deal with adults who were victimized during childhood would predict. It is worth observing, however, that there is no inevitability about an effect that would ruin the life of victims; three-quarters of them are in an emotionally satisfying relationship.

The correlations between abuse and these later life effects are virtually the same for men and for women. Thus abuse seems to impact on both genders equally, at least as far as these data permit us to estimate.

Is there a difference between those "victims" who see a later life effect and those who do not? Table 2 suggests that belief that the sexual contact had an effect leads to lower levels of happiness, greater levels of guilt about sex, and lower reports of orgasms and emotional satisfaction. However, the "conscious" victims (if we may call them that) are more likely to say that they would engage in sex only for love and less likely to say they would enjoy either forced sex or watching others engage in sex. They are, in other words, more likely to be personally troubled than those who think the abuse has not affected their later life, but also more likely to respect others. The negative relationship between reporting that the abuse had an impact on their later life and personal happiness is stronger for women. Otherwise there is no significant pattern of a gender phenomenon in this matter. It is useful to compare the first column of Table 2 with the first column of Table 1. Even though they do not think that the prepuberty genital contact had an effect on their later lives, those in the first column of Table 2 are still notably more likely to display the presumed negative effects of such touching than are those who were not "abused." Perhaps there is some repression or denial at work.

Does the gender of the person initiating the contact make a difference in the relationship between prepuberty sexual contact and our dependent variables? Generally speaking, it does not seem to matter (as far as these variables are concerned) whether the presumed abuser was a man or a woman. Both men and women who have been touched by a woman are less likely to say that they would limit sex to love than those touched by a man. The women who have been touched by a woman are also more likely (than those touched by a man) to say that they find the thought of forced sex appealing or that they find the idea of watching others have sex appealing. Both men and women touched by a woman are also less likely than those touched by a man to report an orgasm in their last sexual encounter, though the differences are not statistically significant. In general, then, if you are a victim (in the sense that someone touched your genitals before you reached puberty), the gender of the victimizer does not matter all that much. Thus prepuberty sexual abuse is widespread, it is usually secret, it has not increased in the last half century, it is generally done by family members and friends, the victims report an effect in later life which the data support, and the victims as well as the victimizers are both men and women.

To make a moral judgment that will doubtless offend one of the symposists (who thinks pederasty cannot be condemned because the Greeks did it), the picture that emerges is horrific. Children survive abuse, some better than others, but the abuse of power (to use Shupe's earlier model) and the potential harm involved in such incidents is chilling and—to use another word that might be unacceptable to Professor Spickard—evil. (Objectively, sociologists can make no judgment about subjective moral responsibility.) In Shupe's model, as I interpret it, an asymmetry of power combined with a propensity to use another sexually is a sufficiently parsimonious explanation of all sexual exploitation, including the sexual abuse of children and especially of children by clergy. Wherever such conditions exist, abuse will occur. Not all those who have power will indulge their sexual desires. Under most circumstances many will not. But some will. It is a melancholy comment on the human condition to note that whenever the thin protections of civilization break down, whether in a war or in the security of a rectory office, abuse will occur.

While the narrative model of Bromley and Cress is impressive intellectually, I would be inclined to explain the increased public awareness of the widespread prevalence of sexual abuse to higher educational attainment, upward social mobility, and the public acceptance of psychotherapy. Catholic parents are less likely to be intimidated or bought off by diocesan officiants because they have learned to make more of their own decisions and as a result to have less respect for allegedly sacred church authority.

But what of the apparent victimization of young men, especially by women? The correct political response is to say that only women are victims and that, if some men are victimized, it is only fair given all the victimization of women. But in an adult population in which a third of the men say they have been sexually harassed in their jobs, such ideology is dangerously shortsighted. All human beings should be protected from harassment in any society that claims to be civilized or at least is trying to become more civilized. Let us assume that most of the reports of prepuberty sexual touching of men by women in our data are the result of mutual sexual exploration and not of any abuse of power. Let us also assume that one can explain away or diminish notably the findings in Tables 1 and 2 with an elaborate model of antecedent and intervening variables. Nonetheless, 20 percent of the men who say they were touched genitally be a woman report that it was by a woman over eighteen. To suggest that a nineteen-year-old man who manipulates the genitals of a ten-year-old girl is a victimizer but a nineteen-year-old woman who does the same thing to a ten-year-old boy is not is to blind oneself to the canons of elementary justice and fairness.

When anyone is violated, we are all violated. Anyone's right to be free from abuse is everyone's right to be free from abuse. The argument that the abuse of women is a more serious problem than the abuse of men is ultimately self-defeating. All abuse is a problem, every abuse is a problem. A civilized society tries to prevent all abuse of power and to defend everyone from an abuse of power.

Professor Shupe's theory is that where there is asymmetry of power, there is likely to be abuse. I am unable to believe that in those situations where women have power over men there will not be some abuse—and not so much for reasons of vengeance as for reasons of possibility. This would not be the case only if men and women were members of different species. Lord Acton's dictum about the corruption of power (aimed originally at the Vatican) is a gender neutral assertion.

Yet, in all honesty, if I had had a chance to review the National Opinion Research Center questionnaire before the National Health and Family Life Study went into the field, I would not have thought to suggest that mothers, older sisters, nurses, housekeepers, and babysitters, for example, be listed as possible abusers because they exist in relationships of asymmetry of power with boys. Nor would I have argued that we ought to know more about the nature of sexual harassment of men in the workplace. However, in future research these issues should be extremely important. I have no reason to believe that either Professor Jacobs or Professor Nason-Clark would disagree with me on these observations. Like me, I suspect that they would think the data I have cited scream to heaven for more research and also suggest that cross-gender alliances to prevent abuse and harassment of all humans would make excellent political sense. I do not advocate any less attention to the abuse of women (about which they write so powerfully), but rather somewhat more attention to the abuse of men.

I am grateful to Professor Stockton for revealing that another denomination can mess up an abuse case as badly as my own, and perhaps even worse. I am amazed and impressed that a denomination which in principle seeks to exclude bureaucracy has managed to create even more layers of bureaucracy than mine has. However, just as the abuse of power for sexual amusement is inherent in the human condition regardless of gender, so the propensity to cover up and protect one's own affects all religious bodies (and indeed all corporate groups, like the police and the medical profession, for example). Whatever the shape of the bureaucracy that engages in the coverup, the outcome is the same—abuse, injustice, and inevitably, litigation. The various denominations, Professor Stockton's and my own among others, are searching, perhaps not with enough determination, for ways to mitigate the harmful effects of the asymmetry of power and to expand the boundaries of civility within the denomination. While some useful beginnings have been made (such as the Independent Review Board in my own archdiocese), we all have a long way to go. Professor Nason-Clark laments that parish clergy do not condemn sexual or physical abuse from the pulpit. I cannot speak for others, but this priest does. In all candor, however, she reminds me that I have not done so recently and must return to that theme.

Finally, one must be grateful to Professor Spickard for bringing the monster of relativism out in the open again. His principles would say that the abuse of power in the new religious movements Professor Jacobs describes is not immoral because the people in such movements believe it is moral, just as the Indians who in his description raped a woman believe that the rape was good for her—and just as some clergy convince themselves that the physical abuse of a child is good for the child. Moreover, if a group of humans believe that another group is so degenerate that it must be eliminated from society for the good of the rest of society and that it is a moral obligation to do so, how would Professor Spickard prevent the elimination of the Tasmanian natives by British settlers, or of the Jews by the Nazis? Both genocidal groups persuaded themselves that they were engaged in highly moral behavior. His argument against clerical abuse—the requirements of practical life in the postmodern era in which we happen to live—either slips universalism in through the back door (and thus cuts the ground out from under his relativist argument) or is utilitarian gibberish. Besides, I will need more proof that there is any such thing as postmodern society outside of English and sociology departments and divinity schools.

This volume is a useful and challenging exercise. It should remind all of us, as it reminded me again, how fragile civilization is, how the barbarians are always inside the gates, and how the law of the jungle survives even in the upper-middle class-suburb or the faculty office building.

Chapter 12

The Future of Clergy Abuse/ Malfeasance Research

Anson Shupe

The strength of this volume has been its presentation of a diversity of perspectives on a common theme of deviant behavior. The contributors demonstrate a sociological truism: everything about a problem may not be known at the moment of its discovery.

Defining, measuring, and understanding clergy malfeasance is literally a work in progress. Once we move beyond the enticing, but only preliminary, psychological questions of *why do they do it*? (referring to the motives of perpetrators) or *why don't they tell*? (referring to the reticence on victims' part to blow the whistle), we enter into the area of *reactance*, i.e., how do these various audiences encountering the evidence of clergy malfeasance then act?

At that point we experience a number of new questions. What is the role of the particular denomination or congregation (depending in part on its structure and polity) in responding to the discovery of clergy abuse? And further, what is that church's niche in the broader community and culture? For example, could the Rev. Henry Lyons, the adulterer, hypocrite, and thief mentioned in the Introduction, have been sustained as the president of his black denomination if not for the traditionally central role clergymen have played in the Afro-American subculture?

And not all traditional sociological models seem equally valid for conceptualizing clergy malfeasance. For example, if we were to retain the structuralism-functionalism notion of a social system with component institutional subsystems existing normally in some sort of state of equilibrium, what sense could we make of clergy malfeasance, which appears to be a problem generated both within and outside the system? I suggest that this paradigm holds little value for developing a theoretical understanding of the problem.

Alternately, while it is undoubtedly true that most clergy persons (like most physicians, teachers, or lawyers) do not seduce, rip off, or abuse persons in their fiduciary care, those who do so operate as predators in a rarified atmosphere of trust and lay vulnerability, much like wolves loose within a fold of sheep. Thus the conflict approach, which assumes hierarchies of power and authority in religious groups, and the creation of opportunity structures for systematic exploitation of the less powerful by elites, appears more useful in future studies of clergy malfeasance.

Meanwhile, there are still conceptual and empirical frontiers that should serve as inspiration for graduate doctoral theses, surveys, and case studies. One prime example is the use of the *social exchange* model for examining clergy misbehavior. This exploitation by religious elites is not always brutally rapacious or one-sided. Sipe (1990: 74–102), for example, cites a number of interviews with heterosexually active Roman Catholic priests and their mistresses (many also married at the time). Not only did these relationships meet the participants' emotional and physical needs; some women also perceived that their affairs contributed to helping the priests to be better servants of the church.

Likewise, the notion that religions extract in-this-life compliance by promising in-the-next-life salvation or other rewards, or what Stark and Bainbridge (1985: 7) call "compensators" (i.e., spiritual IOUs), can play an important part in furthering malfeasance. For instance, in 1994 I was a consultant to a well-known New Mexico attorney who specializes in clergy malfeasance civil suits. It seems a Mormon youth leader and basketball coach in Montana had convinced adolescent boys that there existed a secret priesthood rite that they must go through but of which they must never speak, even to their parents. He organized then into what are crudely referred to as "circle jerks": the boys would sit cross-legged in a circle with their pants down, then each would seize the erect penis of the boy on his right side and masturbate him. In other words, the boys not only received some measure of physical pleasure but an assurance that they were being initiated into a special spiritual order. (By the time four now-grown men sued the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day

Saints, the coach-counselor was deceased. The LDS church settled quietly with the men, and—as often happens in such embarrassing civil proceedings—part of the settlement agreement was that court records be sealed.)

The same sort of social exchange phenomenon occurred in 1989 when Branch Davidian adult males at the Mount Carmel compound in Waco, Texas were instructed by their prophet David Koresh that he was henceforth to have exclusive sexual access to all women, married or not. He counseled the men to be patient, that they would obtain "perfect" wives in heaven (Eve 1993).

Aside from the roles authority and the "charisma of office" play in discouraging victims' reporting, encouraging perpetrators to think they can "get away with it" repeatedly, and making fellow clerics nervous about discipline, the social exchange approach to how clergy malfeasance is experienced by different "audiences" has virtually never been examined.

We are beyond the sociopathological, individual "bad apple" approach to clergy misbehavior. But as one can see, this is only the beginning.

REFERENCES

Eve, Raymond A. 1993. Personal communications to Anson Shupe from April through December. Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Texas at Arlington.

Sipe, A. W. Richard. 1990. *A Secret World: Sexuality and the Search for Celibacy*. New York: Brunner-Mazel.

Stark, Rodney, and William Sims Bainbridge. 1985. *The Future of Religion*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Contributors

David G. Bromley is Professor of Sociology at Virginia Commonwealth University, in Richmond, Virginia.

Clinton H. Cress is a graduate student in sociology at Virginia Commonwealth University, in Richmond, Virginia.

Susan E. Darnell manages a multimillion-dollar credit union in Gary, Indiana and is a civil liberties journalist.

Andrew M. Greeley is Professor of Social Science at the University of Chicago and is affiliated with both the University of Arizona and the National Opinion Research Center.

Peter Iadicola is Professor and Chair in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the joint campus of Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Janet L. Jacobs is Professor of Sociology and Women's Studies at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

Nancy Nason-Clark is Professor of Sociology at the University of New Brunswick, in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada.

Anson Shupe is Professor of Sociology at the joint campus of Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

James V. Spickard is Professor of Sociology at the University of the Redlands, California.

William A. Stacey is Professor of Sociology at the University of Texas at Arlington.

Ronald R. Stockton is Professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin, Dearborn.

Jon Trott is an investigative journalist and editor-in-chief of the evangelical Christian magazine *Cornerstone*, and is affiliated with the urban Chicago commune Jesus People USA.

Index

Activist Survivor, The (newsletter), 192
Amnesty International, 21
Aryan National Church, 23
Aryan World Congress, 23

Baaka people, 21
Backus, William, 163, 169
Bernardin, Fr. Joseph, 189
Branch Davidians, 27, 113–114, 123–24, 251
Building Bridges Project, 86

child sexual abuse, 14, 55–57, 121–23, 126, 241–48
Children of God, 121, 157, 168
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 8, 15, 25–27, 58, 250–55
Church of the Creator, 22
Church of the Word, 21
clergy malfeasance: closed-system view, 14–17; constructionist view, 39–68; cultural relativism of, 90–109; definition of, 13; deconstructionist view, 90–109, 247–48; economic forms, 2–3, 5, 15; false accusations of, 155–84; open system view, 17–36; sexual forms, 14–15, 46–68, 113–30; sexual harassment, 14, 48–50
congregational-hierarchical, 15–16
Cook, Stephan, 189
covenantal-contractual relations, 41–46
Cult Awareness Network, 173

De Smet, Pierre-Jean, 19
Divine Light Mission, 115–16
Dobson, James, 71–72
domestic violence, 69–89

Eliot, John, 19
elite deviance, 4
Enroth, Ronald, 155, 160–84
Evangelical Covenant Church, 159–84

Farrakhan, Rev. Louis, 25
fiduciary responsibility, 14–15
"flirting fishing," 121
Focus of the Family. *See* Dobson, James
Foundation for New Era Philanthropy, 3

Gacy, John Wayne, 174

Hassan, Steve, 160
Herrin, J. W., 157
Holley, David, 191

Identity Christianity, 23
incest, 119
Islamic fundamentalism, 22

Jehovah's Witnesses, 92
Jesus People USA (JPUSA), 7, 155–84
Jones, Rev. Jim, 115, 119

Klanwatch, 22–23
Klassen, Benjamin, 22
Koresh, David, 113–14, 124
Ku Klux Klan, 23

Langone, Michael, 173
Lawrence, Troy, 168
Lifton, Robert J., 173–74
Love, Israel, 116, 125–27
Lyons, Rev. Henry, 2–3, 5, 35, 225

McCarty, Pontifex Maximus Rick, 23
men as victims, 241–47
Miles, Robert, 23
Missing Link, The (newsletter), 192
Monte, General Rios, 20–21
Moon, Rev. Sun Myung, 25, 96, 99, 119

Moral Majority, 25
Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, 21
Mount Carmel siege. *See* Branch Davidians

Nation of Islam, 25
National Baptist Church USA, 2–3, 35, 225
Native Americans, 18–20
Newfoundland pedophile priest scandal, 17
Ntakirutimana, Elizaphan, 22
Nurse, Rebecca, 175

Oklahoma City bombing, 23

Passantino, Bob and Gretchen, 163, 169
Patrick, Ted, 160
Peoples Temple, 115
Peters, Priscilla, 3
political economy context, 35, 225
Porter, Fr. James, 1–2, 24
Presbyterian scandal, 131–54
Promise Keepers Movement, 72
public's awareness of clergy misconduct, 7–8, 187–213
public's direct experience of clergy misconduct, 7, 214–38

racism and clergy misconduct, 35, 225
Rajneesh commune, 93
Rawandan genocide, 22
reactions to clergy misconduct, 15
Richardson, James T., 171–72
Rivera, Alberto, 168
Robertson, Rev. Pat, 215
Roman Catholic Church, 17–18, 24–27, 39, 58, 60–62, 92, 95, 250
Roman Catholics, 203–8
Roosevelt, Eleanor, 99

Serra, Fr. Junipero, 19
Sigler, Fr. Jason, 191
Singer, Margaret T., 160, 166
social exchange approach, 249–51
Southern Christian Leadership Conference, 25
Southern Poverty Law Center, 22–23
Stratford, Lauren, 168
Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), 20

therapists and malfeasance, 132–33
Todd, John, 168
Tucker, Ruth, 169

Unification Church. *See* Moon, Rev. Sun Myung

Villa, Louis Martin, 191

Warnke, Mike, 159
Way International, 157
Whipple, Henry Benjamin, 157
White Aryan Resistance (WAR), 23
Winters, Jack, 159
women as victims, 6, 46–55, 113–30
Wycliffe Bible Translators/missionaries, 20