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In the Shadow of the Population Bomb:
The Campaign for Abortion Reform in Seattle, 1962-1970

By

Alexandra J. Kattar

Accepted in Partial Completion
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

Kathleen Kitto, Dean of the Graduate School

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MASTER'S THESIS

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Alexandra J. Kattar
December 12, 2012

**In the Shadow of the Population Bomb:
The Campaign for Abortion Reform in Seattle, 1962-1970**

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of
Western Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree Master of Arts

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Alexandra J. Kattar
December 2012

ABSTRACT

In November 1970, fifty-six percent of Washington State voters approved Referendum 20. With this act, a state legalized abortion by popular vote for the first and only time in the history of the United States. This study explains how and why Washington State reformed its abortion law. The successful political campaign, led by Washington Citizens for Abortion Reform (WCAR), based in Seattle, constituted an unusual alliance of conservatives and liberals, men and women, Protestants and Catholics, often forgotten from the history of reproductive politics and certainly from the public debate on the issue during the twenty-first century. In the shadow of the population bomb—a postwar metaphor which conflated fears of atomic annihilation and overpopulation—a heterogeneous alliance of supporters for reform was built by Seattleites to meet their needs of a changing urban landscape. Members of the WCAR were professionals in law, medicine, politics, theology, and social work as well as citizen lobbyists. This study posits that their motivation to support the reform was shaped by their identity as a Seattleite (place identity), profession identity, and middle-class values in democracy, education, economic mobility, and family. Their understanding of the dilemma of unwanted pregnancies and illegal abortions was influenced by stories women told them about their need for abortion. These stories played a central role in the mobilization of the reform movement. Furthermore, messages about overpopulation and “healthy” sexuality informed the WCAR’s advertisement campaign to solicit voter-approval for Referendum 20. This work argues that the science of ecology created a new lexicon and schema with which to consider population issues at the same time as a growing women’s movement posited a challenging critique of gender roles. Therefore, the abortion reform movement was aided by two powerful, concurrent social movements during this era—the environmental and women’s movements—in order to remake laws to reflect the changing needs of women in a post-industrial economy.

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This project would not have been possible without the support and guidance from professors in the history department at Western Washington University, the staff at Seattle Planned Parenthood, and my fellow graduate students. I am lucky to have been an undergraduate and graduate student at Western Washington University. So many professors have contributed to my intellectual growth over the years and each has added something to this project. I must acknowledge Kathleen Kennedy, who first introduced to me the history of sexuality and I discovered that I could combine my two passions. The hard work of Kevin Leonard, who carefully read and edited this work, greatly improved its readability. Through a series of serendipitous events, and with the steadfast encouragement and enthusiasm of Polly Myers in particular, this project has evolved to be much more probing and insightful than it could have been otherwise. I would like to thank the history department for the opportunity to work closely with professors as a teaching and research assistant, from which I have gained more knowledge about the craft of being a historian, and for a research grant which allowed me to frequent the archives at the University of Washington. Additionally, I must acknowledge the contributions to this project from Aaron George and Lily Fox, who were always willing to listen to me talk through my argument, asking me new and interesting questions. Furthermore, Cam McIntyre and Cheryll McCain helped me find invaluable primary sources from Seattle Planned Parenthood. Most significant of all, I must acknowledge the contribution of my family to this work, for (unknowingly) instilling in me my lifelong curiosity about the past and for providing me a rock solid foundation upon which I could reach higher and work harder.

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PROLOGUE

*Historians take unusual pains to erase the elements in their work which reveal their grounding in a particular time and place, their preferences in a controversy – the unavoidable obstacles of their passion.*¹ - Michel Foucault

This study is the result of my historical questions, analysis of primary sources, and some theoretical perspectives about the history of sexuality shaped by personal experiences and my own place in the course of the historical events under analysis. Why would I study the abortion reform campaign if I were not passionate about the issue; if I did not believe that it was an important and worth subject for historians? This study is shaped by questions about the significance of sexuality in peoples' lives raised while working from 2008 to 2010 with patients seeking abortions at Seattle Planned Parenthood. Who, why, and how do women seek abortions, and what does the experience mean to them? These questions motivated me to pursue this topic as an academic.

As historian Vincent Brown wrote, “Of all creative writers, historians should be the most skeptical of claims to originality. Our words depend on so many sources that never appear in our footnotes – conversations with kin, friends, and casual acquaintances, the lyrics, rhythms, and melodies of our favorite music, the mood of our times.”² Though it is perhaps impossible to detail all the influences upon this work, it would have certainly turned out differently had it not been for the three books gifted to me from Dr. Robert Cam McIntyre upon leaving my position as a health care assistant at Seattle Planned Parenthood. Knowing I was returning to graduate school to study the history of sexuality, he thought I might find these medical encyclopedias from the 1960s “interesting.” I was touched by the gesture. At the time, I appreciated the smell,

¹ As quoted in Robert D. Johnston, *The Radical Middle Class: Populist Democracy and the Question of Capitalism in Progressive Era Portland, Oregon* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003), xiii-xiv.

² Vincent Brown, *The Reaper's Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), vii.

look, and feel of old books as much as any other history buff. Nevertheless, they sat on my shelf until, as a graduate student, I began to think more about how to analyze these sources.

Turned out they were not just any books. Inside the cover of Master's and Johnson's infamous 1966 edition of *Human Sexual Response* and a lesser-known, two-volume, 1961 encyclopedia of *Human Sexual Behavior*, edited by a forward-thinker in the field of sexual health, Albert Ellis, was the name Peter Raible, the minister at the University Unitarian Church for 36 years who Lee Minto, former executive director at Seattle Planned Parenthood, had credited with involving her in the activities of the Washington Citizens for Abortion Reform. The only markings in any of the books were ruler-straight red lines, highlighting information regarding abortion services available in Japan. I was surprised that a clergyman was interested in helping women access abortion. The contemporary rhetoric against legal abortion seems to boom loudest from religious voices. This source contradicted my previous assumptions about the campaign to legalize abortion in the United States.

By analyzing how and why a coalition of men and women, religious leaders, professionals, and citizen lobbyists agreed that the abortion law in Washington State needed to be reformed, and that a majority of voters agreed, helped me to understand how access to abortion became a middle-class issue shaped by middle-class values during the 1960s. Thus, the abortion issue transcended from solely being a women's issue. From this perspective, the backlash against access to abortion must be understood beyond just an attack on all women in general but as a broader attack about a specific ideal of middle-class motherhood.

Though there were a dozen states which liberalized their abortion law before 1973, Washington is the only state that did so by popular vote and thus the new law and the proponents' campaign had to have popular appeal. What messages about abortion would have

the potential for broad appeal during the 1960s and what was the local and national historical context which favored reform? A locally focused analysis of the campaign to legalize abortion enables scholars to understand why some ordinary Americans, in an act of civic participation, supported reform state laws regarding abortion during the 1960s. This study offers a unique contribution to an understudied time and place and suggests a new perspective on the history of abortion reform.

In the Shadow of the Population Bomb: The Campaign for Abortion Reform in Seattle, 1962-1970

The mood in Seattle after Election Day in November 2004 was palpably dismal. George W. Bush had just won the necessary majority of electoral votes and been reelected. There would be four more years. With its thumb on the pulse of the city, *The Stranger*, an alternative newspaper, freely distributed in Seattle and its surrounding metropolis, gave voice to the hopelessness (see Figure 1). “Do not despair,” the colorful message on the paper’s front cover began. “You don’t have to leave,” it continued, referencing a not uncommon threat to move to Canada if Bush won again. The message sought to connect to its urban audience with the words: “You may feel out of place in the United States today...but you’re not.” The message comforted its readership that they, as urbanites, did not live in “the nation.” They lived in “the city,” suggesting that cities were a special kind of place. It cited a correlation to reassure the reader that this was so. “The bigger the city, the higher Kerry’s percentage.” What made cities unique? Cities, it claimed, were “diverse, dynamic, and progressive,” and therefore Seattleites should rest assured (and stay put) because they lived in “The United Cities of America.”³ The cover of *The Stranger* from 2004 made a remarkable connection between place, politics, and identity that this study of the campaign for abortion reform highlights.

In the election of 1970, Referendum 20 legalized abortion in Washington by popular vote for

Figure 1:



³ *The Stranger*, November 11, 2004.

the first and only time in U.S. history. The impact of the campaign for abortion reform during the 1960s is evident in this source from 2004. According to the *The Stranger*, to be an urbanite meant being progressive and pro-choice.⁴ Events explored in this paper explain how Seattle became a progressive metropolis by the twenty-first century, home to urbanites who support access to abortion with their vote. By analyzing the campaign for abortion reform of the 1960s, the following work will show how place and identity became inextricably linked during the postwar period in Seattle to an extent that its legacy was still visible in this colorful cover of *The Stranger*.

Being pro-choice was one of the four critical attributes of this ideal Seattleite, according to this message. This particular construction of an urban identity has a history that can be analyzed by looking at the local campaign for abortion reform from 1962 until 1970 in Washington State. Indeed, the divide between supporting or opposing the legalization of abortion was geo-political. A majority of voters in the counties from the state's western urban corridor approved the referendum in 1970. Likewise today, as many who live in the state's western cities know anecdotally, the boundary separating city from country is where the rainbow flags end and anti-abortion billboards begin. The following work explores how place, politics, class, and identity functioned to create a culture favorable to abortion reform by 1970.

Demonstrating the relationship between place and identity, *The Stranger* concluded that Seattleites "felt out of place" only *if* they saw themselves as living in the United States. As the message suggested, urbanites supposedly held such different views from the rest of nation that had elected George W. Bush (51% of the popular vote) that Seattleites should see themselves as belonging to a different place, the United Cities of America. Seattleites felt out of place when contrasted against "the nation," whose residents supported Bush and were described as

⁴ Pro-choice is a post-*Roe v. Wade* label to signify political support for access to abortion.

“fundamentalist-church-going, gun-hugging, gay-bashing, [and] anti-choice,” in other words, everything that the magazine presumed its imagined readership *not* to be.⁵ Belonging to the city did not necessarily mean a residential address within the city’s formal boundaries but instead required a constructed urban identity that was decidedly progressive. Thus, culture and place were inextricably linked in ways that fostered an environment favorable to abortion reform in 1970 still evident in 2004.

The construction of a Seattleite identity required an “other” with which to contrast itself. By 2004, the “other” was the rest of America, but during the 1962 Century 21 Exposition in Seattle, which glorified an ideal metropolis of the future, the “other” was rural America. In 1962 Seattle hosted a World’s Fair at a time when many Americans had migrated from rural south and mid-west to the cities in the west and this event helped to create a particular vision of a utopian metropolis that embraced science, scientists, and the scientific method in a way that made abortion reform more favorable as a measure of “progressive” reform. In part, the abortion reform campaign in Seattle was a response to the city’s own “population explosion” after World War II as the city welcomed hundreds of thousands of new residents born out-of-state, though with some apprehension. Apprehension towards growth led to support for Referendum 20 as family planning became understood by some voters as a measure of urban planning. This work suggests that the campaign for abortion reform was an example of how some Seattleites worked to make the city into an ideal imagined during the World’s Fair.

The intention of this work is to uncover why a majority of Washington State voters approved abortion reform by referendum in 1970, the result of a campaign effort led by the members of Washington Citizens for Abortion Reform (WCAR) based in Seattle and run by Seattleites. To accomplish this, it seeks to understand the process through which Seattle became

⁵ *The Stranger*, November 11, 2004.

a progressive metropolis during the postwar era.⁶ This study contextualizes primary sources which portray the city in popular print and images in ways that sought to create a more hopeful future. It finds evidence of Seattleites who discussed their reasoning for supporting abortion reform in ways that reflect the perspective that moving from an “archaic” past and into a bright future required decriminalizing abortion and, in so doing, allowing experts to perform the procedure in hygienic hospitals. Some supporters of abortion reform, like Stacey Brown, wondered what kind of place tolerated women in “the hands of some butcher” because of an “out-needed law”?⁷ Indeed, Americans during the postwar era were hard at work thinking about what kind of place America should be just as the nation entered the world stage as a powerful economic and political force.⁸

This study considers the tension between images of the ideal city and family and the reality of American cities and middle-class families in transformation in the postwar era and how this tension motivated some to act in ways that supported reforming the state’s abortion law. To contextualize the local campaign for abortion reform, this study analyzes how ideas regarding abortion were shaped by discussions of progress and place in addition to new ideas about a healthy planet and healthy families during the postwar period.

By the 1960s, a critical mass of predominantly white, middle-class Americans began to articulate new ideas from the growing environmental and women’s movements that

⁶ Acknowledging that the meaning of “progressive” is not static but in perpetual formation through negotiating and contestation, this study takes seriously the ways in which historical actors understood the concept and how they acted upon its ideals. This matter will be explored further in Chapter 1. For example, readers may be surprised to discover that key members of the Republican leadership team at this time, such as Joel Pritchard, Slade Gorton, and Mary Ellen McCaffree supported Referendum 20. Republican Governor Dan Evans’ political platform, called “The Blueprint for Progress,” included environmental protections that would today be unlikely to be endorsed by the Republican Party. Being “progressive” during the 1960s was not synonymous with being a Democrat. This study investigates a time and place in which abortion was not a partisan issue.

⁷ “Letters, Incoming” Folder 2, Box 3, Washington Citizens for Abortion Reform records, 1963-1970, University of Washington Special Collections.

⁸ For more on the relationship between the international and domestic cold war context, see Elaine Tyler May’s work, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Context* (New York: Basic Books, 1988).

fundamentally rethought the human relationship with the earth and the relationship between genders. The evidence shows that some individuals reasoned that abortion reform was necessary by using a new lexicon popularized by these movements, such as “the stork is out pacing the plow” and “every woman has the right to choose.”⁹ This study takes seriously how politics and culture shape human behavior, especially for the middle class.¹⁰ As the population of the Seattle metropolitan area from Everett to Tacoma increased, so too did middle-class anxiety towards the concrete construction of a growing urban infrastructure and the threat this growth posed to a healthy planet and healthy families. While a growing economy was precisely the reason why many migrants arrived in Seattle between 1945 and 1970, middle-class professionals began to worry about the consequences of growth in ways which made them receptive to supporting public policies which enabled smaller family size. Thus, the campaign for abortion reform should be seen as an effort by citizens to create limits to growth of the city and family size during the postwar period.

Understanding the Shadow of the Population Bomb

This work is organized into two parts. The first two chapters explain the condition of cities and middle class families in the United States after World War II, and the last chapter argues that the abortion reform campaign succeeded because its supporters described it as way to protect women’s health, which they insisted would be good for growing cities and middle-class

⁹ The first comes from an advertisement for Planned Parenthood clinic hours at the University of Washington’s Student Health Center posted in the school’s *UW Daily*. The second phrase is from an advertisement created by the WCAR for the *Ellensburg Review*.

¹⁰ I do not presume a homogeneous middle class. Other scholarship has rightfully acknowledged that “middle classes” is a more accurate description. However, this study focuses upon a segment of the middle classes; white, university-educated, professional men and their wives (who may or may not have had salaried work, but who were through their marriage tied to their husbands professional social circle and thus class expectations), and urban. A. Ricardo Lopez and Barbara Weinstein, eds., *The Making of the Middle Class: Toward a Transnational History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), and Johnston, *The Radical Middle Class*.

families. By the end of the 1960s, many middle-class Americans expected to be able to plan their pregnancies just as they believed that a large family would hinder their aspirations of material affluence, as well as social and class mobility. Therefore, the following work begins with an analysis of the 1962 World's Fair in Seattle in order to understand what kind of place the middle class imagined to be hospitable, as explained in chapter 1.¹¹

Likewise, beginning with the interwar period, but especially after the Second World War, academic and popular literature grew increasingly critical of motherhood as a lifelong occupation for women.¹² An issue explored in chapter 2, participants in the feminist movement called for greater economic and social opportunities for women in society and argued that control over reproduction was a necessary prerequisite for this possibility. Images of marriage, the family, and motherhood during the 1960s reflect the construction of family planning and limited family size as a new middle class ideal. As this study makes clear, abortion was decriminalized because middle class women, despite the law, were already having abortions. By the 1960s, with the popularization of the science of ecology, the middle class became increasingly worried that too many people threatened their material affluence in a world of limited resources and this provides the ideological framework for a heterogeneous alliance of support for the movement. As Seattle voters considered Referendum 20, they confronted the conflict between images of the ideal city and ideal family against the reality of the seemingly endless urban and population growth if left unchecked.

¹¹ For a more complete discussion of middle-class aspirations, see Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Vintage Books, 2003), especially 212-226.

¹² For more on this subject, see the first chapter of Rebecca Jo Plant, *Mom: The Transformation of Motherhood in Modern America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

Chapter 1, “Urban Planning,” begins with an analysis of the 1962 Century 21 Exposition as a mega-event which functioned to create an imagined community—the metropolis—and a culture in Seattle favorable towards university-trained professionals as the preferred authorities on matters related to sex.¹³ The evidence suggests that ideas about what kind of place Seattle *should* be shaped citizens’ views of abortion reform legislation. Chapter 2, “Family Planning,” analyzes transformations in the middle class and explains why middle-class men and women supported abortion reform. This chapter argues that images of white, middle class-families shaped the campaign for abortion reform just as these images helped to transform the ideal family into an affluent married white man and woman with *two* planned children (see Figure 2).¹⁴

Figure 2:



The final chapter, “The Making of a Women’s Health Issue,” outlines the WCAR’s campaign that put abortion to a vote of the people in 1970 and suggests its legacy into the twenty-first century. It considers the vital contribution of local clergymen and members of the medical community, which added a powerful legitimacy to the political campaign. The evidence suggests that some doctors and religious leaders supported abortion reform because of their professional responsibility to serve women’s bodies and souls. Therefore, these professionals defined the campaign for reform as predominantly a women’s health issue rather than as a women’s rights issue. The evidence suggests that this aided the success of the campaign.

¹³ I rely upon the work of sociologist Maurice Roche to consider the function of the Seattle World’s Fair. Maurice Roche, *Mega-Events and Modernity: Olympics and Expos in the Growth of Global Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2000).

¹⁴ “Ephemera,” Box 1, Folder 16, WCAR, UWSC.

Because Washington State's abortion laws were reformed by referendum, this local case study analyzes and synthesizes rich primary sources to consider the significance of abortion reform in the history of postwar America. This study relies upon archival material from the Washington Citizens for Abortion Reform and Seattle Planned Parenthood as well as personal interviews conducted with people close to the campaign, including two interviews by the author. In order to understand why abortion reform passed in 1970, the study begins by analyzing why members of WCAR and the Washington State Legislature supported reform. The sources reveal that stories about women who needed abortions compelled people to support the campaign. Because of the referral requirement of therapeutic abortions, lawmakers had created a system in which women seeking abortions during the postwar period *had* to tell their stories and thus stories moved from congregants to clergymen and from patients to psychiatrists or physicians. In doing so, they had unknowingly set in to place a structure which set into motion the campaign for abortion reform. Knowing the power of personal stories, the WCAR actively sought "case studies" from local physicians in their investigation into the issue beginning in 1967. Citizens wrote letters to the WCAR's campaign office in downtown Seattle, volunteering stories of their own illegal abortions or retelling other women's stories. In 2000, Seattle Planned Parenthood conducted an oral history project to record the early years of the local affiliate. The unedited transcripts from this oral history project contain the same pattern and many members on the board at Seattle Planned Parenthood were also involved with the WCAR. The evidence is clear. Women's stories motivated people to change the law in Washington because.

This study finds that stories about unwanted pregnancies and illegal abortions were crucial in the politicization of members of the WCAR. They drive the tone and direction of this history because they drove the campaign during the 1960s. In the beginning of each chapter is a

WCAR member's recollection of one of these stories. In choosing which story out of many to recall, the activists revealed which story was meaningful to them. They are used in the following study to understand *which* particular stories, reconstructed in *what* exact way, motivated their political involvement with the WCAR and Referendum 20.

These stories are used in three ways in the following study. First, these stories are used to illuminate how the activists understood their participation in the reform effort. The stories suggest that members of the WCAR were motivated because unwanted pregnancies created a dilemma for the pregnant woman as well as the professionals whose job it was to serve them. Second, these stories are used to understand how the speakers reconstructed the dilemma of unwanted pregnancies and illegal abortions. As feminist and psychologist Carol Gilligan points out, "the way people talk about their lives is of significance...the language they use and the connections they make reveal the world that they see and in which they act."¹⁵ Thus, reproducing these stories in their entirety reveals how abortion was understood by these historical actors in order to understand how they shaped their actions. They are indispensable windows into the reform effort.

The order in which these stories appear in this study align with the history of abortion reform. The first story is recalled by Lee Minto and it introduces the idea that people are permanently affected when they "get close to peoples' pain" and highlights the geography of illegal abortions.¹⁶ The second story, by Dr. C. Glenn Clements, articulates how stories of unwanted pregnancies were understood in the context of middle class expectations surrounding

¹⁵ Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982), 2.

¹⁶ Interview of Lee Minto by Deborah McFarlane, November 10-11, 2007, 39. Oral history transcripts, Seattle Planned Parenthood Archive.

marriage and family.¹⁷ The third story was retold by Dr. Richard Soderstrom. It provides a window into the professional quandary that illegal abortion posed to a Seattle physician in the context of postwar debates over medicine and women's health. Together, these stories highlight three main themes that this study suggests may have motivated people at the time to support abortion reform with their vote: that the nature of therapeutic abortions compelled women to share their stories with professionals who lived and worked in the Seattle metropolis, that unwanted pregnancies were understood as a threat middle class marriages and families in the making by the 1960s, and that illegal abortions placed professionals in a bind, unable to serve women as they saw fit without breaking the law.

Stories also appear in this study in order to provide insight into the experiences of some of the thousands of newly arrived migrants to Seattle during the postwar period, some of whom were central to the reform campaign. These oral histories provide insight into how Seattleites responded to the dilemma of urban growth. An investigation into the campaign for abortion reform quickly reveals the crucial networks built around the University of Washington between professors and their wives, many of whom migrated to Seattle during the 1950s because of job opportunities at the growing research institution. Campaign literature which solicited donations was specifically addressed to "physicians and their wives," and friendships built between neighbors in the University District neighborhood connected politicians, physicians, and community activists around dinner-table conversations, during their church activities, or in local politicking affairs like the PTA or League of Women Voters.¹⁸ The evidence suggests that the campaign for abortion reform was a family affair, and this study focuses upon three families in particular—the McCaffrees, McIntyres, and Mintos, all of whom lived in the neighborhood

¹⁷ "Case Studies," Folder 6, Box 2, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁸ "Letters, Incoming" Folder 2, Box 3, WCAR, UWSC.

around the University. Each of these families moved to Seattle because of growing employment opportunities at the University of Washington after World War II.

Kenneth McCaffree was a professor of economics and health services while also serving on the board at Group Health of Puget Sound. Robert McIntyre was a professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, working at the county hospital (later called Harborview) and as a volunteer physician at Seattle Planned Parenthood. Robert Minto was on staff at the Applied Physics Lab. Their wives, like other middle-class wives, worked though sometimes not for pay. Mary Ellen McCaffree represented the University District in the State House of Representatives from 1963 until 1971. She continued to work in local politics even after she lost her seat in the 1970 election. Lenore McIntyre was on the board at Seattle Planned Parenthood from 1956 until 1986. Lee Minto worked at the University Unitarian Church with Peter Raible and as a fundraiser for the UN Pavilion at the World's Fair before she joined the board at Planned Parenthood and became the affiliate's first full-time executive director, a position she held from 1967 until 1993. This alliance of university professors and their civically active wives reveals another pattern that explains the middle-class nature of the campaign for abortion reform in Washington State. The evidence suggests that the campaign for abortion reform was a political effort by the middle class and for the middle class.

Thus, three important themes are central to understanding why and how abortion was legalized in Washington State in 1970: the role of the middle class in Seattle in the campaign as a progressive reform initiative; the power of place and culture to favor support for such a reform efforts; and the power of personal stories from women's "personal" lives to motivate political

actions.¹⁹ Middle-class Seattleites participated in both the environment and women's movements of the 1960s. Feminists argued that contraception and abortion empowered women, allowing them to control their fertility, while environmentalists believed that population limitation was crucial for balancing the earth's carrying capacity. The campaign for abortion reform in Washington State rested upon an alliance of these two ideologically-driven movements. The science of ecology posited a scientific schema in which human life was inextricably connected to the life of the planet, not its rightful master. Feminists argued that patriarchy enslaved men and women into gender roles which supported American militarism and consumerism—two elements which some contended perpetuated a systematic exploitation of the earth's resources.²⁰ Evidence of these ideologies can be found in Legislative proceedings, oral histories, editorials, private letters, campaign material, and images produced during this period.

It is within this context that the legalization of abortion gained support along the metropolitan corridor of western Washington. If the population continued to grow unrestricted, how would the next generation enjoy the same "quality of life" in the future? The concern about "quality of life"—manifested as material affluence, health, and environmental beauty—signified one's middle class status. Understanding abortion as a "quality of life" issues—that abortion reform supported *wanted* children who would be better cared for—it then becomes clear how the ideologies from environmental and women's movements were complementary for many white middle class Seattleites who entered the poll booth in November, 1970.

¹⁹ Feminists have rightly noted, and as the case of abortion reform makes clear, that the personal is political. See Robin Morgan, *Sisterhood is Powerful: An Anthology of Writings from the Women's Liberation Movement* (New York: Random House, 1970).

²⁰ See *New York Radical Women: Notes from the First Year*, <http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/scriptorium/wlm/notes/>. Of particular interest are "Abortion Rally Speech" and "Funeral Oration for the Burial of Traditional Womanhood."

The women's movement indirectly supported the abortion reform campaign by widening the context in which abortion reform was discussed in the words of Dr. Sam Goldenberg, who co-founded the WCAR.²¹ Although campaign literature included a women's "right to choose," the campaign's strongest message (perhaps because it could most powerfully contend with the opposition that argued simply that abortion murdered children) was that abortion was good for families because it prevented unwanted children from coming into a world unable to provide enough for all. For example, Figure 2 is an image from an advertisement for abortion reform from the *Ellensburg Daily Record*. Below the image of an idealized white, middle class family, were words which complicate any attempt to simplify this reform effort. In black, bold-faced ink were the words: "Every child has the right to be wanted. Every woman has the right to choose. Every family has the right to decide."²² The advertisement shows the rhetoric with which support for abortion reform was articulated in a way that implied that it was "good" for the middle-class family. Other discussions of support for abortion reform suggested that it was "good" for Washington State's economy and landscape, especially in cities like Seattle. This perspective on the issue reflected middle-class values as well as the method of reforming the law. Indeed, the WCAR began as a citizens' study group to gather information about the issue and included the cooperation of professionals, sought legitimacy in public media, pursued political change through the channels of democratic reform, and valued scientific knowledge above all else in order to stop what they called a human tragedy.

Therefore, in the shadow of the population bomb, supporters of abortion reform were motivated to reform the state's laws. Fear of overpopulation provided a platform upon which the

²¹ "Dr. Samuel Goldenberg Recalls the Campaign to Liberalize Washington's Abortions Laws," Interview of Dr. Samuel [sic] Goldenberg by Cassandra Tate, September 2, 2000, Seattle, Washington, *HistoryLink: The Free Online Encyclopedia of Washington State History*, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=2656.

²² "Ephemera," Box 1, Folder 16, WCAR, UWSC.

American middle class remade itself. In doing so, a middle class ideal emerged by the later postwar period in which abortion was seen as a necessary tool to support their expectations regarding sex, marriage, and family, as well as class expectations of higher-education, material affluence, and the use of nature as a leisure resource. The method of reform perused by the WCAR reflected their middle class faith in the moral authority of professionals and the democratic process. By the late 1960s it became clear to many that the pursuit of material affluence, given a world of limited resources, was threatened by the presence of “too many.” Furthermore, the social value placed upon women as mothers had changed as white, middle-class women expected and were expected to exit the child-rearing phase of their life earlier than in previous eras. In short, American women expected and were expected to have occupations other than motherhood. Abortion, along with contraception, thus became an indispensable tool to fulfill the needs of the family in a consumer economy which needed women’s labor and spending power to function. To conclude, the decriminalization of abortion in the United States should be understood as a reform effort supported by the middle class as they sought to plan families in order to meet the changing economic realities of a post-industrial nation.

History of Abortion Reform

The earliest histories of abortion, contraception, and the role of the state in these matters were written by feminist scholars. They were the first to raise the consciousness of their disciplines, including history, by insisting that “the personal is political” and that matters of sex were not only an appropriate but an illuminating lens into human relations and dynamics of power in society.²³ Beginning in the 1970s, historians and social scientists published studies on

²³ Linda Gordon, *Woman’s Body, Woman’s Right: A Social History of Birth Control in America* (New York: Grossman, 1976). A second edition was published in 1977 by Penguin Books in New York and a third edition was published in

the birth-control movement.²⁴ The following social-political history extends previous scholarship about the social history of reproductive politics by investigating the campaign for abortion reform at the state level. Since 1973, state legislative actions have expanded upon the meaning of Justice Blackmun's words in the majority decision in *Roe* that "the right is not unqualified and must be considered against important state interests in regulation."²⁵ Thus, it is clearly crucial to analyze how "state interests" have been interpreted by policy makers from various states since 1973 as well as how local campaigns prior to 1973 have shaped the nature of abortion reform in America.

However, the scope of previous studies on the history of abortion has remained national.²⁶ While historians using a national perspective can explain change at the macro-level—major shifts in economic structures, the landscape of international politics, national social movements—they cannot explain the complex terrain that created a remarkably heterogeneous alliance of clergymen, politicians, medical professionals, and community activists who heard the stories of women who faced the dilemma of unwanted pregnancies. In other words, ordinary people responded to national events by acting locally. This history therefore considers how the efforts of extraordinary individuals like Margaret Sanger, Alfred Kinsey, or John D. Rockefeller III contributed to the history of abortion reform only through the influence of their ideas upon individual actions. As Leslie Reagan suggested, "Public policy made at the national and state

2002 under a new title, *The Moral Property of Women: A History of Birth Control Politics in America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002).

²⁴ James W. Reed, "The Birth Control Movement Before *Roe v. Wade*," *Journal of Policy History* 7, no. 1 (January 1995): 22. See also James Reed, *From Private Vice to Public Virtue: the Birth Control Movement and American Society since 1830* (New York: Basic Books, 1978).

²⁵ Linda K. Kerber, "The 40th Anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*: A Teachable Moment," *Perspectives on History*, October 2012, 65.

²⁶ Classic studies of the history of abortion include: James C. Mohr, *Abortion in America: The Origins and Evolutions of National Policy, 1800-1900* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), Kristin Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), Leslie J. Reagan, *When Abortion Was a Crime: Women, Medicine, and Law in the United States, 1867-1973* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), and previously cited work by Linda Gordon.

levels deserves to be examined where it was carried out: at the local level, in one-on-one interactions and the day-to-day basis.”²⁷ In order to properly contextualize *Roe v. Wade*, scholars must investigate the wealth of information available from the more than fifteen states which legalized or liberalized their abortion laws at the state level before 1973. Local archives contain records pertaining to the work of grassroots activism, and local studies can analyze how the voices of ordinary women mobilized citizen activists.²⁸ The history of Washington State is a captivating case study because the reform effort was achieved by referendum. The following is a history that focuses upon citizen participation in the democratic process to make laws which fit their social reality.

As the fortieth anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* approaches, perhaps it is time for fresh scholarship on the history of abortion reform in the United States. In a recent article, historian Linda Kerber outlined the literature on the subject and suggested that the time is ripe for local histories of abortion. She specifically writes: “Here is where our students – undergraduate and graduate – can make a real difference.” She reasons that students are well positioned to piece together archival sources “in grave danger of being lost,” interviewing activists from the 1960s in the short amount of time available, and contributing “indispensable” new research to the field.²⁹ Indeed, the sources available regarding the campaign for abortion reform in Washington are rich and the following study contributes important insights into an under investigated event.

²⁷ Reagan, *When Abortion Was a Crime*, 1.

²⁸ By 1973, Alaska, Hawaii, New York, and Washington had legalized abortion. In the three states other than Washington, it was accomplished by an act of the state legislature. Another thirteen states had liberalized their abortion laws, meaning they had broadened the possible scenarios in which a woman could have a “therapeutic” abortion in a hospital, for example, in cases of rape or incest. Although the exact procedures varied, a therapeutic abortion was one in which a board of physicians and/or psychiatrists agreed that an abortion was necessary to save the life and/or health of the mother. Rachel Benson Gold, “Lessons from before *Roe*: Will Past Be Prologue?” *The Guttmacher Report on Public Policy*, 6, no. 9, March 2003, <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/tgr/06/1/gr060108.html>

²⁹ Kerber, “The 40th Anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*,” 65.

This study seeks to understand Referendum 20 from the perspective of those who worked on the campaign, Seattleites, and understandably the urban focus restricts this study in some ways. Future research opportunities include investigating the history of the reform campaign in rural parts of Washington, an investigation into the campaign of Voice for the Unborn (the opposition group), or studies that consider minority voices with the respect and attention that they deserve. Clearly, there is more work to be done. Nevertheless, this study adds important knowledge to the field by analyzing the role of women in local politics, understanding the heterogeneous alliance which favored abortion reform during the 1960s, and considering how place and culture function in modern societies. Most importantly, this study reveals the pervasive influence of ideologies from the environmental and women's movement upon women's healthcare during the postwar period. Furthermore, historians can help contemporary policy makers and those in the medical field understand why access to abortion, in spite of its legalization, is uneven across socioeconomic and geographic lines.³⁰

Historical research on women of the Pacific Northwest has only recently begun to contribute interpretations about the past that compel rethinking some previous assumptions about U.S. history.³¹ In 2001, historian Karen Blair made clear that previous studies of Pacific Northwest women have tended to be more descriptive than analytical and that only a few topics had received the attention of scholars. She concluded that too little research has been published

³⁰ For example, in *Safe, Legal, and Unavailable? Abortion Politics in the United States*, (Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2006), Melody Rose highlights that access to abortion is very difficult for women living in rural counties. It is less clear how or if social characteristics like culture or ethnicity play a role in access to abortion even when cost is not a factor and a provider is available.

³¹ For example, Quintard Taylor's 1994 history of the Central District in Seattle and the creation of a black community offers new insight into the emergence of the civil rights movement in the United States. See Quintard Taylor, *The Forging of a Black Community: Seattle's Central District from 1870 through the Civil Rights Era*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994). Coll Thrush uses stories about Indians and their experiences in Seattle in ways that also have national implications. See Coll Thrush, *Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007). Also, Matthew Klinge's work combines urban history and environmental history and suggests rethinking the history and ethic of all American places. See Matthew Klinge, *Emerald City: An Environmental History of Seattle* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

on several issues of importance: “politics, radicalism, movements to redress inequality, sexual issues, minority women, and even post-World War II woman’s experiences.”³² The following work contributes new knowledge to these topics in the history of the region, as well as to the history of abortion reform in the United States as well as other postwar phenomenon. This study casts light upon the “unlikely” alliance of support for reform from a heterogeneous group of supporters.³³ Linda Gordon and others have rightfully pointed out that in the years prior to *Roe*, there is no evidence of a great degree of polarization on the issue of abortion, and yet there are few studies which adequately explain why.³⁴ Thus, this history depicts an era and a place in which abortion reform received endorsement from a heterogeneous alliance unlikely to exist in the twenty-first century. For example, Referendum 20 was officially endorsed by doctors, churches, teachers, union members, Republicans, and Democrats. Many of these organizations, like the PTA, Medical Association, or Democratic Convention, were the local branch of a larger national organization which often had *not yet* decided upon an official position on the matter of abortion reform. To be blunt, by 1970 the Pacific Northwest, Washington State, Puget Sound, King County, or Seattle branch of various medical, church, or professional associations had endorsed abortion reform whereas their national counterparts had not.³⁵ This alliance seems “unlikely” only because after 1973 and with the rise of the New Right, the Republican Party and certain Christian churches have loudly proclaimed their disdain for legal sanction of abortion.³⁶

³² Karen Blair, “The State of Research on Pacific Northwest Women,” *Frontiers* 22, no. 3 (2001): 51.

³³ I mean “unlikely” from the perspective of the twenty-first century. The phrase, “unlikely alliance,” is a theme throughout this study. The language comes from the 2004 work by Tom Davis, *Sacred Work: Planned Parenthood and its Clergy Alliance* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2005), which is covered more fully in chapter 3.

³⁴ Gordon, *The Moral Property of Women*, 299.

³⁵ “The Abortion Law,” *The Seattle Times*, November 1, 1970.

³⁶ For more on the matter, see Davis, *Sacred Work*. As former chaplain for Planned Parenthood Federation of American, Tom Davis points out that it is a misconception to think that to be religious in America necessarily means to be pro-life. He blames the media from this misconception and argues that the alliance between clergymen and the work of Planned Parenthood, including abortion, has a long history that indeed continues to

Yet, during the 1960s many Republicans and clergymen were central to the reform effort. This study explains why by arguing that the shadow of the population bomb provided a context for reform that legitimized their efforts as a reform measure that was good for the planet, American society, urban cities, middle class families, and individual women.

This study makes clear that abortion reform is an important history to investigate. The legalization of abortion during the last quarter of the twentieth century had a political, social, and economic impact for women and their partners and emerged from a dramatic transformation of the American economy and middle class families. Historians who investigate the history of abortion between World War II and 1973 are often compelled by a desire to make known what life was like for women facing unwanted pregnancies when abortion was a crime in order to make the case that we should “never go back.” They are often reacting to their own era, in which access to abortion has become increasingly undermined by political actions at the state level. Therefore, not only is it necessary for historians to contextualize illegal abortions for policy makers and medical providers but they must contribute to their discipline an analysis of motivating factors for these local efforts to reform abortion laws at the state level.

Finally, this study properly situates the history of the campaign for abortion reform as a *likely* alliance of the environmental and women’s movement. In Linda Gordon’s now classic history of birth control politics, she wrote the following in her chapter on abortion: “The legalization of abortion...resulted immediately from the campaigns of feminists and civil libertarian physicians and lawyers and from long-term changes in society and the economy.”³⁷ Yet, until the work of Robert Thompson in *The Malthusian Moment*, historians have failed to appreciate the relationship between the environmental and women’s movements as well as the

this day. In fact, the Seattle affiliate of Planned Parenthood is the only affiliate to have a chaplain, Rev. Vincent Brown, as a full-time member of the staff.

³⁷ Gordon, *Moral Property of Women*, 298.

role from a heterogeneous alliance of supporters. Feminists did not act alone in their struggle to legalize abortion. This work builds upon previous—now classic—scholarship by feminist historians while also considering recent work by Thomas Robertson and Rebecca Jo Plant.³⁸ The evidence in Seattle suggests that tenets of ecology, such as carrying capacity, in addition to feminist campaigns, created a schema that helped activists to argue that abortion reform was an important social and political matter.³⁹ During the same eight-year period from 1962 until 1970, a critical mass of mostly middle-class Americans, feminists and non-feminists, advocated for environmental protections that included anti-natal policies such as the legalization of abortion, expansion of access to reliable contraceptive technology, and sex education.

This work is inspired by the scholarship of Elaine Tyler May (*America and the Pill*), Beth Bailey (*Sex in the Heartland*), and Lisa McGirr (*Suburban Warriors*) in particular. By focusing upon the middle class in transformation and by using a regional case study, the following interpretation assesses larger historical questions of the postwar period in a new way. What explains changing behavioral norms regarding sex, marriage, and motherhood? How did Americans respond to a rapidly changing political and economic landscape in the era following World War II? Why did many respond during the 1960s by using grassroots action tactics in civic participation to change policies regarding abortion? This work explains how some Seattleites understood abortion reform as a tool to help create a modern city suitable to middle-class families during an era of affluence and anxiety.

Methodologically, this study has much in common with the work of May, Bailey, and McGirr. First, the middle class is the primary subject in each of their books. Second, like McGirr's *Suburban Warriors* and Bailey's *Sex in the Heartland*, this study focuses upon a local

³⁸ Robertson, *The Malthusian Moment: Global Population Growth and the Birth of American Environmentalism* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2012), and Plant, *Mom*.

³⁹ See chapters 6 and 7 of Robertson, *The Malthusian Moment*.

region in order to understand a national trend. Writing about the rising social movement in California which in part gave birth to the New Right in the United States, McGirr found that previous scholarship on the subject had focused exclusively at the national level and had left “unexamined and unexplained the dynamic social base that propelled the movement and gave it its endurance and strength.”⁴⁰ This study also examines local politics and the Republican Party during this transformative time for conservative politics, but because of regional differences, the Republican Party in Washington did not align with religious institutions and sentiments as it did in Orange County. Finally, this work shares a feminist perspective that gender is an important analytical category, that it shapes human experiences in fundamental ways. Some additional similarities exist between these studies.

For example, this paper’s interpretation of the history of abortion reform mirrors May’s interpretation of the meaning of “the pill” in American history. May also notes the “strange bedfellows” who supported this new contraceptive technology and takes seriously the fear of the population bomb in motivating its development and acceptance. This paper argues that fear of the population bomb created an ideological umbrella that was broad enough to accommodate the unlikely alliance that supported abortion reform in Washington State. This is in part because of the contradictory role of science in the postwar period in America. As May concludes, science had provided the world with penicillin to save millions while at the same time it created atomic and hydrogen bombs capable of killing just as many. Just the same, the history of the pill was full of promises and perils. For some, it represented the “magic bullet” that would avert the explosion of the “population bomb.”⁴¹ But it was also full of peril both because of the side effects from the excessively high dose in its early years and also because it failed to completely

⁴⁰ Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 11.

⁴¹ Elain Tyler May, *America and the Pill: A History of Promise, Peril, and Liberation* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), 3.

solve the dilemma of unwanted pregnancy. Additionally, in liberating women from fear of pregnancy, it also liberated men from the shared responsibility of contraception and unwanted pregnancies. This history of the campaign for abortion reform picks up where May's study leaves off: what happened when the pill failed to eliminate unwanted pregnancies?

Bailey's work considers the sexual revolution in the United States from a local perspective in a college town in Kansas to assess the validity of some scholars' depiction of its national scope. This study assesses the political phenomenon in which family planning became a part of public policy supported in postwar America by using a local case study. Like the sexual revolution in Lawrence, Kansas, the campaign for abortion reform in Seattle was not created by a set of radicals on the fringe of American society.⁴² Again, a diverse group of activists sought abortion reform in Washington State. The legalization of abortion was not the result any one social group motivated by one unifying agenda. Instead, a wide range of interests were considered in writing the law which a majority of voters approved. Like the sexual revolution, the movement in favor of abortion reform had unintended consequences from activists with sometimes quite different goals. For example, May and Robertson both acknowledge the "strange bedfellows" of eugenicists, libertarians, feminists, radicals, and conservatives who may have favored population limitation for all or only certain groups of people. In May's history of the pill and Robertson's history of the modern environmental movement, each cite the fear of the population bomb as a motivating factor which unified an unlikely alliance of supporters, including feminists and non-feminists.

Further similarities exist between Bailey's book and this work. Both towns' universities played an important economic role and both towns experienced post-war population growth. Local elites in Seattle responded by rethinking social norms and public policies that supported

⁴² Beth Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 3.

access to abortion, enabling women to later claim it as a tool of revolution. Like Bailey's sexual revolution, the campaign for abortion reform was a result of negotiation rather than "pitched battles and overt cultural warfare."⁴³ Compromises were made, and by 1971, a woman could obtain a safe and legal abortion in Washington State. Thus, the campaign for abortion reform rested upon the intersection between the environmental and women's movement, with implications that affected all women.

By focusing on a local history of a national phenomenon, we can analyze how and why individuals decided to work to change the prohibition against abortion. The campaign for abortion reform unearthed contested terrain of the postwar period in ways that reveal the middle class in transformation. Images of planned families contrasted against images of excessive reproduction during the campaign for reform. This identity-making process for the middle class was inextricably bound to the making of Seattle into a metropolis as Los Angeles functioned as its antithetical "other." The need for reform was fueled by a ubiquitous postwar metaphor which symbolized the ultimate threat to the American middle class: the population bomb. This image conflated fear of atomic annihilation with newly popularized ideas about overpopulation, and it helped to legitimize the public discourse necessary for an abortion reform campaign to be successful and create a schema elastic enough for the heterogeneous alliance of supporters for reform. As a backlash against the pro-natal culture of the 1950s, the abortion reform campaign in Seattle reflects the creation of a new ideal white, middle-class family to meet the economic and social needs of post-industrial America.

⁴³ Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland*, 11.

Urban Planning

“If You Get Close to People’s Pain”

I was sitting at my desk in 1968 before the law change in Washington, and the front desk volunteer came back to me and she said, ‘This woman just has got to see you. She’s just got to see you.’ And I said, ‘All right, bring her in.’ This was a woman in her jeans, and she’d come in a pickup truck, and she’d brought her retarded daughter with her. She came into my office, and she put a sack of money on my desk – and I could hear it – and she said, ‘I’ve got a problem, and you’ve got to help me with it.’ And she said, ‘My girl doesn’t think right, and she’s got herself in trouble. And she didn’t mean no harm by it, but you’ve got to help me, you’ve just got to help me.’ And she said, ‘I’ve got \$125 in there.’ She said, ‘I’ve sold everything I can get my hands on.’ She’d driven all the way down from Skagit Valley to have help for this girl, and there wasn’t a thing I could do.

I’ll never forget that woman either. Never forget her. Those memories are the most painful memories that I’ve had at Planned Parenthood. If you get close to people’s pain – and you do when you’re in a situation like that – you never forget them. And you want to tell people about them so they understand what is there. And it hurts.⁴⁴

Personal Story, recalled in 2007 by Lee Minto
Executive Director of Seattle Planned Parenthood from 1967-1993

This is one of many stories which demonstrate how the voices of women drove members of the Washington Citizens for Abortion Reform (WCAR) to organize the abortion reform campaign of the 1960s. It reveals a common pattern, one that explains why the campaign to legalize abortion by popular vote in 1970 was successful. Similar “unforgettable” memories fill the archives of the WCAR at the University of Washington (UW), and this study argues that Seattle became the center of the reform movement in part because many key figures in the city’s medical community, such as Minto, were supportive of reform because of their class expectations and values in addition to the emergence of Seattle as a regional medical center during the postwar period. In 1967, Minto became Seattle Planned Parenthood’s first full-time

⁴⁴ Interview of Lee Minto by Deborah McFarlane, November 10-11, 2007, 39.

executive director, and its clinic was the only center for low-cost family planning services in the entire Northwest region of the United States. She had also just joined the WCAR, meeting regularly with other concerned citizens, including clergymen, priests, lawyers, physicians, psychologists, and other professionals familiar with the dilemma of illegal abortions. Because of her position at Planned Parenthood she was confronted with stories of women and their dilemma of unwanted pregnancies.

This “painful memory” was recalled years later in an oral history project by Smith College on Population and Reproductive Health. The story was one that she would never forget--not even the sound of the sack of money as the woman placed it on her desk. The way in which she retold the story reveals Minto’s understanding of the abortion issue. In choosing to tell it and to prioritize this particular story, she revealed what motivated her to work to reform the state’s 1909 prohibition against abortion: recognition of the need for abortion, a sense of the human tragedy of living in a society in which abortion was a crime, and the belief that it was her job to help. Other members of the WCAR recalled similar “marker cases” which compelled them to act.⁴⁵ Indeed, the campaign for abortion reform between 1967 and 1970 was built upon and driven by this network of stories from women about unwanted pregnancies. Such stories, therefore, allow us to understand how and why members of the WCAR led a political campaign for abortion reform. A closer analysis of this story is thus worthwhile in order to understand the nature of this urban campaign.

Having driven south from the agricultural region north of Seattle, the mother of the pregnant daughter “insisted” on speaking to Minto. “I’ve got a problem,” she exclaimed, “and you’ve got to help me with it.” Presenting professionals with their stories and insisting upon being helped, women drove the campaign for reform. But the current law created a quandary for

⁴⁵ Oral History Transcripts, Seattle Planned Parenthood Archive.

Minto and other professionals. As middle-class professionals they wanted to respect the law, and yet, on the other hand, the law prevented them from fulfilling their professional responsibilities to help women. Therefore, motivated by the voices of women, middle class professionals—men and women—worked to change the law in Washington State. Minto illustrated the dilemma that the law created for herself and others with the words: “There wasn’t a thing I could do.” The inability to help constituted “the most painful memories” Minto had from her work at Planned Parenthood, but her emotional response to this scenario sealed the memory into her mind, allowing her to recall it decades later.

Minto first became aware of the dilemma of unwanted pregnancies not during her time as executive director at Planned Parenthood but through her work with her church—University Unitarian. Indeed, there is a strong history between churches and Planned Parenthood often forgotten during discussions of reproductive rights in the twenty-first century. Thus, through her participation in her church, through experience gained while working at the UN Pavilion at the 1962 Seattle World’s fair, and because of her job at Seattle Planned Parenthood, she became an effective member of the WCAR and a remarkable figure in the movement to legalize abortion. Moreover, as the last line in the story suggests—“And you want to tell people about them so they understand what is there”—not only was her work driven by the stories that women shared with her, but she also believed that in sharing these stories, others would understand what criminalized abortion meant for women and support abortion reform.

By the 1960s, PPFA and Seattle Planned Parenthood had each had a long history. Since Margaret Sanger opened an illegal birth control clinic in 1916 in New York City, the pattern was repeated throughout the nation of female nurses opening clinics in urban centers. In 1939, Seattle’s first Planned Parenthood clinic was started in the basement of a local nurse’s personal

residence. But by the 1960s, the reproductive rights movement had changed in significant ways. By 1962 the president of PPFA was a male doctor—Alan Guttmacher. Likewise, under Minto’s leadership, Seattle Planned Parenthood expanded as she actively sought to involve local men in the mission of Planned Parenthood as members of the Businessmen, Physician, and Clergymen’s Advisory Boards. Minto’s first job during the 1962 Seattle World’s Fair as a fundraiser for the UN Pavilion had taught her practical lessons on the importance of involving men in the work of an organization like Planned Parenthood, which relied on support from private donations.⁴⁶ This study therefore begins in 1962, though the WCAR was formed in 1967, in order to understand the culture which helped to build the unlikely alliance that would in 1970 successfully run a campaign in which 56% of voters supported abortion reform.⁴⁷

Beginning the study in 1962 also allows us to understand how the Century 21 Exposition functioned to create an imagined community—the metropolis—and a culture in Seattle favorable towards university-trained experts as the preferred authorities on matters related to reproduction. This chapter thus laid the foundation for this study upon which the successful reform movement was built. Just as the Century 21 Exposition reshaped the urban landscape in Seattle, this chapter explains how a culture favorable to reform was intact by the 1960s. It is necessary to understand how this mega-event created an image of an ideal metropolis during an era in which popular media discussed “the crisis” of American cities. This chapter argues that the Century 21 Exposition reveals a tension between the reality of cities in American and the ideal that the Seattle World’s Fair helped to posit. Not only did this event help to transform Seattle into the metropolis that city boosters desperately wanted to see, but also the event’s hosts hoped to

⁴⁶ Public funding for health services did not begin until Title X was approved by Congress and signed by President Richard M. Nixon the same year that Referendum 20 was approved by Washington voters.

⁴⁷ A. Ludlow Kramer, *Abstract of Votes: General Election Held on November 3, 1970* (Olympia: Secretary of State, 1970).

convince potential businesses, technocrats, and government agencies that Seattle was the place on the new (endless) frontier of science in order to attract federal dollars and university-educated migrants to the growing city. But the event also reveals ambivalence towards the benefits of growth, for one of the region's most valuable assets was its sparsely populated, resource-rich, environment. Though fair's organizers expressed hope for a brighter future, the reality of living in the atomic age meant a certain amount of reservation towards the social benefits of science. It is in this tension between ideal and reality that we can understand how Seattleites might have understood the promises and perils of science in ways that favored abortion reform.

As the shadow of the population bomb grew darker between 1962 and 1970, support for abortion reform became seen by some reformers as a policy measure that would create limits to growth and ease America's transition from an industrial to a post-industrial nation. The following chapter explains how and why Seattle became a likely place for the campaign for abortion reform. Although the social-political tide had begun to favor rethinking our national and state policies regarding abortion during the 1950s, this chapter argues that not until the confluence of historical events of 1962 (Seattle World's Fair, Cuban Missile Crisis, and the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*) that family planning merged with urban planning as two sides of the same coin. This chapter explains how Seattle became the place on the new, endless frontier of science and how the conflation between science, progress, and metropolis created a culture in Seattle favorable to the campaign for abortion reform by 1970.

Like family planning, urban planning was called for by public servants and policy makers as a response to the perception that, without limits to growth, the city as well as middle-class families would face peril in the near future. Thus, the evidence suggests that after 1962, the middle class in Seattle was receptive to policies which promised limits to growth, and the

WCAR framed the campaign in such a light by linking family planning to urban planning. The World's Fair in 1962 functioned to create a culture in Seattle favorable to reform by bringing together thousands of locals to help create, raise funds, build, work at, and visit the Century 21 Exposition. It reshaped the culture of the city in ways which directly affected the campaign for abortion reform. Uncertainty about the future, echoed in the letter from the City Council members, propelled city boosters, planners, policy makers, and activists to support measures which promised urban and family planning to quell the threat of unchecked growth, such as voting for abortion reform in 1970.

Endless Frontier

A hopeful future still seemed possible as local city boosters planned the Seattle World's Fair from 1957-1962. They insisted that a new frontier of hope had opened in the American West, an endless frontier of science and progress, and they argued that Seattle was a good place for investing in this future with financial and human capital. Indeed, migration to western cities had increased since the Second World War and many of the families central to this campaign—the Mintos, McIntyres, and McCaffrees—migrated to Seattle during the 1950s. Like other migrants, they carried with them ideas about the meaning of the journey west that influenced their support for abortion reform as a means to remove an unnecessary, archaic law.

The story of pioneers heading west to seek new opportunities in ways that lifted up the nation as a whole is evident in the oral histories of members of the WCAR. The Minto, McIntyre, and McCaffree families migrated to Seattle because of expanding employment opportunities at the University of Washington. Employed in areas of scientific research, medicine, and economics, these married men migrated to Seattle with their families in a pattern indicative of what one geographer has called the Great Internal Rural-Urban Migration of the

mid-twentieth century.⁴⁸ Recently arrived from Montana, Illinois, and Kansas, they settled into the neighborhood surrounding the University, making friends and professional connections that would help to build the alliance of supporters for WCAR in Seattle. Just as important, they carried with them ideas about what kind of place Seattle was. After the World's Fair of 1962, the evidence suggests that they acted upon ideas of what kind of place Seattle *should* be in ways that motivated the campaign for abortion reform. An analysis of the migration story of the Minto family reveals how the wave of migration to Seattle after World War II fostered the creation of a campaign alliance built around the University of Washington. This shaped the nature of the campaign in ways that aligned with a secular, scientific culture that the Century 21 Exposition aspired to see in Seattle.

The migration story of the Mintos is not unusual in Seattle's postwar history. In 1946 Robert Minto was a B-29 pilot and had just come back from the Pacific. Wanting to study engineering at the University of Washington, he decided to take a few credits at the University of Montana. While there, he met Lee Bates—a sophomore at the university—and three months later they were married. Just before they married, a mother and close friend of Minto's told her, "Well, you really do need to go and see a doctor and get fit for a diaphragm, because you want to finish your education." Minto's doctor, though, would not fit her for a diaphragm. He didn't do pelvic examinations on women until after they were married. She explained to him that they were going on a six-week honeymoon and asked him what she should do. "Well," he replied, "I'd use a vinegar douche, if I were you."⁴⁹ This story, recalled in an oral history in 2007, places Minto's life directly in the crosscurrents of American history regarding reproductive politics. She helped to expand the first and only family planning health center in the Northwest in 1967, yet

⁴⁸ For more on migration during the twentieth century in America, see James M. Rubenstein, *The Cultural Landscape: An Introduction to Human Geography* (New York: Macmillan, 1994), 114-17.

⁴⁹ Minto, Oral History, November 10-11, 2007, 4.

she was unable to plan her own pregnancies. For Minto, a vinegar douche is hardly the kind of scientific solution to the modern issue of overpopulation. Claiming that the “stork was outracing the plow,” she worked to expand the education department at Seattle Planned Parenthood with skills acquired while working as a fundraiser during the World’s Fair.⁵⁰

Likewise, the Mintos’ migration to Seattle reflects a common pattern in postwar Seattle which helps explain why the Century 21 Exposition sought to create a more hospitable environment for middle-class families in the metropolis of the future. Migrants tended to be married and university educated.⁵¹ Upon returning from their honeymoon, Robert and Lee Minto moved to Seattle to attend the University of Washington. She was already pregnant. Robert studied mathematics and engineering, while Lee continued to study English literature and creative writing. Within a few years, Robert was on the staff of the Applied Physics Laboratory of UW and Lee was soon a mother of three. Living in the University District, Lee Minto met her neighbor Lenore McIntyre, whose husband was a faculty member at the Medical School teaching obstetrics. The two quickly became close friends. This alliance between university professors’ wives in the neighborhood around UW was at the core of the alliance for abortion reform in the later part of the decade and was aided by the demographics of this westward migration.

Although she gained important, practical skills while working to fundraise for the UN Pavilion at the Seattle World’s Fair, her interest in the issue of family planning began before. Minto’s career path was similar to other middle-class women and reveals the important role that they played in politics during the 1960s. Along with the PTA, Minto spent time working at her church—University Unitarian—which the McIntyres also attended. It was through her work with the church that Minto first became aware of the need for family planning. While the church was

⁵⁰ *UW Daily*, October 21, 1967.

⁵¹ Rubenstein, *Cultural Landscape*, 116.

in-between ministers, someone from the Welfare Department approached Minto to ask if the church could help a family badly in need. The parents in this family had thirteen children. The Welfare Department Supervisor asked if Minto could help her collect some money and basic necessities from people at the church, which she did. Minto solicited aid from her friend and fellow congregation member Lenore McIntyre, who was currently on the board of Seattle Planned Parenthood. When Minto approached McIntyre three months later, this time for a family with eight children, McIntyre responded, “I’ll do this one more time, on the condition that you go on the board of Planned Parenthood, because, you know there is a better answer to the problem. People should have access to birth control.”⁵² Through relationships forged between the wives of staff and faculty at the University, and because of these women’s participation in community service at their church, Minto began a more than three-decade long career at Planned Parenthood and was a powerful force as member of the WCAR. Initially motivated by a desire to fix the problem of “overcrowded” classrooms, concerned by the economic consequence of “too many” children, and worried about the health of planet, Minto, McIntyre, and McCaffree became actively and instrumentally involved in local politics.

During the early years at Seattle Planned Parenthood, the small family planning clinic at 516 Broadway in the Capitol Hill neighborhood of Seattle was operated by volunteer staff and physicians with a limited annual operational budget of around \$1000, solicited from private donations from local businessmen. The skills Minto acquired while fundraising for the UN Pavilion at the Seattle World’s Fair, and the connections that she made there and at the University Unitarian Church, proved vital to the successful expansion of Seattle Planned Parenthood under her leadership in 1967. During the course of the World’s Fair, she stayed on to serve as the UN Pavilion’s director. Not only did she gain valuable fund-raising and networking

⁵² Minto, Oral History, November 10-11, 2007, 3.

skills, but the message that science should play a central role in making a better future for the city stayed with Minto through the rest of her long career.

Although each member of the WCAR has their own unique story as to why they supported reform, an analysis of the World's Fair sheds light into the general culture in Seattle from which Seattleites considered the issue during the election of 1970. Since it is likewise impossible to understand why each individual voter supported reform, considering how events such as a World's Fair functioned to create a culture Seattle that favored such reforms aids our understanding of the reasons a majority of voters supported Referendum 20. The following analysis of the Seattle World's Fair relies upon the theories from sociologist Maurice Roche who argued that mega-events, such as the Century 21 Expo, help to create culture in modern societies. Thus, in order to understand why Referendum 20 passed in 1970, it is necessary to understand how this event helped to create a culture in Seattle favorable to the moral authority of scientific technologies, methods, and experts; imagining Seattle to be the place on the frontier of science and American progress. In the campaign for abortion reform from 1967 to 1970, the WCAR used these ideas about place and culture to solicit support from the public for abortion reform.

Imagining Seattle

*We cannot see into the future to visualize the Seattle of the future, but we can hope and imagine. In the year 2012 Seattle will either be a mighty metropolis of more than 1,000,000 residents—or it will have become a charred, deserted relic of a fearful age of nuclear warfare. This year of 1962 is a troubled one in the world as you will have read in history.*⁵³

-April 9, 1962

This letter from the Seattle City Council of 1962 addressed to their 2012 successors contains both hope and doubt regarding the future. As the city prepared for opening day of the

⁵³ City Council of the City of Seattle, "A Message to our Successors on the City Council in the Year 2,012," <http://www.seattle.gov/council/attachments/20120417.pdf>.

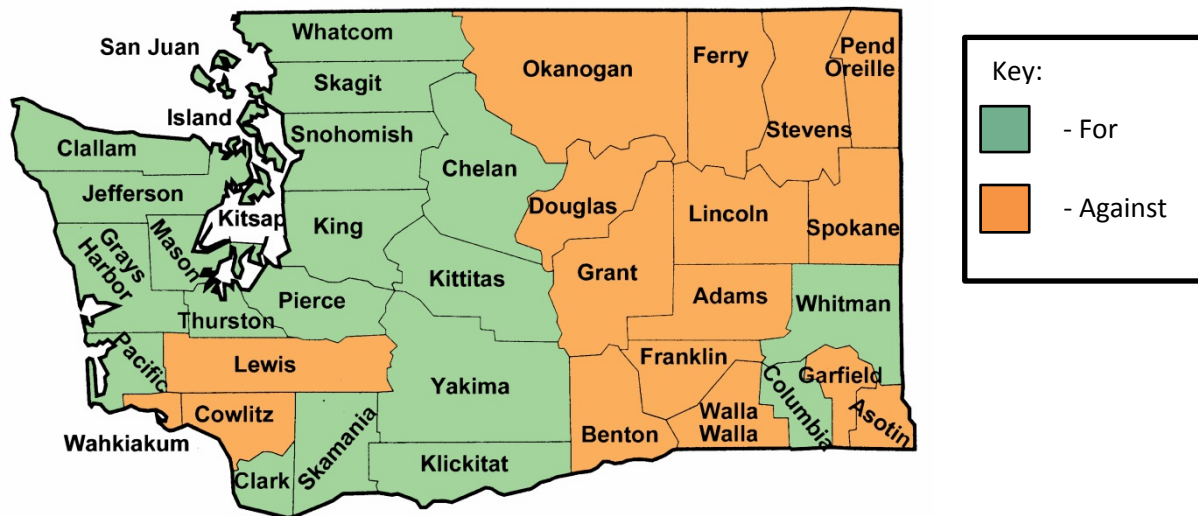
Seattle World's Fair, David Levine, President of the City Council of the City of Seattle, signed his name upon this letter addressed to the future. This message reflects the paradoxical views towards science contained in the metaphor of the population bomb—the conflation of overpopulation and nuclear annihilation. The message suggests that optimism regarding the future was a choice. “We prefer to look toward the Seattle of 2012,” the letter continues, “as a vibrant, lively center of industry (of types we cannot today imagine) and a center of the arts and culture.”⁵⁴ As this source suggests, the World's Fair in Seattle played an important role in helping residents imagine the city's future. The World Fair's theme of “Century 21” led residents to consider what kind of place Seattle would be in 2012 and created a culture in Seattle that functioned to motivate city boosters, planners, and activists to create a brighter future for their city.

By discussing the city's growing pains, this source reveals ambivalence towards unchecked growth. As they imagined the future of their city a half-century later, members of the City Council, as well as those involved with the World's Fair, had begun to create a narrative about what kind of place Seattle should be. During a period of change and uncertainty for the city and the nation, this letter voiced urbanites' ambivalent sentiments regarding growth. But growth was unevenly distributed in the state, especially after World War II. Population growth had been greatest in the state's western urban corridor. It was highest in the Seattle metropolitan area. An analysis of the voting records from Referendum 20 reveal that nearly forty-percent of total votes in favor of reform were cast from King County – the county with the state's largest population.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ City Council, “A Message to our Successors.”

⁵⁵ Ludlow, *Abstract of Votes*, 1970. Total votes for Ref. 20 in the state: 599,959; in King County: 238,043.

Figure 3:Map of Washington State Counties and Approval for Referendum 20



This chapter argues that support for reform in Seattle as evidenced by the emergence of the WCAR in Seattle and the participation of Seattleites in the organization of the campaign necessitate an investigation into the economic, political, and cultural nature of the city during this period. Since the campaign literature for abortion reform in 1970 expressed similar themes as the World's Fair in 1962 hosted by Seattle; because one of the campaign's important figures, Lee Minto, worked in part of the fair; and because mega-events such as this help to create culture, it is necessary to consider how the fair helped to imagine Seattle's future in ways that strengthened Seattleites support for Referendum 20.

The Seattle World's Fair in 1962 coincided with the dawn of the space age, and the theme of the event celebrated science. City boosters placed Seattle at the epicenter of this new frontier. Given the Cold War context of a nuclear arms race with the USSR, it is unsurprising that the committee chose the theme of science and space. In 1955, the City Council officially backed the idea of hosting the fair. After the successful launch of *Sputnik 1* in 1957, American scientists and statesmen hastened to embrace the Century 21 Exposition as a platform for responding to the Cold War challenge posed by *Sputnik*. According to historian John M. Findlay,

the fair displayed the products and methods of science to visitors, promising the nation and the world that science could offer “greater economic vitality, more orderly social relations, and heightened mastery of surroundings.”⁵⁶ Because of the shadow of gloom and doom hanging over the nation after *Sputnik*, Americans felt they were in the dreadful position of being behind the USSR in the space race. Thus, the fair repeated its hopeful message visually and verbally to rebuild confidence in its visitors that America was still a place of scientific innovation. In doing so, they implied that Seattle would lead the nation in this endeavor.

Like other fairs, it was invested with local, national, and international significance. “Our city, once regarded by many as a muddy Wild West outpost was thrust into the world’s spotlight, suddenly becoming sophisticated and cutting edge,” begins the feature article of *Seattle* magazine’s 2012 issue commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the 1962 event. Changing the American public’s perception of the city was precisely the intention of the local planning committee whose members helped to conceive of and then sell the idea that Seattle was the city of the future, choosing for its theme “Century 21.” The article from 2012 continues, “In 1962, everything about Seattle – our civic spaces, culture and very identity – was redefined.”⁵⁷

According to Findlay, the fair did indeed represent an effort on the part of local residents to achieve metropolitan stature and bring order to a growing city. It did so by celebrating a “distinctive optimism, based on growth, technology, and defense spending, that characterized all rapidly expanding cities in the region.”⁵⁸ The message that science and technology would build a better *urban* future was conceived by the city’s elites, operating like other western city boosters

⁵⁶ John M. Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture after 1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 229.

⁵⁷ Knute Berger, Feliks Banel and Seattle Magazine Staff, “A Fair to Remember,” *Seattle*, February 2012, 61.

⁵⁸ Findlay, *Magic Lands*, 216-218.

before them, to encourage people, business, and the federal government to imagine Seattle as a good place to live, work, and invest.

In his study of expositions, Maurice Roche defines mega-events as large-scale cultural events which “are simultaneously charismatic spectacles, products of rational calculation, and ‘functional’ social rituals.”⁵⁹ The experience of visiting such an event was intended to be transformative. Because they are organized by varying combinations of local, national, and international non-governmental organizations, they represent important elements in “official” versions of public culture. Sociologically, he argues, mega-events do the same sort of “identity-work” as other rites of passage and life events which serve to structure space and time.⁶⁰ They offer concrete versions and visions of what he calls a symbolic and participatory community so important in the processes of change and modernization of societies. Mega-events are necessary for modern societies, he argues, because they offer a vision of predictability and serve to control the timing, pace, and direction of change in a world where social and technological changes can often appear out of control, unpredictable, and generally too fast to adapt to.⁶¹ Finally, they can contribute to social change because they make explicit and implicit references to modernity’s changing versions of its past and the future.⁶² The Seattle World’s Fair did all of these things.

Drawing upon this theoretical approach regarding the functions of mega-events, we can see that the Seattle World’s Fair played an indispensable role in creating an imagined community where the future of urban America was bright *if* people maintained their unswerving faith in science and progress. The fair helped to sell the idea that Seattle was the geographic center of science’s ethereal endless frontier.

⁵⁹ Roche, *Mega-Events and Modernity*, 7.

⁶⁰ Roche, *Mega-Events and Modernity*, 5.

⁶¹ Roche, *Mega-Events and Modernity*, 7-8.

⁶² Roche, *Mega-Events and Modernity*, 9.

The goals of mega-events from the perspective of the elites who create them are to educate the public, create a collective identity, and provide opportunities for consumption and leisure.⁶³ In this case, visitors could experience the “World of Tomorrow,” visit the “American Home of the Immediate Future,” view transportation and energy sources of the future at the IBM Pavilion, Standard Oil or Bell System Exhibit, and hear “Sermons from Science,” all surrounding Friendship Mall. In a world where science had produced the atomic bomb and created more efficient means to extinguish human life, the message of Century 21 Expo was that science could create a more peaceful world, in part by creating a more orderly city and by expanding the economic pie of prosperity.

While building a metaphorical temple to science, the exposition left a permanent visible impact upon the city. Many of the fair’s main buildings remained as a civic center dedicated to the arts and sciences, and the city received its iconic landmark to its new metropolis status, the Space Needle, which dominated the cityscape. This new landmark was a lasting reminder to Seattleites that a bright future for their city rested upon being innovative in science and technology.

Though the state’s rural population was exposed to the same message produced by the Expo, the conditions of their immediate locale did not warrant the same sense of urgency and fear felt by their urban counterparts, who could look around and see for themselves evidence of over-population and unchecked growth. Furthermore, some Seattleites embraced the identity offered by promoters of the World’s Fair and acted—as *Seattleites*—to make the imagined city a reality. Also, the fears and hopes expressed in the message of the Exposition resonated more profoundly with a professional, college educated middle-class.

⁶³ Roche, *Mega-Events and Modernity*, 35.

Building a temple to science, the message of the fair challenged the functions once reserved for religion in providing inspiration and comfort.⁶⁴ While city boosters celebrated endless progress and growth, urban planners and local media increasingly criticized unchecked population growth by the closing of the fair. Though science had given society penicillin, DDT, and the oral contraceptive pill which promised to prevent disease, increase food production, and decrease unwanted pregnancies, the realities of these new technologies in use during the postwar period did not create the social stability that they had promised and some began to argue that Americans needed to consider limits to growth in order to ensure the same hopeful future for posterity.

As the following section makes clear, the call for limits to growth certainly had support in America prior to 1962. But the events of that year—the Cuban Missile Crisis, the convening of Vatican II Council, the Sherri Finkbine abortion case, and the popularization of Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*—had a lasting effect on the campaign for abortion reform. The first two events recalled that the future was indeed uncertain and that Americans were conscious that they were living during a turning point in American history. The last two events suggested that the modern environmental and women’s movements were inextricably bound in ways encouraged abortion reform.

Limits to Growth

After hosting more than nine million visitors, the Seattle World’s Fair – which reshaped the skyline and culture of the city in lasting ways and espoused a message that the future of American cities could be saved by adopting scientific models and methods – ended on October

⁶⁴ Findlay, *Magic Lands*, 236.

21, 1962.⁶⁵ The very next day, Americans listened to President Kennedy address the nation regarding the buildup of arms in Cuba. “The purpose of these bases,” he calmly began, “can be none other than to provide a nuclear strike capability against the western hemisphere.”⁶⁶ After detailing the types of weapons identified, he explained that Washington D.C. was within range of the missiles and that the placement of these weapons in Cuba constituted an explicit threat to the lives of all Americans. It was arguably the tensest time during the conflict with the USSR. The threat of nuclear annihilation during the 1960s was bound together with the fear of overpopulation, and, in the shadow of the population bomb, abortion reform was debated in the nationally and locally.

The month before, Rachel Carson warned Americans about the coming *Silent Spring* and helped spark the modern environmental movement. This widely read book helped introduced to a general audience the science of ecology by detailing the far-reaching negative effects of our use of the pesticide DDT. For those close to the campaign for abortion reform, like Minto Rep. McCaffree, DDT and Rachel Carson’s book were a tangible turning point in their lives as activists. For McCaffree, the daughter of Kansas farmers, DDT was personal. She remembered her family’s generous use of the new “miracle” chemical and connected it to the early death of her mother and father. Minto’s understanding of the chemical was more indirect. She drew a connection between the use of the chemical globally to combat malaria, the subsequent decline in the death rate, and the need for a comparable decline in the birth rate that only contraceptive technology could bring about quickly enough, so the argument went. As the U.S. played a more prominent role in the world after the war, and its support of the use of DDT seemed to epitomize the kind of role it would play, criticism from inside and outside of the government grew from

⁶⁵ Findlay, *Magic Lands*, 227.

⁶⁶ John F. Kennedy, Radio and Television Address to the American People Regarding the Soviet Arms Build-up in Cuba, October 22, 1962, <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/sUVmCh-sB0moLfrBcaHaSg.aspx>.

people like General Draper and John Rockefeller III that family planning should become a part of public policy.

Perhaps the most important concept that Carson introduced to a general audience was that of ecology—a science predicated on the interaction and exchange between animals, plants, and the environment, what we now call the ecosystem. Ecology can be said to a *subversive* science because it challenged the previous hierarchical view of biology in which humans were the final stage of the evolutionary process, the top of the food chain, and thus the natural or God-given rulers over the earth. From this scientific (and Christian) perspective, progress meant domination and control over nature. Whereas some scientists had argued that tools such as penicillin, DDT, and even atomic energy increased man’s control over his environment, freeing him from the “bondage of bare existence,” ecologists emphasized the equality of life which saw human society *interdependent* with, not dominant over, nature.⁶⁷ In fact, ecology threatened to erase any boundaries between human and non-human life, arguing against any human exceptionalism to biological processes.

Silent Spring quickly jumped to the top of the best-seller lists and warned Americans to be hesitant about their blind faith in science. Through her rich prose and sophisticated analysis, Carson unraveled the complex nature of the ecosystem into easy-to-understand concepts. Therefore by 1968, when Paul Ehrlich’s book *The Population Bomb* was published, Americans had already developed an awareness of the interconnections between the human and non-human world through books such as Carson’s. The title of his book was first used in 1954 on the cover of a widely distributed pamphlet issued by the Hugh Moore Fund, established in 1944 to fund various organizations involved with peace and population, issues of interest to the wealthy

⁶⁷ David Kinkela, *DDT and the American Century: Global Health, Environmental Politics, and the Pesticide that Changed the World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 34.

businessman. The first chapter of Ehrlich's book outlined the problem in simple terms: too many people, too little food, and a dying planet. Because both Carson and Ehrlich chose to write for a non-academic audience—an act that brought criticism from some of their contemporaries, these books provided the general public with a new vocabulary and scientific scheme with which to argue more credibly that contraception and abortion were public virtues because they limited “over-population.” Also, by writing about matters such as sex, scientists were competing (successfully) with religious leaders during the 1960s as the authoritative source in matters related to human relations like marriage and parenting, licit and illicit sex.

This new lexicon is evident in the campaign for abortion reform in Washington. Proponents of Referendum 20 in Seattle displayed bumper stickers which read, “The Population Bomb is Everybody's Baby,” and articles by Paul Ehrlich appeared in the alternative environmental publication, *The Northwest Passage*, which circulated from Bellingham to Tacoma in the state's western region. In many articles and editorials, the newspaper questioned the virtues of progress at the expense of nature. It asked its readership during the election of 1970 to defeat local politicians who would “Los Angelize our region of the country and surrender the air, the land, and the waters to ‘progress.’”⁶⁸ Appearing just months before Referendum 20 was approved by a majority of voters, this article demonstrated support for contraception and abortion based on ecological concerns. It bluntly stated, “Either we find a way to bring the birth rate down or the death rate will soon go back up.” Ideas about place converged with a culture in Seattle that had come to support the medical community and their understanding of good women's health and therefore supported Referendum 20. The medical and scientific infrastructure of Seattle's economy became vital to the regional economy during the postwar era, and the city's culture favored the moral authority of scientific experts in matters related to sex.

⁶⁸ “Northwest Perspectives,” *The Northwest Passage*, November 1970, 4.

Postwar works from ecologists, such as Carson, held pessimistic views about America's future. As early as 1948, ecologist William Vogt published *Road to Survival* that reflected the same kind of pessimism about America's future the same year as conservationist Fairfield Osborn's work, *Our Plundered Planet*. The image of the population bomb popularized during the 1960s is evident immediately after the dropping of the atomic bomb over Hiroshima gave humans an image with which to associate human annihilation. With a strong interest in population control, Vogt wrote in *Road to Survival* a basic tenet of ecology – carrying capacity – which would bind the environmental and women's movement together: "Where human populations are so large that available land cannot feed, clothe, and shelter them, man's destructive methods of exploitation mushroom like the atomic cloud over Hiroshima."⁶⁹ At mid-century, American biology was undergoing a revolution and books such as *Road to Survival*, *Our Plundered Planet*, *Silent Spring*, and *The Population Bomb*, helped Americans to understand the interdependent web of life that ecologists advanced.

Though ecologists did not agree upon population policies, issues related to population were at the heart of this delicate balance. From this schema, the WCAR could argue that public policies should allow individuals to choose to limit their family size. The pessimism in all four of these works regarding America's future gave a sense of urgency to the campaign for abortion reform in the late 1960s. Although the nation as a whole experienced an increase in net-birth rate during the 1950s, because of internal migration patterns, the population growth in western cities was disproportionately higher, adding further intensity to the campaign in 1970. Though the 1960s has been interpreted by historians such as James Reed, Linda Gordon, and Elaine Tyler May as the era in which family planning become public policy as the nation responded to a nation-wide baby boom, because Seattle experienced the additional pressures of welcoming

⁶⁹ Quoted in Robertson, *Malthusian Moment*, 37.

newly arrived migrants from the Midwest and South, it should be no surprise that, like California's Legislature, which had the support of then-Governor Ronald Reagan, Washington State considered reforming its prohibition against abortion.

Part of the successful campaign rested upon the broader shift in American history in which family planning was transformed from a private vice at the beginning of the century to a public virtue at mid-century. Even President Dwight D. Eisenhower had famously changed his mind during this time. In 1959, in response to the Draper Report, he remarked upon the subject of contraception saying, "I cannot imagine anything more emphatically a subject that is not a proper political or governmental activity or function or responsibility."⁷⁰ But by 1968, given the amount of attention from academics and activists, the Cold War climate of urgency abroad and context of domestic urban violence, as well as increased attention to America's population growth, Eisenhower changed his mind. "Once as President," he admitted, "I thought that birth control was not the business of our federal government. The facts have changed my mind...Governments must act...Failure would limit the expectations of future generations to abject poverty and suffering and bring down upon us history's condemnation."⁷¹ During the 1960s, facts from experts in their academic fields increasing guided state policy, not the moral authority of religious institutions.

President Lyndon Johnson placed population control at the center of his program for foreign aid as well as his domestic War on Poverty. Part of America's attention to domestic poverty during the 1960s grew out of the awareness of a newfound material abundance. In 1964, an article in *Time* announced, there were "1,634 federally assisted urban renewal projects going

⁷⁰ Quoted in *Planned Parenthood at 75: A Tradition of Choice* (New York: Planned Parenthood Federation of America, 1991), 51.

⁷¹ Quoted in May, *America and the Pill*, 43.

on and being studied in 777 U.S. cities.”⁷² That same year, President Johnson proclaimed that “our society will never be great until our cities our great.” Continuing with rhetoric that echoed that of the promoters of the Seattle World’s Fair, he continued: “Today the frontier of imagination and innovation is inside those cities and not beyond their borders.”⁷³ By emphasizing scarcity and limits, people such as Draper, Johnson, and Minto urged middle-class solutions to this social problem in the form of education and medical expertise in order to prevent disaster. Three years before *Roe v. Wade*, Washingtonians had the opportunity to express their views on abortion with their votes. The science of ecology had provided the campaign with urgency and legitimacy.

The language of urgency can be found in this local campaign effort as well as efforts by the federal government to support reform by 1970. This campaign at the state level helps to contextualize actions by the federal government which, if analyzed in isolation, seems shocking. For instance, the first President to send a message to Congress regarding the problems of population growth and the need for family planning was Republican Richard M. Nixon. But as the campaign in Washington makes clear, during the 1960s many important supporters for abortion reform were Republicans. The opening line from his special investigation into the issue of population reads like a line penned by Paul Ehrlich: “From 10 million in 1830, the number of people has increased to more than 200 million at present, and an additional 100 million are expected during the next 30 years.” Repeating ideas circulating across academic disciplines, the document specifies the social problems of too many people: “Unchecked, this continuing expansion threatens to exacerbate all the social problems - including poverty, overcrowding,

⁷² “The City: Under the Knife, or All For Their Own Good,” *Time*, November 11, 1964. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,876419,00.html>.

⁷³ Lyndon B. Johnson, “The Great Society,” *The Penguin Book of Twentieth-Century Speeches* (New York: Vintage, 1992), 346.

unemployment, inadequate housing, malnutrition, violence - associated with higher rates of mental disability.” By using a local case study into what became a national movement, we can see more clearly the middle-class nature of reform. For example, the opening statement of a special federal investigation into the issue of population released on September 1, 1970, outlined the problem within the middle-class framework of quality of life concerns: “The present rapid expansion of the population threatens the quality of life for this and future generations.” Indeed, the problem was urgent, requiring swift action:

Between 1962 and 1969 government spending for domestic family planning programs increased from \$8.6 million to \$56.3 million.⁷⁴ In 1967 Seattle Planned Parenthood was able to afford to hire a full-time executive director for the first time.⁷⁵ Because of her experience with fundraising for the Seattle World’s Fair UN Pavilion, Minto was asked by the board to fill that position, and she accepted under the agreement from the board that she could hire an educational director. In line with middle-class values, the solution could be found in part by educating the population about “the facts” of sex. In the *Seattle Times* article announcing her position, Minto is quoted as saying: “Population growth in one of the most critical problems of the world.” She continued, “Economic and political instability is mushrooming everywhere because of the pressure of this growth.”⁷⁶ One Planned Parenthood advertisement in the University of Washington’s student newspaper, *The Daily*, gave the address and hours of the clinic and a simple message: “The stork is outracing the plow.”⁷⁷ Population control seemed to be the panacea that would solve the world’s greatest problems like hunger, poverty, and even disease.

⁷⁴ May, *America and the Pill*, 43.

⁷⁵ The Planned Parenthood center of Seattle received at that time public contributions, fees from clients based on their ability to pay, and funds from pharmaceutical companies although the exact numbers are not known to me.

⁷⁶ June Anderson Almquist, “June’s Journal: She Works to Fulfill a ‘Tremendous Need,’” *Seattle Times*, September 3, 1967.

⁷⁷ *UW Daily*, October 21, 1967.

In reality, the source of social instability in the United States and abroad was much more complicated than simply too many people. Imperialism, sexism, racism, and economic inequalities could not be solved by the promises of the pill or expertly-advised population policies. Perhaps believing that science and professionals could find the solution to social problems was easier than tackling the structures of racism and sexism which perpetuated economic inequalities. Nevertheless, the expansion of Seattle Planned Parenthood clinic in 1967 was predicated upon the perceived need for such services, fueled by the notion that too many people posed a threat to society. One board member during this time commented directly upon the connection between population and her decision to participate in the work of Planned Parenthood in Seattle. “I feel that in working for Planned Parenthood, I’m improving [the world] for my grandchildren. I want it not to be greater in terms of population. We have to control that. We absolutely do! Planned Parenthood is in the forefront of that. That’s why I was on the board for so many years.”⁷⁸

In 1967, Seattle Planned Parenthood was the only agency offering free family planning services in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming and Montana.⁷⁹ As noted earlier in the analysis of the personal story told to Minto in 1968, before the law had changed in Washington, Seattle’s place as a regional medical hub meant that women often traveled from the periphery to Seattle in order to seek advice about how to obtain an illegal abortion. Under Minto’s leadership, the structure of Seattle Planned Parenthood expanded to include advisory boards for clergymen, businessmen, and physicians. The fact that these men were interested in the work of Planned Parenthood is a testament to how the shadow of the population bomb could include such varied parties in the matter of family planning by the late 1960s. The unknown perils and promises of

⁷⁸ Kim Farwell, Oral History Transcript, PPGNW.

⁷⁹ Almquist, “She Works to Fulfill a ‘Tremendous Need.’”

the decade would indeed be faced with invention, innovation, and imagination in Seattle as the WCAR prepared to launch a successful campaign to legalize abortion in the name of women's health. This campaign of an unlikely and diverse alliance of urbanites required imagining Seattle to be the place of the American frontier of science, a place in which abortion should be legal, safe, and the domain of medical community. Because population issues were at the heart of the modern environmental movement as ecologists like Ehrlich urgently called for limits to growth, it is necessary to analyze the changing role of middle class women, their contribution to the reform effort, and the movement to legitimize the separation of sex from reproduction.

Family Planning

“WHAT CHANCE WILL OUR SOCIETY HAVE?”

A 19-year-old white college student calls in for a psychiatric consultation...She is attractive, well groomed, intelligent but tense young woman. She quickly gets to the point that she has missed her second period and fears she is pregnant...

She reports how in the last month she has not slept, how she has become unable to concentrate and how depressed she is. She has had fleeting thoughts of suicide. Despite the acute distress that she is now in, I know that she would never qualify for an abortion on mental or physical grounds in the United States, so, without stating this to her I steer her in the direction of what alternatives there are and in making an approach to her parents...

Within a month I am invited to a wedding which, out of interest in this subject, I attend. A small church wedding takes place. The bride on the surface appears happy, but her forced happiness is apparent to me. There is considerable tension manifested by many little things – the way she participates in cutting the cake at the reception, the way she throws her flowers, her inability to relax and really participate in her own wedding...

This situation is a difficult one to know the answer to. This marriage may work out, but it doesn't begin under auspicious circumstances. Under the pressure of marriage and parenting this couple will have a built-in excuse in their fights. They will point out that they didn't marry because they loved each other anyway.

This case also illustrates that a person even with adequate education who knows all she needed to know about contraceptives, who had by her upbringing more moral guidelines than 90% of our population, yet got pregnant. If an intelligent young woman like this gets into this situation, what about the great number of our youth who receive no consistent religious guidelines, are stimulated constantly by their peers, by magazines and by sexy movies?

*What chance will our society have of establishing families which can do a good job for their children if our youth don't marry under circumstances of real commitment and with the intention of being responsible parents?*⁸⁰

Personal Story recalled by Dr. C. Glenn Clements
Supporter of Referendum 20,
January 23, 1969

The archive of the Washington Citizens for Abortion Reform at the University of Washington has an entire folder of collected “case studies.” The contents of this folder provide

⁸⁰ Case Studies, Folder 6, Box 2, WCAR, UWSC.

evidence about the lives of women who faced the dilemma of an unwanted pregnancy and illegal abortion. But these case studies, mostly retold by physicians or psychologists such as Clements, also reveal the way in which this dilemma was understood by the professionals whose jobs placed them on the other side of the desk, listening to these stories from women who asked them for help. Retyped and sent to the WCAR's headquarters in downtown Seattle, these case studies were retold to WCAR members and at "think-ins" throughout the course of the campaign.⁸¹ This particular story reveals Clements' perspective on the issue and how it pertains to the matter of marriage and family. The following chapter considers the remarkable transformation of the middle class during the middle of the twentieth century. At the center of this transformation were discussions about the proper role of middle-class women as workers, mothers, and wives. Women's bodies were at the center of this debate, so it should be no surprise that dozens of states at this time considered abortion reform legislation. The campaign in Washington State was driven by the stories of women who, because of the nature of therapeutic abortions and because of Seattle's place as the hub of medical care for the Northwest, told their stories to middle-class professionals. Members of the WCAR argued that abortion reform was good for children, good for families, and good for women, and a majority of voters agreed.

This story thus provides insight into the transformation of the ideal, white, middle-class family which this chapter explores. Clements begins the story by describing the patient as young, attractive, and college-educated. He assumes that she was brought up well, with moral guidance and a proper education. He is dismayed that even under these ideal circumstances, an intelligent woman such as she "gets into this situation." In other words, even middle-class women needed abortions. The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that the popularization of medical research from Alfred Kinsey, Albert Ellis, William Masters and Virginia Johnson helped to

⁸¹ Ray Rubbert, "'Think-in' Abortion: The Human Crisis vs. the Taking of Life," *Seattle Times*, March 3, 1970.

legitimize the limitation of family size in order to separate sex from reproduction. Their works collectively suggest that contraception and abortion are legitimate because they remove fear of pregnancy from the act of sex. This argument is inextricably linked to feminist claims that control over reproduction has positive consequences for women and society. Furthermore, a limit to population growth was supported by many modern environmentalists who understood the concept of carrying capacity. At the heart of three movements—medical reform, feminism, and environmentalism—are women’s bodies. This chapter seeks to understand the role of women in the campaign for reform and how these movements contributed to the legitimization of anti-natal public discussions and policies.

We can see some of these ideas in Clements’s story about unwanted pregnancies. In choosing to focus on the aftermath of this denied therapeutic abortion case, he revealed his understanding of the social impact resulting from the inability to access a legal abortion in ways that shaped his participation in the campaign for reform in Washington. “What chance will our society have,” he ends by asking, if marriages begin under such auspicious circumstances? He specifically worried about their ability to raise children or have a stable marriage, for in his mind, because they did not marry for love but instead because of an unplanned pregnancy, they now had a “built in” excuse for a fight. In criticizing this scenario, he expresses his notion of an ideal marriage, which should begin “under circumstances of real commitment and with the intention of being responsible parents.” He therefore reveals his perspective of the social function of marriage—to properly raise children. Although he expressed doubt—“this situation is a difficult one to know the answer to,” he implied that the current law hurt women, families, and society.

Because abortion reform was decided upon by popular vote, it is important to understand how men and women considered the social impact of abortion. This chapter thus explores the

changing nature of “women’s work” and the story of Mary Ellen McCaffree specifically; the effort by experts in the field of science and medicine to argue that freeing women from the fears of pregnancy would result in happier marriages and thus better families; and the criticism of motherhood from the counter culture, environmentalists, and feminists that contributed to the social acceptance of female occupations beyond motherhood. The evidence suggests that like urban planning, family planning was understood as a social good because it allowed for limits to growth. Abortion, like contraception, would bring much needed stability in individual women’s lives, for middle-class families, and for society as America transformed into a post-industrial nation. Thus, by focusing on Seattle, a city with a growing population and economy based in science and technology, we can see how the future of the city was inextricably connected to the future of middle-class families. From here, the final chapter will then explore the campaign for abortion reform in more detail, demonstrating how and why the matter of abortion was decided upon as an issue of good women’s health.

“Women’s Work”

In September of 1965, Ken and Mary Ellen McCaffree were preparing for the new school year. “I have plenty of work cut out for me,” she recalled of the time, “beyond being a Mother.”⁸² The Washington State legislature had just approved redistricting of voting districts for the first time in twenty-five years, largely thanks to long hours worked by McCaffree in Olympia, away from her family in Seattle. Before redistricting, it was possible for Democrats to elect a House majority with only a popular vote of 38 percent. In the upcoming election, a popular vote of 47.7% would be required to win the majority of state legislative seats.⁸³ At this moment, she faced a serious decision about her legislative career. “How can I quit now?” she

⁸² McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 214.

⁸³ McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 210.

wondered, “I’ve labored nearly a decade...But am I done? To the point, is secure school funding in place? Not yet. Not yet.”⁸⁴ Then on September 4, Albert Schweitzer—a theologian, organist, philosopher, physician, medical missionary, proto-environmentalist, and Nobel Laureate—died. He was her hero. For her, his doctrine of “Reverence for Life” extended beyond a humanitarian calling to serve others. Albert Schweitzer “looked for connection, rather than division or hate,” McCaffree wrote. The next day, her phone rang. It was Jim Dolliver, the Governor’s assistant, calling her up to help plan the state’s education budget among other things, and McCaffree agreed to continue her work with the Republican leadership team, along with Joel Pritchard, Dan Evans, and Slade Gordon.

Inspired by the life of Albert Schweitzer, McCaffree reflected upon the meaning of her work in the Washington State Legislature in her 2010 political memoir. She recalled that when her friend Louis Hauptli, from the League of Women Voters, came to Olympia in 1965 to lobby for better safety glass standards after her eight-year-old son Gary, chasing a Frisbee, had run right through their family’s sliding glass door, McCaffree supported the bill. Hauptli’s skillful lobbying techniques paid off. After the bill passed the House, McCaffree thought to herself, “What a beautiful example of our democracy at work. One woman, one person, one voter making a difference.”⁸⁵ Her faith in democracy rested upon her belief that our government is only as strong as the people elected to it and that hard work was not a gender-specific characteristic. But her decision to work required her to consider the needs of her family. When McCaffree considered whether or not her work was done and if she should run again to represent the 32nd District in the 1966 election, she reassured her husband that their family would not be neglected and “that it might actually be good for our children to have a mom with some interests

⁸⁴ McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 209.

⁸⁵ McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 189.

outside the home.”⁸⁶ McCaffree resolved this tension by repeatedly acknowledging that her motivation to run as State Representative stemmed from her desire to reform the tax code in the state in order to properly fund public education. Her story is part of a larger narrative of the transformation of motherhood in modern America.

By the 1960s, motherhood came to be conceived by culture-makers as a deeply fulfilling but fundamentally private experience and a single, though still central, component of a more multifaceted self, according to historian Rebecca Jo Plant. This new ideal “both reflected and facilitated white, middle-class women’s gradual incorporation into the political and economic order as individuals rather than as wives and mothers.”⁸⁷ The anti-feminist critique of “momism” – which labeled mothers as idle, even parasitic upon their families and the nation – by popular critics such as Philip Wylie during the 1940s and 1950s actually helped lay the necessary ground work so that *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan could have such broad appeal in the 1960s, Plant contends. The expectation that women would “work” outside of the house (once their young children had been properly reared) had emerged as a new ideal for white, middle-class women by the 1960s, though not without serious debate from mothers and so-called (male) experts. Though it is difficult to gauge precisely why, people’s behavior regarding parenting had changed. “By the early 1960, white, middle-class American homemakers had lost much of their prior prestige, and women’s presence in the workplace had increased considerably.”⁸⁸ This transformation propelled the concurrent movement for abortion reform that swept over more than a dozen states at this time. To explore this, the following is an analysis of a special edition of *Seattle* from 1965.

⁸⁶ McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 198.

⁸⁷ Plant, *Mom*, 2-3.

⁸⁸ Plant, *Mom*, 54.

The February edition of *Seattle* magazine focused upon “the Seattle woman.” “For the past decade or so,” the author reasoned, “much of the country has been swept up in a raging controversy about the role that women should - or should not – play in contemporary American life.”⁸⁹ Indeed, after the release of *The Feminine Mystique*, which was largely addressed to and elicited the most heartfelt responses from white, middle-class women, the national media turned a suspicious eye towards the American woman. This issue of *Seattle* featured an article celebrating former Seattle Mayor Bertha K. Landes, women of the Northwest who climbed some of the area’s tallest mountains “along with their menfolk,” the latest spring hat fashions, and insight into some of the women who served their community through their volunteer work. The message of the issue seemed to be that women were not discriminated against in Washington—they climbed mountains just like men and were elected to public office. At the same time, however, the issue expressed a preference for some female activities and characteristics over others. The magazine’s editor, Peter Bunzel, claimed: “The chief role of women, no matter how you slice it, is to be loving wives and devoted mothers.”⁹⁰ The magazine toed the mainstream line, though its editor preferred to think of their state as more progressive than others by virtue of the perceived equitable treatment of women.

The article, “A Portrait of the Seattle Woman,” is an example of the creation of a gendered ideal. It was intent upon finding out exactly why women in Seattle were “relatively content with their lot,” in order to “explain why, in the main, [the Seattle woman] had shunned Betty Friedan’s blandishments.”⁹¹ The validity of the author’s premise aside, it is insightful to discuss the reasons he believed this to be the case: the main thrust of his argument is that women were content in Seattle because Seattle is a good place for families. First, “highly eligible males”

⁸⁹ “A Portrait of Seattle Women,” *Seattle*, February 1965, 7.

⁹⁰ “Letter from the Editor,” *Seattle*, February 1965, 3.

⁹¹ “A Portrait of Seattle Women,” *Seattle*, February 1965, 7.

lived there. Second, husbands participate in family-oriented activities and contribute to domestic labor without compromising their masculinity. “Many a housewife who bakes her own bread confidently expects her husband to build the bookshelves.”⁹² Third, access to outdoor recreation constituted the leisure activity of choice for Seattle families. Helping to make this cultural ideal a reality, the author told his reader that “84% of the region's residents participate in outdoor activities, 20% above the national average.”⁹³ Regarding the attractiveness of the region, a particularly “revealing statistic” was that 50% of Seattle’s population was born outside of Washington State, suggesting that people choose to live there. Thus, Seattle seemed to provide all the trappings of good community according to these middle-class values of family life.

All of this suggested that the belief that if women are content, it must be because family life is good and the ability to access the symbols important to middle-class status—good schools, good jobs, and outdoor recreation spent together as a family—made Seattle an attractive place to live. McCaffree agreed, writing, “It wasn’t until we arrived in Seattle that we began to feel comfortable and settled, to feel like a real family.”⁹⁴ The article then cites testimonials of (middle-class) women about their decision to live in Seattle, like the following passage from a wife of an insurance broker.

*We moved here from the Middle West to escape from tension and phoniness. We wanted to get out and do things, and we wanted to be our own masters, no matter how much work that might take. In a nutshell, we were seeking a wholesome life for ourselves and for our four children, which is exactly what we've got. All right, maybe we're not sophisticated like people back East and I hope to God we never will be.*⁹⁵

Once their children were in school, middle-class women were encouraged by popular culture and professional advice to find other ways to occupy their talents and

⁹² “A Portrait of Seattle Women,” *Seattle*, February 1965, 12.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 198.

⁹⁵ “A Portrait of Seattle Women,” *Seattle*, February 1965, 7.

their time. “Some women go back to school,” the article explains. “A few take full-time jobs, but even more become active in women's clubs, which involve them in community affairs as they once were in purely familial activities.”⁹⁶ Further expressing the magazine’s middle-class orientation, the author reveals a preference towards unpaid work. “The ripest field open to women is non-salaried work for all manner of do-gooding organizations,” because “such civic activities keep women as busy on weekdays as they remain on family oriented weekends.”⁹⁷ Thus, volunteer work was meant to come second to the perceived needs of one’s family and was only meant to occupy a woman’s “natural” talents towards service while her children were at school and away from home. Mrs. Edward Stern—“a prototype of Seattle clubwoman and national vice president of the Council of Jewish Women who for several decades had been active in numerous local and national groups”—was quoted to have said proudly, “I could never just sit around the house and watch myself get gray. I've never earned a dollar in my life, but through my volunteer work I not only keep busy but can contribute to the community and to society.”⁹⁸ The article estimates that perhaps as many as 50,000 Seattle women belong to volunteer groups, citing the League of Women Voters as the most influential.⁹⁹

*Once all five of the children were in school, I was asked to serve on the board of our Seattle League of Women Voters. Ken was concerned about the time this would take from the family. But I knew that one day all our children would fly the home coop and I would be let alone without an outside interest or activity. Ken has always been deeply involved in his work, and in a couple of outside professional pursuits as well. Reluctantly, he agreed to my League work.*¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ “A Portrait of Seattle Women,” *Seattle*, February 1965, 14.

⁹⁷ “A Portrait of Seattle Women,” *Seattle*, February 1965, 15.

⁹⁸ “A Portrait of Seattle Women,” *Seattle*, February 1965, 16.

⁹⁹ “By far the most influential of Seattle's all female groups is the League of Women Voters. Six-hundred, forty members strong, it speaks with a highly informed voice about civic issues, and it has been responsible for supporting numerous civic causes which might otherwise have languished,” from “A Portrait of Seattle Women,” *Seattle*, February 1965, 15.

¹⁰⁰ McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 198.

At age forty, holding a degree from Kansas State University in home economics, McCaffree began her work as a representative to the state government, working in local government until 1985. Though studying to be a dietician, she never planned on working as such. “I actually was preparing to get married and have a family while I was in college,” she continued in an interview conducted while still working as administrative assistant to then Senator Slade Gorton, by emphasizing, “I had planned to be married as soon as I had completed college, and to have a family.”¹⁰¹ When asked when she “first became politically active,” she answers by explaining that all five of her children were in public schools and – out of concern for their education – she became involved in issues of quality of education and over-crowding in the classrooms. Her participation in the PTA preceded her work with the League of Women Voters. Her eventual employment as a state representative was not antithetical, in her eyes, to appropriate “women’s work.”

Her community agreed. Just before Mother’s Day in 1963, McCaffree received a phone call informing her that Mrs. Mortimer H Thomas and Mr. E. Earl Richards had nominated McCaffree as the University District’s “Ideal Mother;” an award from the University District Herald which entailed breakfast at the Lions Club at the Wilsonian for the family, followed by dinner at the Meany Hotel. In Mr. Richards’ nomination letter he wrote of her: “Her tremendous recognition of duty both to her family and her community has welded together what might well be described as an ideal family.”¹⁰² In other words, though motherhood was commendable, it alone was not enough, for it was the addition of her work in the community that earned this man’s nomination.

¹⁰¹ Mary Ellen McCaffree, Oral Interview, 1983, p. 2.

¹⁰² Quoted in McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 96.

Marilyn Watson, a Seattle Planned Parenthood board member from 1959 until 1992, remembered what it was like to make this same decision about how to spend her time as a middle class mother. “In 1958,” she recalled of the process, “I was invited by lady friends, who were already involved with the beginnings of Planned Parenthood, to a luncheon.” Her work with the organization was her “major counterpart to family.” When she told her mother that she had joined the group her mother looked at her and said, “Oh dear, you don’t really want to do that, do you?” But when she was asked to go on the Seattle Art Museum board ten years later, her mother exclaimed, “Oh, I think that’s just lovely.” Although women of families who could afford to have one income, once the children were in school, they were expected to serve their community in various capacities. For some, like Watson, participation with Planned Parenthood was a source of personal satisfaction that could bring some social stigma. At the time, men were not involved in the board because, as Watson recalled, “this was women’s work.”¹⁰³

The author of the *Seattle* magazine article about women agreed. Assuming the universalism of middle-class values and white privilege, the author elucidated: “Like modern women everywhere, begin an especially crucial period” when their children are grown. Here again, what it meant to be “modern” was wrapped up in the transformation of the ideal white, middle-class family, and limiting reproduction lay at the heart of it. The legitimization of separating sex from reproduction was a powerful prerequisite to the transformation of the middle-class family of four. Thus, an alliance between some scientific research into sexuality and feminist activist argued that removing the fear of pregnancy from sex was good for women and for society.

¹⁰³ *From Humble Beginnings: An Oral History of Planned Parenthood of Western Washington* (Seattle: Planned Parenthood of Western Washington, 2000), 23.

Separating Sex from Reproduction

During the postwar period, academics and public officials began to express concern about the limits to growth with a renewed sense of urgency. Unchecked growth threatened the quality of life for the middle class in particular. This fear motivated some people, especially those who were university-educated, to search for solutions to problems peculiar to American cities, and access to contraception and abortion was one of many solutions proposed. But in order for contraception and abortion to be legitimate issues for academics and middle-class social workers, social scientists felt compelled to consider the social consequences of separating sex from pregnancy—its “natural” consequence.

Academics from a variety of social science disciplines began to publish research throughout the 1960s on matters related to population. “The Relation of Economic Status to Fertility,” appeared in *The American Economic Review* in 1963, and “The Economic Aspects of Slowing Population Growth,” in *The Economic Journal*, was published in 1966, to cite two examples. In doing so, they indirectly and sometimes directly commented upon the morality of sex and the social consequences of publicizing this information to a general audience. Female sexual behavior was of particular concern for some of these scientists. Those in the field of medicine, psychology, and science who supported information and technologies that would “free” women to enjoy the physical pleasures of sex began to articulate novel ideas regarding “healthy” female sexuality during the postwar period.

At the same time, members of the nascent women’s movement were also discussing matters of sex, based upon experiential and academic knowledge, in so-called consciousness-raising groups across the nation. Though this movement—of mostly white, middle-class, college-educated women—has been rightfully credited with securing and maintaining access to

contraceptive knowledge and technologies, as well as safe, legal abortions during the 1970s, many people who were not part of the women's movement supported family planning programs in the 1960s. Members of the Washington Citizens for Abortion Reform argued that Washington should liberalize its restriction of abortion in the name of women's health, not as a matter of women's rights. In order to make this argument, a paradigm shift regarding "healthy" female sexuality had to precede it. Members of WCAR and their supporters believed that sex should be separated from the consequence of pregnancy so that, in part, wives could enjoy sex with their husbands. Though many WCAR members and supporters did not see themselves as participants in the women's movement, their view of sex came out of the movement of their time and demonstrates the pervasive power of feminist ideas.

In the footnotes of feminist Anne Koedt's article, "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm," were works by Alfred Kinsey, Albert Ellis, and William Masters and Virginia Johnson. These books occupied shelf space in the office of Peter Raible, the minister of University Unitarian Church, where the Mintos and McIntyres worshiped. These works helped Koedt to argue against prevailing Freudian views of female sexuality. "Today," she wrote, "with extensive knowledge of anatomy, with Kinsey, and Masters and Johnson, to mention just a few sources, there is no ignorance on the subject."¹⁰⁴ Revealing Koedt's consciousness of living in modern times, in the passage she equates "ignorance" with the past and "knowledge" with the present. Koedt's essay simultaneously criticizes the oppression and suppression of female sexual pleasure by secular authorities in scientific disciplines while at the same time acknowledging the continued authority of science to substantiate her claim to repudiate the myth of the vaginal orgasm. The legitimization of separating sex from reproduction strengthened the WCAR's campaign for abortion reform.

¹⁰⁴ Anne Koedt, "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm," *New York Radical Women: Notes from the First Year*, <http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/scriptorium/wlm/notes/>.

The evidence suggests that these works were read by the organization's members and their analysis helps to illuminate the connection between ideas and actions that spurred the campaign in Seattle.

The preface to William Masters and Virginia Johnson's *Human Sexual Response* lamented the previous timidity of science to investigate the physiology of sex. "If the current tentative approach to sex education is to achieve the widespread popular support it deserves," they wrote in the mid-1960s, "there must be physiological fact rather than phallic fallacy to teach."¹⁰⁵ During this time, university-trained professionals felt compelled for reasons related to domestic stability and international peace to investigate the macro- and micro-scale causes and effects in changes of a given population's fertility. At the same time, as part of an emerging therapeutic culture, the white middle class looked to these so-called experts for public policy and individually prescribed advice.¹⁰⁶ This attention to secular authorities in matters of sexual relations came at the expense of spiritual authorities. "Myths" persisted among a general population because of the professional community's refusal to accept its responsibility, according to Masters and Johnson.

Koedt also cites *Sex Without Guilt* in her essay on female sexual pleasure. This book by psychotherapist and marriage counselor Albert Ellis was first published in 1958 and reprinted four more times in five different editions. His two-volume encyclopedia also sat in Peter Raible's library, with sentences from the section on abortion underlined in red ink.¹⁰⁷ The book was dedicated to "the countless men and women who have fought the lonely battle against guilt for

¹⁰⁵ William Masters and Virginia Johnson, *Human Sexual Response* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966), v-vi.

¹⁰⁶ See *Mom* by Rebecca Jo Plant: "The rise of antimaternalism proceeded with another major cultural trend that had profoundly ambiguous political effects – the rise of a therapeutic culture and the expansion of the psychological professions...This basic conflict – between experts who questioned maternal wisdom, and mothers who questioned psychological expertise – would persist in ensuing decades, with experts increasingly, but by no means completely, gaining the upper hand," 10-11.

¹⁰⁷ Peter Raible's personal books, in possession of the author.

doing those sexual things which are neither harmful to themselves nor to others.” The Kinsey studies had provided others with a large body of research into the sexual practices of thousands of Americans, helping to create the notion that something was “normal” and “natural” if a majority of people did it or felt it. In “Why Americans are so Fearful of Sex,” Ellis cited the Kinsey study to show that “we engage, to a considerable degree, in masturbatory, fornicative, adulterous, homosexual, and other types of sex outlets. But we usually do so queasily, stealthily, guiltily.”¹⁰⁸ For Ellis, the “unhealthy” consequences of sex are a result of feelings or fear of guilt, not from the sex act itself. “As any serious student of sex knows,” he insisted, “it is virtually impossible for most human beings to suppress their biological impulses through so-called ‘normal’ manifestation, they will frequently take ‘abnormal’ forms of outlet – including ‘perverted’ and neurotic symptoms.”¹⁰⁹ If it is natural than it must be good, is his line of argument. By extension, society’s values should reflect human biology, not run counter to it. To do so would produce the conditions for “neurotic symptoms.” In other words, sex was healthy and if birth control and abortion could remove the fear of pregnancy from sex, than marriages, family, and society would be better off.

One theme that appeared in various chapters of Masters and Johnson’s *Human Sexual Response* was the “fear of pregnancy” and its—generally—unhealthy consequences. In the book’s section about “The Aging Female,” they observed a correlation between increased levels of sexual activity with a decrease in the fear of pregnancy among women approaching menopause. They noted that “absolute contraceptive security has not been available in the past to women,” but, “in today’s setting a young wife need have no fear of unwanted pregnancy, provided her religion tolerates the practice of contraception and she can afford to purchase the effective

¹⁰⁸ Albert Ellis, *Sex without Guilt* (Hollywood, Calif.: Wilshire Book Co., 1969), 117.

¹⁰⁹ Ellis, *Sex*, 23.

contraceptive materials presently available.”¹¹⁰ The passage suggests that science had already provided a technological and simple solution to the “problem” of female frigidity – or, “inability” to enjoy sex. From this perspective, contraception was a technological tool which delineated “the past” from “today.” Thus, contraception was conflated with modern times.

Additionally, the emphasis upon the young wife in the passage is reflective of an important transformation during the mid-twentieth century, as detailed by Rebecca Jo Plant’s work, *Mom*. In it she discusses the attention upon young mothers in medical and popular literature. She traces the transformation of the ideal white, middle-class mother from the Victorian era’s matronly mother-of-many towards the new ideal of a young, sexually active wife and mother-of-two. Kim Farwell, board member at Seattle Planned Parenthood from 1963 until 1969, spoke of this changing ideal in personal terms:

*Of course, my generation had three, four, and five children and everyone on our board had that many, but I was one of eight. I had four. I have three children with families, they each have two. So we’ve gone from eight to four to two, and they are quite happy with two, and think this now a family. They feel that they can afford and educate that number of children. Just in my lifetime, see how much has changed?*¹¹¹

Discussions about the morality of the contraceptive pill are also revealing of the era’s renegotiation of appropriate sexual behavior that help explain the decrease in fertility rate that Kim Karwell referred to in her oral history. In 1966, *Seattle* magazine asked if the pill was a “Prescription for a New Morality?”¹¹² The article began with quoted fragments of comments by women and physicians regarding oral contraception. “Eavesdropping around Seattle,” the authors assure their reader, “is much like eavesdropping anywhere in the nation. All over the U.S., The Pill is being discussed – and used.” What did it mean, the authors asked? People sometimes

¹¹⁰ William Masters and Virginia Johnson, *Human Sexual Response*, 245.

¹¹¹ Kim Farwell, Oral History Transcript, PPGNW.

¹¹² Thomas and Martha Bethell, “The Pill: Prescription for a New Morality?” *Seattle*, December 1966, 20.

struggled to keep pace with such rapid change. The authors explored the medical, social, and religious aspects of the new technology, clearly demanded by some six million American women by 1966. The power of “the pill” could not be denied.

The article’s authors, Thomas and Martha Bethell, conclude in a tone that suggest their sensibility that times had changed in ways that this new technology seemed to reflect and contribute to. “Now,” they began, “for the first time in human history, The Pill enabled women – and, for that matter, men too – to indulge in sex without making any more lasting commitment than they would give a run around the block.” Without considering the truth of this statement, we can see that it articulates a worry about a possible breakdown in former boundaries of appropriate social behavior. What were the new rules, and who were the new authorities on the matter? What was the “new morality”? “In the old days,” they wrote, “the threat of unwanted pregnancies was a tale that kept girls in line, and boys were forewarned about ‘shotgun marriages.’” After raising more questions than proposing answers, the article concluded that only one thing was clear: “Just as patients can expect no definitive guidance from their doctor, so everyone concerned with the problem – whether Protestant or Catholic, married or single – must grapple for *individual* answers.”¹¹³ As physicians, social workers, psychiatrists, and other social scientists, along with policy makers and clergymen, competed for the social position as authorities for prescribing “a new morality,” some found the negotiation of new social boundaries regarding sex and reproduction to be too complicated, too new, and too unclear for individuals to trust the advice from any one source in particular.

Within a decade, more than twelve million American women were using the new contraceptive, Pope Paul VI had called a special council to discuss the matter, the federal government had set aside millions of dollars for “family planning,” and hundreds of popular and

¹¹³ Bethell and Bethell, “The Pill,” 50.

academic sources discussed the social implications. Americans seemed aware that a fundamental shift had occurred, and many struggled to make sense of it. An article appearing in *Time* magazine in 1964 noted the changing sentiment when it mentioned the “Crisis of Virginity,” but it also revealed that changes in sex mores were occurring among the middle class. Whereas “a generation ago,” the article continued, “college boys strayed off campus to seek out professionals; today they are generally looked down on if they can’t succeed with a coed.”¹¹⁴ During the early twentieth century, medical experts increasingly acknowledged that men and women had powerful sex drives. While the “health” of premarital and extramarital sex was debated, sexual fulfillment between husband and wife was generally agreed to be an important function of a “healthy” family, and by extension, society. At the heart of this transformation were changing mores about female sexuality.

Changes in middle-class sexual mores coincided with the increased attendance of young adults in American universities during the postwar period. Even though the mass of World War II vets, such as Robert Minto and Ken McCaffree, had passed through the universities by the early 1950s, enrollments continued to stay high in the three decades following. The G.I. Bill had helped to propel hundreds of thousands of young men, and their families, into the middle class through higher education, and the first wave of the baby boomer generation “increasingly saw a college degree as a prerequisite for a ‘good’ job and a middle-class life.” As universities struggled to cope with their growing size, they faced an identity crisis regarding their mission.¹¹⁵ Thus, as a larger and more diverse student population was incorporated into the nation’s civil society through their education at universities, they also became imbued with ideas that inclined

¹¹⁴ “Morals: The Second Sexual Revolution,” *Time*, January 24, 1964, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,875692,00.html>.

¹¹⁵ Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland*, 49.

the middle class towards their scientific predilection. At the same time, their experiences and exposure to novel ideas about sex and sexuality helped renegotiate new sex mores for that class.

Issues such as the family and population took on new significance as America charted a new global role during the postwar period. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, anti-natal or pro-family planning policies became part of state and national public policies for the first time. Because the abortion reform campaign sought to end what the WCAR argued was the “barbaric” practice of illegal abortions by “freeing” licensed physicians to perform the procedure, the passage of Referendum 20 can be seen as an action, primarily by urban voters, to create a more modern society. Due to the limits of the oral contraception pill and the prevalence of sexual misinformation among the general population despite the scientific knowledge available regarding human reproduction, unwanted pregnancies continued and thus so too did illegal and dangerous abortions. Additionally, mid-century ideals regarding motherhood changed and idealized *planned* pregnancies just as civic leaders idealized urban planning. “Unlike the Victorian proper woman, the feminine mystique ideal was not asexual,” finds Linda Gordon in her history of birth control in America. “On the contrary,” she continues, “her gender duty included seducing and satisfying her husband indefinitely.”¹¹⁶ Contraception and abortion, because they freed women and men from fear of pregnancy, were seen by some as a solution to the tension between the desire for smaller family size and sexually active spouses. The alliance of support for Referendum 20 thus included a natural alliance between pro-family planners and environmentalists concerned with the consequence of a planet with too many people. The following section considers how environmentalists and the ideas espoused by ecologists directly affected support for abortion reform.

¹¹⁶ Gordon, *The Moral Property of Women*, 257.

Limits to Growth

After listening to the logic by which Dow Chemical Company was chosen as the target of the Nov. 8 protest, we feel that the demonstration should not end with napalm...So instead we propose going to the very heart of the problem with a demonstration against that un-American institution of mass production, Motherhood.¹¹⁷

In this editorial, signed by Kristen Wahlberg and eleven other students at the University of Washington, we can see how ideas about anti-militarism during the Vietnam War had become entangled with notions of anti-maternalism. To understand this source requires an understanding of the relationship between the environmental and women's movements within the counterculture. At the heart of this critique of militarism was criticism of consumerism. This was another expression of anxiety about growth discussed elsewhere in this study. Just as Americans were aware that they were living on the edge of the modern era—a time of monumental and fundamental change that shifting gender roles and contraception seemed to epitomize—they were also aware that they were living during a historically unprecedented affluent society. Some Americans, especially members of the middle class, expressed anxiety and ambiguity towards the meaning and consequences of such affluence. Within and outside of the counterculture, Americans expressed worries about overconsumption in ways similar the ways in which they expressed fears about overpopulation. In this sense, a critique of America was at times expressed as a critique of motherhood in order to argue against women's economic role as consumers and social role as "baby machines."

We can see many of these different strands of critique responding to each other most clearly as the protest against the war in Vietnam increased among college students after the expansion of the war into North Vietnam in 1967, the Tet Offensive in January of 1968,

¹¹⁷ "Baby Machines," *The UW Daily*, October 14, 1967.

introduction of the draft lottery in 1969, and expansion of bombing into Cambodia in 1970. Therefore, escalation of the war coincided with increased demonstrations against the war, especially on university campuses across the nation. Protests against the war were infused with criticism of consumerism as the middle class sought to remake itself from the inside-out. Condemnations of America were mostly a critique of the American middle-class “lifestyle.” Issues regarding sex and sexuality were integral to this renegotiation of social boundaries. The University of Washington and Seattle were not exceptions. Protest against the war provided a platform for broader critiques of American society.

As the editorial in *The UW Daily* suggests, a protest against the war quickly became a criticism of the American economy, Christianity, and the family. It called out Dow Chemical Company and Boeing – the “military-industrial complex” – for their contribution to the war. Additionally, this editorial suggested a march against the Church. “Through its policy on birth control,” it announced, “it gives support to baby-machines and hence, the Vietnam War.” The radical civil rights, anti-war, and environmental movement each contributed to the heralding in of second-wave feminism by 1968. But, critiques of “traditional motherhood” and support for family planning had historical precedents outside of (and, at times, counter to) the emerging women’s movement. By analyzing the roots of the movement outside of “a women’s issue,” we can see the unusual alliance of men and women, conservatives and liberals, the religious and the secular, who supported abortion reform during the 1960s in Seattle. In doing so, we can see the issue’s alliance and relation to the American middle-class and understand why and how support for “women’s health” has remained strong in Washington State despite the national backlash against many of the late 1960s social movements—including the women’s movement—in the decades following.

The growing women's movement and modern environmental movement of the late 1960s, especially among the middle class, helped to create legitimacy for family planning programs. Between the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) and the first Earth Day Celebration (April 20, 1970), the postwar environmental movement and popularity for family planning policies grew. During the same time span, between Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*—published in January of 1963—and the nationwide Women's Strike for Equality on August 26, 1970—commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of women's suffrage—the women's movement had helped turn family planning into a women's rights issue. During this same period, from the Seattle World's Fair to state approval of Referendum 20, Seattleites began to make Seattle into the place of the future where what it meant to be progressive merged with notions about reforming women's health care and legalizing abortion.

As the passage from the editorial suggests, the revaluation of motherhood converged with the counter culture's criticism of consumerism and militarism. The international context and America's war in Vietnam, Robertson argues, were crucial ingredients to make the 1960s the decade which birthed the environmental movement. Debates about population reveal a whole series of issues central to postwar American life, such as "the rise of a Keynesian growth economy and a 'consumer republic'; the growth of metropolitan areas and the eruption of urban violence; new ideas of sex, sexuality, and women's roles; the place of science and expertise in democratic society; Catholicism, the Religious Right, and debates about evolution; and the expansion of governmental authority."¹¹⁸ While a thorough explanation of how the abortion reform campaign in Washington State contributed to and reflected each of these issues is beyond the scope of this study, it does show the inextricable link between the environmental and women's movement in ways that hint at their continued strength in the twenty-first century in

¹¹⁸ Robertson, *The Malthusian Moment*, xiv.

spite of the so-called “backlash” beginning in the mid-1970s. During this decade of growth, family planning was a way to propose limits and renegotiate boundaries of class, gender, and race.

An investigation into the motives of members of the Washington Citizens for Abortion Reform reveals an interpretation like Robertson’s. Environmental Malthusians were “responding to the massive economic expansion that, especially since the end of World War II, was devastating ecosystems around the world, they pioneered thinking about ‘limits to growth’ and sustainability.”¹¹⁹ The participation of the middle class was vital to both campaigns. Many members of the middle class saw their values in education, nature, and “quality of life” threatened by overpopulation and urban instability. Likewise, the campaign for abortion reform in Seattle was driven by stories of women who needed abortions and their middle-class allies who saw their class expectations threatened by living in a society that forbade abortion.

An understanding of nature as an ecologically interconnected system enabled public discussion of issues like contraception and abortion during the 1960s. International, national, and local events during this decade provided Seattleites with tangible examples to discuss abstract issues such as ecology and overpopulation. Not only were academics discussing these issues in universities across America, but popular national and local media frequently featured articles and photographs, political cartoons and book reviews, of issues related to population, the environment, and sex. Many of the members of the WCAR and supporters of Ref. 20 demonstrated their knowledge of ecology, sociological understandings of poverty, and exposure to new ideas about sex and gender roles. The reform effort was spurred on by the climate of crisis in a world with too many people, threatened by nuclear annihilation, and American cities facing the pains of population growth. Seattleites, like other Americans, were constantly

¹¹⁹ Robertson, *The Malthusian Moment*, xv.

reminded that they lived in troubled times by television and print media's coverage of current events.

In January 1969, *Life* magazine proudly proclaimed that "1 out of 4 Americans will read this issue of Life." But this particular issue promised to be exceptional, for it reflected upon the troublesome year of 1968:

It was some year. It was a year when everybody had to be heard – students, blacks, hippies, yippies, rightists, leftists, dissidents – and then heeded, instantly. It was a year of confrontation, a year the Establishment became the Enemy, the alienated became the activist and nobody could hear the sensible voice of the quiet man. It was a year that pulled the moon down almost close enough to touch...It was a year nudity lost its novelty and sex came on strong. Most of all, it was a year we had to learn to expect the astounding, to accept the unthinkable. Assassination, starvation, invasion – the events, like a series of waves, battered us with awful rapidity. In short, it was an incredible year.

Nothing seemed to provide more perspective of the year than the choice of the issue's front cover: an image of the Earth, taken from Apollo 9 in December 1968. Apollo 9's Christmas Eve flight, according to *Life*, filled America with a rare moment of optimism and hope, some respite after a year which threatened to pull the nation apart over issues of race, war, politics, religion, and sex. While problems seemed of epic proportion, the image of the Earth seemed to encourage people to rethink the relative importance of these problems, and issues related to the health of the planet—closely linked in people's minds with limits on population growth—for many people, dwarfed all problems.

Seeing a photograph of the Earth for the first time was a transformative experience for some, especially in the nascent environmental movement. The McCaffrees joined other Americans by listening to Captain James Lovell describe his perspective of the earth as he orbited the moon: "A vast, lonely and forbidding sight...A grand oasis in the big vastness of

space.”¹²⁰ In Paul Ehrlich’s book from that same year, *The Population Bomb*, which sold over two million copies, he likewise used the metaphor of spaceship earth to highlight the finite capacity of the Earth.¹²¹ Affluence was an unsustainable goal for future generations, he reminded his reader, if population control measures like sex education and expansion of contraception and abortion were not secured during the present. “The birth rate must be brought into balance with the death rate,” he made clear, “or mankind will breed itself into oblivion.”¹²² Living in California, Ehrlich could cite personal ways in which development had impacted the environment just within his lifetime. Seattleites feared that their city was next. Thus an ecological lens provided him, perhaps the most well-known Malthusian, with a tool to see the connections between American culture, economic practices, public policies, and reproduction. “The causal chain of the deterioration is easily followed to its source,” he claimed: “too many people.”¹²³ Therefore, the goals of environmentalists and feminists aligned with middle-class aspirations to create limits to growth by empowering women to control their reproduction.

A devaluation of the social good of motherhood lay not far away from a critique of too many people, as evident by the UW student’s call to demonstrate against “that un-American institution of mass production, Motherhood.” As Plant has outlined in her study of motherhood in modern America, anxious views of mothers as idle, consuming, almost parasite-like members of society had been circulating in popular and academic literature since the 1920s. Antimaternalism, she argues, had a “significant presence” within American culture and emerged as a “notable force” during the same period renowned for its glorification of motherhood and homemaking. Critiques of motherhood were espoused by feminists and antifeminists alike, most

¹²⁰ McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 342.

¹²¹ Robertson, *The Malthusian Moment*, 126.

¹²² Ehrlich, *Population Bomb*, 11.

¹²³ Ehrlich, *Population Bomb*, 66-67.

notably, in Philip Wylie's 1942 bestselling book, *Generation of Vipers*. "As the birthrate fell, longevity increased, and new laborsaving devices eased the difficulties of housekeeping," Plant summarized Wylie's argument. "The nation's industrious mothers had devolved into idle and profligate moms."¹²⁴ Some of the same views are present in Friedan's critique of suburban motherhood in 1963.¹²⁵ What Plant's study makes clear is just how complicated American notions about motherhood were during the middle of the last century. She concludes that as America transformed from an industrial to a post-industrial economy, gender roles required reconsideration and ultimately shifted to reflect social norms which increasingly valued female productive rather than reproductive labor. Devaluing motherhood as a life-long female occupation also added the call that abortion reform would benefit society as a whole in ways that can be traced in local print media from the urban corridor of western Washington.

As noted, the critique of motherhood was conflated with overconsumption and overpopulation, and dramatic language and images were used by some in the counterculture to attack middle-class values of family and their faith in technology. One of Paul Ehrlich's articles about "the population explosion" was reprinted in *The Northwest Passage* in February 1970. The front cover of this issue is an image of the Earth, but, unlike *Life* magazine's cover from a year prior, the Earth is a bomb with a lit fuse. The cover page read, "Diffusing the Population Bomb." Ehrlich's article began by emphasizing the limits of the Earth: "Since people are unable to flee from our rather small planet, the inevitable result of the wide discrepancy between birth and death rates has been a rapid increase in the numbers of people crowded onto the Earth."¹²⁶

Printed next to these words is another dramatic image of the Earth (see Figure 4). Sitting atop the planet is a corpulent nude woman with a pig-like face. Smiling, she has seemingly

¹²⁴ Plant, *Mom*, 33.

¹²⁵ Plant, *Mom*, 151.

¹²⁶ Paul Ehrlich, "The Population Explosion," February 23, 1970.

Figure: 4

dozens of babies reaching for her breasts as two worried and eager-looking “capitalists” pull at each leg. Standing behind the woman is the figure of death; an omniscient skeleton with his hands around the woman’s neck, as if about to break it. Death looms large behind excessive consumption and reproduction, the image seems to communicate. This image critiques the apparent connection between unchecked population growth and unsustainable economic growth. The concept of carrying capacity—that the earth had a limited amount of resources to sustain life—reminded people that growth was not limitless. The image visually demonstrates the complex narrative of ecologists during the 1960s to an audience which may not have encountered the literature directly, spreading the message beyond the university-educated. The visual



and verbal message was the same. It warned of inevitable doom if the excesses of growth—overconsumption and overpopulation—were not drastically curbed, *now*.

Seattleites had another opportunity to engage in public discourse about population when the city’s Mayor, Wes Uhlman, was rumored to have proposed the so-called “third-baby tax” in 1970.¹²⁷ *The Seattle Times* declared that the “third-baby tax” had support from Seattle residents

¹²⁷ See Emily Lieb, “Uhlman, Wesley Carl (b. 1935),” December 21, 2006, *HistoryLink*, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&File_Id=7854.

who saw it as a way to “help control population.”¹²⁸ Marylyn Martin from the University District wrote to the *Times* that she “fully” supported the proposal. Robert E. Scharefer, M.D., from the affluent Magnolia neighborhood, called Mayor Uhlman’s proposal “forward thinking” and urged that “those who reject realistic measures for dealing with the population problem should read, ‘The Population Bomb’ by Paul Ehrlich [sic].” Another resident from the University District agreed, as he expressed his support for the rumored tax proposal. “Overpopulation will be a critical problem in the near future. We are already murdering our environment.” Again, the direct connection is made between too many people and a dying planet. As this University District resident expressed the urgency of his concern, he ended with the warning to others to “limit your families today so that your children can have families too.” Not wanting to abandon all together the middle-class value upon family and the environment required accepting limits to growth. Marylyn Martin likewise demonstrated her value in families, stating that she was not opposed to large families, “but parents who want more than two” should adopt, she argued. Curbing “excesses” in the present, these editorialists suggest, would ensure the middle-class’ quality of life – articulated by valuing education, the family, and the environment – for the future.

Anxiety about growth articulated during the postwar period by ecologists, supporters of family planning, and members of the counterculture, among others, coincided with “the great and unprecedented” affluence of the American middle class.¹²⁹ To mention just a few factors contributing to this change, federal loans helped make home-ownership and college education—two symbols of and means to middle-class status—more widely available. The G.I. Bill, government subsidies, and tax breaks to homeowners, consumers of durable goods, credit borrowers, and male-breadwinner tax-payers specifically benefited the middle-class. Mass

¹²⁸ “The Times’ Readers Have Their Say,” *Seattle Times*, April 17, 1970.

¹²⁹ John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Affluent Society*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998), 1.

prosperity was achieved through mass production and mass consumption. “The Consumers’ Republic,” wrote historian Lizabeth Cohen, “not only fostered new rules of the game for gender roles, but for the class structure as well.”¹³⁰ Indeed, it is difficult to untangle class, gender, and race from changing sex norms as each identity mutually informed and shaped all others. As demonstrated in this chapter, the renegotiation of the boundaries of appropriate sexual behavior and reproductive expectations occurred as the middle-class faced changing realities of the postwar landscape. Migration, urbanization, and education were just some of the experiences that helped middle-class families like the McCaffrees, Mintos, and McIntyres shape their expectations about the future, a future in which control of reproduction seemed to be vital.

¹³⁰ Cohen, *Consumers’ Republic*, 152.

The Making of a Women's Health Issue: the Search for a Solution

"MOST OF THESE WOMEN JUST DIED."

I have a patient who was a marker case for me, and I still think about...I got a phone call on a Saturday from a family that I had taken care of, and they said they'd gotten this phone call, and it turns out that the young woman was an airline stewardess, and she was pregnant. No legal abortion in the United States. So she flew down to El Paso, Texas and went across to Juarez, Mexico...They perforated her uterus and the infection and bleeding spread into abdomen, and somebody – but we never learned who it was – called, got her information out of her purse, called her uncle in Seattle...and he just got an airplane and flew to El Paso...

Well, it turned out that then he called and they told me what was going on, so we had an ambulance waiting at SeaTac, and when she arrived they put her in the ambulance and put her in the hospital. She was in shock so severely and so long that she lost her kidney function for a while; she went into kidney shutdown. And if she hadn't come to Seattle she would have died because they had just started to do dialysis in Seattle. Only place in the world you could get somebody to carry you through this kind of renal shutdown...

*That's the sort of thing that went on before. Most of these women just died. They never made it back to Seattle. But she made it back, largely thanks to her uncle. He's a real hero.*¹³¹

Personal Story, recalled in 2000 by Dr. Richard Soderstrom
Volunteer Physician and Medical Advisory Committee Chair at Seattle Planned Parenthood
From 1968-1995

During the 1960s, Soderstrom was on the faculty of the University of Washington Medical Schools, ran a private practice in Seattle's eastern suburb of Bellevue, and volunteered his services for patients at Seattle Planned Parenthood, as well as advising the board of this expanding clinic. His work represents the important contribution of male physicians in the transformation of women's health care during this period. The previous story was recalled in 2000 during an oral history project launched by what was then Planned Parenthood of Western Washington. His was one of five histories collected from male physicians. This story represented

¹³¹ Oral History Transcripts. Seattle Planned Parenthood Archive.

“a marker case” for him and one that he still thinks about. Illegal abortion placed physicians in a professional quandary – the law prohibited them from being able to serve their female patients as they saw fit. As this study conveys, illegal abortion in the United States at times drove women to cross borders to seek services elsewhere. Some women living in Seattle who could afford the \$1000 fee flew to Japan for an abortion arranged by a local travel agency. Though abortion was officially illegal in Japan, Japanese officials did not enforce the law. Some went north to Vancouver because of rumors of safe, less expensive abortionists. Others asked friends or even their family doctor if they knew where they could have an illegal abortion. In the case of this woman, she went south and placed her body at risk with an illegal abortion in Mexico. The “hypocrisy” of the law, according to the campaign literature from the WCAR, meant that women who could afford it could access an abortion. Without having to say anything more, these campaign messages suggest that the intended audience of this campaign would be familiar with the case of going abroad to receive an abortion.

The following chapter considers how therapeutic abortions placed professionals in a quandary in ways that encouraged their support for reform. The chapter begins by considering the concept of “sacred work” in order to try to understand why many clergymen supported abortion reform. It then analyzes how the Washington Citizens for Abortion Reform (WCAR) was organized by a psychologist and lawyer, expanded quickly to include physicians, and then through local professional organizations. Because the membership of the WCAR included a variety of professionals, the campaign for reform essentially argued that about reform was a women’s health issue, as evident in the story from Soderstrom. It analyzes how ideas discussed in the first two chapters about urban and family planning informed the campaign literature which sought approval from Washington voters during the election of 1970. Again we find that the

heterogeneous alliance of support for reform was made possible in the shadow of the population bomb. The making of a women's health issue added another powerful layer of legitimacy that helps explain the majority approval of Referendum 20.

The same year that Seattle hosted the World's Fair, the case of Sherri Finkbine received national coverage, and many scholars have labeled the publicity of her story as a turning point in the history of abortion reform.¹³² As an Arizona television actress and mother of five, Finkbine had used Thalidomide (an anti-nausea medication) during her pregnancy – a drug later found to cause severe birth defects. The media coverage of the case helped to turn public opinion in favor of abortion reform. The *Seattle Times* printed the AP's coverage of the case, from Finkbine's denied therapeutic abortion in by an Arizona hospital board to her flight to Switzerland for an abortion. This case helped to shape the reform effort as a matter of women's health.

As the story by Soderstrom reflects, illegal abortion endangered women's bodies and placed their physicians in a predicament. It is from this tension between professional obligation to serve one's patient and citizenship obligation to obey the law that the reform movement in Seattle was born out of a desire by the middle class to create laws which they believed best served society. As the story from Dr. Clements previously suggested, illegal abortion was bad for women, families, and society. Likewise, this story still haunted Soderstrom, whose patient almost died because she sought an illegal abortion.

This story also suggests that by the late 1960s Seattle had become a center for medical innovation. With her kidneys failing, had she not come to Seattle—the only place in the world where dialysis was available, she would have died, according to Soderstrom. The story taught him a tangible lesson about the nature of illegal abortion. “Most of these women just died,” he concluded, because “they never made it back to Seattle.” This was a “marker case” and thus

¹³² May, *America and the Pill*, and Gordon, *Moral Property of Women*.

deserves attention in order to understand why physicians were directly involved with the successful campaign for abortion reform. As argued in the first chapter, their participation provided legitimacy in the eyes of society which valued the advice of experts. The final chapter considers how and why male physicians, and clergy, were involved in the work of reforming the state's prohibition in Washington.

The following chapter traces the migration story of the last remaining family close to this campaign—the McIntyres. It considers why the minister of their church, Peter Raible at University Unitarian, considered abortion reform to be “sacred work.” It explores in detail the professional quandary posed by the system of so-called therapeutic abortions for middle class professionals. It concludes with an analysis of the vote for abortion reform and finds that the divide between opponents and proponents was geographic, thus coming full circle with the finding that place mattered to citizens who considered the need for abortion reform.

“Sacred Work”

Fellow Physicians and Wives,

Our 1909 abortion law is not only obsolete but totally unrealistic in 1970. It perpetuates Victorian concepts that a criminally-, wrongly-, or mis-conceived woman must pay for her 'sin' by bearing its product. Today most of us realize that it is society, social welfare, the tax-payer, and the unwanted and too often abused children who pay the penalty...

*Donald M. McIntyre, M.D., Wm. E Watts, M.D., Thomas Gilpatrick, M.D., and
Mrs. Gilbert Eade¹³³*

The previous is the opening address from letters of solicitation from the Washington Citizens for Abortion Reform. It contains many of the thematic elements that this work has highlighted: the middle class nature of the reform effort, the relationship between the individual

¹³³ “Letters, Incoming” Folder 2, Box 3, WCAR, UWSC.

and society, and an awareness of living in a new era. To begin, the letter was addressed to “Physicians and Wives,” who represented the core membership of the WCAR. The letter refers to the current law as “obsolete” and “totally unrealistic in 1970,” echoing the message from the 1962 letter from the Seattle City Council, which articulated an understanding that their era represented a “turning point” in history. Consciously aware that America, and Seattle especially, were at a historic crossroads, the middle-class members of the WCAR worked to reform their state’s prohibition against abortion as part of a larger effort to make Seattle into a progressive metropolis. The passage also contains another important theme of the campaign that this section on “sacred work” will explore – the relationship between religion and science in general and the specific contribution and opposition from various religious leaders and doctrines to the campaign for reform.

Additionally, this short passage reveals a reconsideration of the relationship between the individual and society in ways that reflect the popularization of the science of ecology. The letter frames the reform effort as a measure to undo an outmoded policy. The authors wrote that the 1909 prohibition against abortion represented a Victorian notion that women should pay for their “sin” by carrying a pregnancy to full-term and raising the child, alone if necessary. Then the authors mentioned that unwanted pregnancies constituted a burden to society as a whole. From an ecological perspective, human society was an interconnected web in which unwanted children of individuals negatively affected the whole of society. Therefore, abortion reform was good for society because it allowed women to terminate unwanted pregnancies. Furthermore, referring to the pregnancy as a “sin” reflects the desire by some to end the practice of basing secular laws upon religious constructions of morality by decriminalizing abortion and letting individuals choose what was best for them. The pro-science culture that the Century 21 Exposition had

helped to create merged with ideas from ecologists and from feminists. Within this context, religious leaders struggled to remain relevant and maintain some amount of moral authority; therefore, Peter Raible and other ministers supported abortion reform.

Though other religious communities were present in Seattle at this time, this study focuses upon Christianity because the membership of the WCAR included priests and ministers. Because a referral from a psychiatrist *or* minister was required for a hospital board to consider a therapeutic abortion, some women turned to their church community when faced with an unwanted abortion. In doing so, these women challenged their priests or ministers to consider the dilemma of illegal abortion. Some such as Peter Raible of University Unitarian Church responded by giving their full support to the campaign for reform. It is erroneous to assume that to be religious means supporting a prohibition against abortion. To the contrary, as argued by former chair of the PPFA Clergy Advisory Board, Thomas Davis, there is a long history of some clergymen providing support for their female congregants facing an unwanted pregnancy.¹³⁴

In 1997, United Church of Christ minister Thomas Davis was startled after reading an article in the *Washington Post*. The headline of the article read: “Unlikely Alliance for Planned Parenthood.” In spring of that year, the article explained that the Planned Parenthood affiliate in Washington D.C. had opened a clinic in a nearby church. This struck the article’s author as strangely unusual. But for Davis, the *Post* had it all wrong. He began his book, *Sacred Work*, by explaining that “an alliance between churches, synagogues, temples, and Planned Parenthood had existed for over seventy years.”¹³⁵ He acknowledged that while some of the most intense

¹³⁴ See Davis, *Sacred Work*.

¹³⁵ Davis, *Sacred Work*, 5. In fact, the first Planned Parenthood clinic in Seattle opened in 1935 with the support of the Church of the People; a “rigorous, radical, revolutionary church,” *Time* quoted the preacher, Rev. Frederic William Shorter, in 1934. He believed that “Christianity and Capitalism as they now exist are not compatible.” Demonstrating the connection between health care and creating a new social order, he supported what became Group Health Cooperative as well as Planned Parenthood. “Seattle Socialist,” *Time*, April, 30, 1934, 48.

opposition to the organization and its work had come from religious individuals and institutions, Planned Parenthood's "dedication has also cultivated a spiritual alliance with clergy who believe that all women should have access to the information and services."¹³⁶ This opposition, he believed, stemmed from an embrace of tradition at the cost of justice. According to Davis, because Planned Parenthood strives to provide reproductive health care to all women, Planned Parenthood and their clergy alliance are engaged in "sacred work." Clergymen and Planned Parenthood are natural allies, he concludes, because both groups, at their best, focus "on helping people whom society does not always want to help."¹³⁷ The evidence from the WCAR and the campaign in Washington State support Davis' claim. Like the support from the medical community, support from clergymen was referenced in the campaign advertisements from the WCAR.¹³⁸ Sacred work is a concept that helps to explain what appears to be an "unlikely" alliance between some in the religious community and the campaign for abortion reform. People such as Peter Raible of University Unitarian and John Compton Leffler of St. Mark's Cathedral understood their support for abortion reform as an act of sacred work. Their profession obligated them to do so, they believed, and their participation in the reform movement added much credibility to the campaign as well as the perceived relevance of a moral perspective on the issue.

The front page of the May 22, 1967, issue of the *New York Times* featured an article headlined: "Clergymen Offer Abortion Advice." Twenty-one Protestant ministers and rabbis in New York City, it announced, had formed a Clergymen's Consultation Service on Abortion to assist women in seeking abortions. States across the nation had begun to discuss the validity of,

¹³⁶ Davis, *Sacred Work*, 5.

¹³⁷ Davis, *Sacred Work*, 4.

¹³⁸ "Ephemera," Box 1, Folder 16, WCAR, UWSC.

for some states, 140 year-old laws prohibiting abortion.¹³⁹ Most states had some level of exemptions, indications for a so-called therapeutic abortion. Obtaining a therapeutic abortion began with a referral from a psychologist or clergyman. Then a certain number of physicians or a board at a hospital had to agree that the mental or physical life of the mother was directly threatened by the pregnancy. As more white, middle-class women (some married, some not) began to ask for therapeutic abortions, men in these professions were confronted with their stories, which at times challenged their professional obligation to care for minds, bodies, and souls. Reverend Howard R. Moody, spokesmen for the group, stated simply: “We are not willing to admit that it is illegal.” Their sense of justice superseded their respect for the law and even at times their religious tradition. But the 1960s was not only a time of social reform, agitated for by civil rights, environmental, women’s, and antiwar activists, but it was also a time of religious reform as spiritual leaders struggled to make sense of their role in the age of affluence and anxiety.

The Clergy Consultation Service on Abortion quickly grew to a network of nearly 1,500 ministers and rabbis. It informed women of the process for seeking a therapeutic abortion, or a legal abortion abroad, and other options for unwanted pregnancies, like adoption and homes for unwed mothers. They also, at times, helped connect women to the underground network of illegal abortions. Tom Davis recalled later how his experience with this service was “a crash course in the reality of women’s lives.”¹⁴⁰ An excerpt from a letter sent by Peter Raible in response to an inquiry from the Chicago Area Clergy Consultation Service on Problem Pregnancies, addressed March 4, 1970, illustrates how this network functioned:

¹³⁹ The nation’s first anti-abortion law was enacted in Connecticut in 1821. In 1828, New York added the precedent setting exemption from criminal law for abortions “necessary to preserve the life of the mother.” North Dakota became the last state to enact restrictive abortion law. By 1970, 46 states prohibited abortion unless necessary to preserve the life of the pregnant woman. “Speakers Packet,” Box 1, Folder 16, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁴⁰ Davis, *Sacred Work*, 2.

*Recently Hugh Anwyl of L.A. Clergyman's Consultation of Problem Pregnancies was through the Northwest and we talked with him. I did not ask Hugh, however, if he was able to uncover sources for referrals in this area. Two members of the University of Washington faculty, Dr. Ron Pion, an ob-gyn, and Dr. Nathaniel Wagner, a psychologist, have organized a limited phone referral service housed in one of our churches, but it is important to note that this is extremely limited and does not involve personal interviews...As you may know, there is a limited ability to refer women to the State of Oregon. If you need further information on this I suggest you write Dr. Wagner.*¹⁴¹

As explained in the previous chapter, Peter Raible had asked Lee Minto in 1967 to meet with the Washington Citizens for Abortion Reform (WCAR) group in his stead because he was too busy with his other duties, one of which was maintaining this national network of communication with the Clergy Consolation Service.¹⁴² Minto was then Executive Director of Seattle Planned Parenthood. She agreed to join the group because of her experiences working at her church. In fact, religious, legal, and medical institutions preceded official Planned Parenthood statements in support of abortion reform.¹⁴³ In 1961, the American Council of Churches approved hospital abortion when the health or life of the mother was at stake, and two years later the Unitarian Universalist Church, in a resolution, condemned the present abortion laws as “an affront to human life and dignity.”¹⁴⁴

A special task force appointed by the Department of Ministry to the World, having been asked to draft a statement on this issue of abortion in general and Referendum 20 in particular,

¹⁴¹ “Letters – Incoming,” Box 1, Folder 1-1, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁴² Schear, “The Changing Currents,” *Seattle*, December 1965, 20.

¹⁴³ In 1968, Planned Parenthood-World Population urged that abortion be removed from the criminal code and the decision be left to the woman and her physician. In 1959, the American Law Institute presented its Model Penal Code which included a liberalized version of the abortion law which included provisions such as if continued pregnancy posed “substantial risk” to the physical or mental health of the mother, if the child would be born with “grave” physical or mental health defects, or if the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest, then an abortion could be lawfully performed by a licensed physician. In 1965, the American Medical Association Committee on Human Reproduction took a stand, urging the adoption of the American Law Institute’s proposed language. “Speakers Packet,” Box 1, Folder 16, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁴⁴ “Speakers Packet,” Box 1, Folder 16, WCAR, UWSC.

met with members from WCAR and the referendum's opposition, Voice for the Unborn.¹⁴⁵ After "advanced individual reflection," the task force reached consensus. The committee's chairman, Reverend Kendall C. Baker of First Congregational Church in Bellevue, prepared a draft of both a theological statement and a proposed resolution. The tone of the resolution urged religious institutions to respond and play an authoritative role in the national debate about abortion reform. "The church as a corporate body must speak to this issue in some clear way," The resolution declared. Because abortion raises fundamental moral concerns, it continued, such as the taking of life, "the general public and political leaders are looking for some response from the religious community." After reviewing the biblical tradition regarding the sanctity of life, the resolution noted that the task force found that abortion, by expelling the fetus prematurely, is "arresting the development of life." It then quickly acknowledged that in "our pluralistic society, it must be recognized that there is no final answer to the complicated arguments about when life begins, about the difference between potential human life and actual human life." The author then accepts this ambiguity by asking a different question: "Are there any circumstances in which this taking of life can be justified?" Here is where considerations of contemporary concerns about justice along environmental, individual, and gender lines entered the argument.

Immediately following this question, the drafted statement discussed the new ecological perspective. "We must constantly choose one life over another," the author contended, "in a myriad of complex situations." The author cites the example of soldiers fighting in Vietnam and the much-discussed topic of overpopulation. "As world population increases and natural

¹⁴⁵ The Washington, North Idaho Conference of the United Church of Christ officially approved the resolution favoring about reform at its annual meeting, October 10, 1970. Their report, "Broad Theological Context of the Issue of Abortion," was sent to the WCAR headquarters on October 15, 1970. Its authors included five reverends from Bellevue, Monroe, Kirkland, and North Idaho. It also included four female lay members of churches from Bellevue, Tacoma, Seattle, and Pullman. By whom and for what purpose these members were appointed to the Department of Ministry to the World is not known to the author. "Incoming Correspondence," Box 1, Folder 1, WCAR, UWSC.

resources are limited, the choice of one life over another which occurs now will of necessity become even more obvious to us all.” Then, using a common metaphor to help make tangible the abstract concept of overpopulation and carrying capacity, it continues with: “The image of the planet Earth as a space-ship with the human family as its passengers makes it clear that hard day-to-day decisions of what shall live is a real fact of life.” Given that we have “already filled the earth and subdued it...the limitation of family size has recently become a positive social value.”¹⁴⁶ Therefore, with the sanctioning of some religious individuals and institutions, sins against nature and God—contraception and abortion—was transformed from a private vice to a public virtue. Given the context of affluence and anxiety in postwar America—the ominous shadow of the population bomb, the middle class began to see the public virtue and the private need for control over reproduction.

The resolution agreed upon by this committee highlights the preference for individual choice in “personal” matters.¹⁴⁷ Here, one can find middle-class values and assumptions about family and concerns for “quality of life,” which too many people and unwanted pregnancies threatened. The resolution declared that “men and women are free and responsible.” The author claimed that it is “a denial of human freedom and responsibility” to take literally the absolutist statement, “thou shall not kill.” The author finds that while it is a “God-given right to enter fully into sexual expression as she chooses,” yet “no one has the right to require a woman to complete a full nine-month pregnancy against her will.” The removal of the fear of an unwanted pregnancy is the key to sexual freedom, it finds. Though contraception is a means of family planning, it is

¹⁴⁶ “Theological Reflections Specifically Related to the Issue of Abortion,” 2 from “Letters – Incoming” Box 1, Folder 1-1, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁴⁷ Following the announcement of *Humanae Vitae*, the Roman Catholic Bishops of Austria released a statement in 1969 which also seemed to favor individual choice. Regarding contraceptive use it stated that a woman “in a hopeless-appearing situation is free to choose the way out which is the least destructive in terms of her concept of Christian love,” as quoted in “Letters – Incoming,” Box 1, Folder 1, WCAR, UWSC.

not entirely reliable, which is why abortion must be available. Finally, the law should protect rather than invade private life.¹⁴⁸ Regarding the matter of individual choice, some religious individuals and institutions acknowledge that because there is no consensus about the beginning of life, “one particular view should not be forced on society through the legal system.”¹⁴⁹

Each sect and denomination of Christianity carried with it its own tradition and political considerations when taking a stand for or against abortion reform.¹⁵⁰ But it is clear that members of the WCAR considered it important to add the support of clergymen to their campaign. This is evident in the inclusion of surveys of the regions’ churches with more than 15,000 members included in their files. Advertisements in the newspapers, on radios, and during public talks would reiterate that clergymen supported abortion reform. Although not absolute, it became apparent by 1968 that the divide fell along the lines of a five-century-old schism within the Christian church: Protestants generally supported abortion reform whereas Catholics generally did not.¹⁵¹ For example, one supporter of Referendum 20 wrote to the WCAR expressing this religious schema:

One of the principle obstructions to the legislation of abortion is the Catholic Church...we should remember that its Popes and bishops once persecuted scientists who taught the earth's rotation on its axis and its revolution around the

¹⁴⁸ “A Resolution Concerning Abortion Reform Legislation,” from “Letters – Incoming” Box 1, Folder 1-1, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁴⁹ Quoted in “Church Policies on Abortion: The Study,” from “Policy-Program Positions on Freedom of Choice Concerning Abortion,” *Journal*, July-August, 1970, 31. “Letters – Incoming,” Box 1, Folder 1, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁵⁰ At this time, Roman Catholics made up about thirteen percent of the western Washington population. See “Catholics,” *Seattle*, December 1966, 22. Indeed, Roman Catholics constituted 12.5% of Washington State’s population, or 394,387 people, in 1966. *Churches in the State of Washington: A Statistical Analysis* (Seattle: Washington State Council of Churches, 1968), 36.

¹⁵¹ The survey revealed that the Roman Catholic and Church of Latter Day Saints gave an official negative resolution on the matter of abortion reform. Neither the Missouri Synod Lutheran nor Southern Baptist Churches had an official statement on abortion. Methodists, the Lutheran Church of America, the (regional) Christian, the (regional) Episcopal, and the Presbyterian Churches called for reform which would leave the decision up to the mother and physician. The Mintos and McIntries were Unitarians, and their minister actively supported abortion reform, and spoke of the human tragedy of illegal abortions during Sunday sermons. The McCaffrees were Methodist.

*sun. The Church's current philosophy on abortion shows the same unwillingness to accept scientific facts.*¹⁵²

When members of the Washington State legislature and the registered voters decided whether to vote for or against Referendum 20 in 1970, they carried with them secular and spiritual considerations.

As clergymen struggled to maintain their moral authority over matters related to human relationship like marriage, parenting, and sexuality in a climate that tilted towards secular authorities, some clergymen lent their support to local abortion reform movements in order to demonstrate their compassion towards the concerns of their congregants. Because many women turned towards their church members and leaders for support—practical or spiritual—they shared their stories of the dilemma of an unwanted pregnancy. In doing so, they built an alliance for the reform movement that included some clergymen. The WCAR repeatedly mentioned their support from clergymen in public talks and advertisements soliciting support for Referendum 20. Like physicians, stories about illegal abortion presented by women presented a quandary to clergymen. By reforming the state's abortion law by referendum, this quandary was debated during professional organization meetings, public talks, through media outlets, and an alliance for reform—in the shadow of the population bomb—was able to include clergymen, ecologists, feminists, and members of the medical community.

The Quandary for Middle Class Professionals

The one other area I feel very strongly about is abortion reform...There is no question about it, that this is a problem that hits the needy the worst. Those with \$285 can go to a house on the outskirts of Vancouver, B.C. and get an abortion. I know, because my wife and I helped an unmarried friend of ours get one. Every doctor and lawyer knows someone who can either help or recommend someone else who can...Unwanted children stand a good chance of ending up on the public

¹⁵² "Letters – Incoming," Box 1, Folder 1-1, WCAR, UWSC.

*welfare system. So in short, please do everything you can to support abortion reform.*¹⁵³

-1970, letter from a constituent addressed to Rep. McCaffree

The content of this letter helps to illuminate how personal stories about illegal abortions motivated citizens in the same manner as it did members of the WCAR to support abortion reform. This letter also suggests the role of class in the public discourse about abortion reform in Seattle. The letter is written by a man who had helped an unmarried friend obtain an illegal abortion one hundred-forty miles north, across the international border. It cost their friend \$285. From his class perspective, he presumed that “every doctor and lawyer” had knowledge about how to obtain an abortion. This scenario raised a question for him: what about those without hundreds of dollars to spare, or without a trusted doctor or lawyer in whom to confide? He quickly shifted from his middle-class experience with abortion to pondering what it must be like for those without the means to access this network of knowledge and then pay the price. He concluded that the result of this class difference meant that those without the know-how or financial means ended up having unwanted pregnancies and that these children “stand a good chance of ending up on the public welfare system.”¹⁵⁴ For all these reasons—the experience of his friend whom they were able to help and the imagined unwanted children of the poor—illegal abortion was unjust for both his friend and those without \$285. From this perspective, he asked

¹⁵³ McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 402.

¹⁵⁴ The first welfare program in the United States, the Mother’s Pension Fund from 1913-1937, provided aid for mothers in cases of “destitution.” Mothers qualified when the husband (or father of children, in some cases, if the women were not married) had died, abandoned the family, was disabled, incarcerated, or in cases of divorce where the father did not pay court-ordered child support. Lillian Gideon, Seattle Planned Parenthood board member and long-time social worker, recalled that it was her work with pensioners from the Mother’s Fund that first exposed her to the need for contraception and the work of Planned Parenthood. Thus, as the government became involved in the support of mothers, social workers and probation officers, often women, began to see the need for contraception – that there was a link between poverty and reproduction – and if state agencies were to involve themselves in the support of poor families, then it made good sense to support affordable access to contraception. “In all my case loads there was always something that a family needed that Planned Parenthood provided.” Lillian Gideon, Oral History Transcript, PPGNW.

Rep. McCaffree to support Referendum 20 in the State House of Representatives. Thus, even if some wondered what unwanted children would be like for the poor, ultimately the middle class used their own personal encounters with illegal abortion to advocate for reform.

The passage also repeated a common assumption: that a network of knowledge existed to help women access a local illegal abortion or a legal abortion abroad but that access to reliable information and a safe abortion was limited by class. Minto recalled some of the options she had discovered over the course of her career:

It was about seven hundred dollars if you went to a naturopath that was halfway between here and Tacoma. I'd heard about that one. There was a man in the city who would do abortions for...I think it was five hundred dollars up to four months, although he was an alcoholic, and that was a really risky one. There had been, years before that, a woman by the name of Dr. Mimi McClafferty who did abortions up to three months, and she charged about four hundred dollars to do them, which was a lot of money in those days, but she was very good and very clean nobody ever gave her a bad time.

This information suggests that illegal abortion had not only variable cost but risk as well. Note that the geography of abortion followed the urban corridor of western Washington: Tacoma, Seattle, and Vancouver, mentioned in the letter to Rep. McCaffree. In fact, McCaffree recalled in her political memoir that those who could recall a personal experience with the dilemma of an illegal abortion were more likely to support abortion reform. When voters went to the polls in November 1970, western Washington counties voted with some of the highest margins in support of Referendum 20. During an era in which the ability to have a private doctor in which to confide in regarding an unwanted pregnancy was not available to all, access to this network of knowledge was shaped by class. The cost for a safer option was prohibitive and the WCAR noted this injustice in their campaign for reform.

Minto frequently mentioned in various oral histories the particular story of one young man to demonstrate the consequences of criminalizing abortion, especially for those with limited

financial or cultural resources. This story demonstrates how class shaped one's network of information in ways that often led lower class women into more dangerous situations. An eighteen-year-old garage mechanic went to Minto for a consultation, shaking as he told her his story. He had gotten a girl pregnant. "He hadn't meant to and they didn't love each other," but he "felt responsible for her," Minto recalled. So he talked to the "men at the shop" and somebody gave him a telephone number of "somebody who could do something." The man told him to meet him at a motel with the girl and to bring four hundred dollars. He didn't have four hundred dollars, so he sold his car. He borrowed a friend's car and drove the girl to the motel. The man took the money, raped her, then left through a back door, Minto explained. Still pregnant, the woman "flipped out," and they ended up taking her to the psychiatric ward at Harborview Hospital. "I'll never forget this kid as long as I live," Minto recalled decades after the matter. "You don't see 18-year-old young men weep like that," she explained.¹⁵⁵ Stories like these spoke of injustice to Minto and many others involved in the campaign to legalize abortion. In the same oral history, Minto suggested the impact of class differences. She said that if there was anything that *she* ever needed, she could always ask her good friend, Dr. McIntyre, and he would help her. What about others without those connections, she wondered, like the man who wrote to Rep. McCaffree asking her to support Referendum 20? The injustice of illegal abortion along class lines constituted a portion of the WCAR campaign for abortion reform.

Minto, as noted earlier, had met the McIntyre family while living next door in faculty housing located near the University of Washington. Migrating to Seattle during the 1950s to accept a position at the University of Washington Medical School, Donald McIntyre was president of the King County OB Society and the State Obstetric Society and volunteered his services as a physician at Planned Parenthood. Through those professional positions he had the

¹⁵⁵ Lee Minto, Oral History Transcript, PPGWN.

opportunity to shape medical policy and practices. While a professor, he taught many of the doctors trained at UW. Though the board members at the King County Hospital didn't allow doctors or anyone else to talk to women about contraception, McIntyre had a Planned Parenthood nurse come in and talk to these women—women who were there because they couldn't afford to give birth at a private hospital. "Because he was involved," his wife Lenore recalled, "so many women that couldn't afford another child for one reason or another" had access to contraception information. For Lenore McIntyre, her interest in Planned Parenthood was twofold: "the individual woman and her need for family planning, but I was very interested in population."¹⁵⁶ For so many who worked for Planned Parenthood or for the Referendum 20 campaign during the 1960s and 1970, concerns about "the individual woman" and concerns about "population" were inextricably linked.

As explained in the previous chapter, stories McIntyre told to Joel Pritchard over dinner at the McCaffrees house convinced Pritchard that illegal abortion was nonsensical because it placed doctors in a quandary. Doctors were able to provide a simple and safe abortion, but the law prohibited them from doing so. Because of this, Pritchard was convinced, abortions were performed haphazardly by people without medical training who, without any means for standardization, were inconsistent. Luck seemed to determine how much risk a woman assumed when seeking an illegal abortion. Some physicians did perform abortions, though they risked their professional license and reputation by doing so. This did not make sense to Pritchard and many others who believed that abortion was a medical procedure and thus should be the monopoly of trained professionals. This made sense to their sensibility of what it meant to live in a modern society. Instead, black-market abortions appeared medieval, and this rhetoric entered the public campaign for Referendum 20 as well.

¹⁵⁶ *From Humble Beginnings*, 17.

Reflecting the social value placed in the authority of professionals, the WCAR's campaign for abortion reform emphasized, in newspaper, radio, television, and public representations, that the reform had the support of educational, religious, medical, and social authorities. Panels were held at private, Catholic schools like Seattle University and Blanchet High School, with signs that announced, "Every child should be wanted."¹⁵⁷ Just before the election, the *Seattle Times* outlined the official statements for—from WCAR—and against—from the Voice for the Unborn. Half of the statement from WCAR is consumed by a list of the professional groups which supported the referendum. The list included medical, educational, and religious organizations, such as the Washington State Medical Association, the PTA, and the American Association of University Women, to name a few. Many of them were based in Seattle or represented the greater Puget Sound region of western Washington, demonstrating the regionalism of support for abortion reform. The statement from the WCAR highlighted the "hypocrisy" of the current law.

The statement from Voice for the Unborn reiterates their debate about "the central issue"—life. It concludes by stating that a woman's "absolute rights end when the child's life begins" and that the solution to "the basic problem, pregnancy," is not legalized abortion but "adoption, sex education and responsible sexuality, contraception, family counseling and planning."¹⁵⁸ They feared that, unlike the process of a therapeutic abortion, Referendum 20 represented abortion "on demand," meaning that there were too few "safeguards" and "restrictions," reducing the decision to the request of a woman and a willing physician. Therefore, both sides held faith that abortion should lay within the scope of the professional community. They disagreed, though, to the degree of power that the law granted to professionals.

¹⁵⁷ "Abortion Panel; Seattle University, Senator Fore," March 11, 1970. Photo Collection, Museum of History and Industry.

¹⁵⁸ "The Abortion Law," *Seattle Times*, November 11, 1970.

What appeared to weaken the argument from Voice for the Unborn was their insistence that the central issue was life. A “Think-In” was held at Blanchet High School in March of 1970. The *Seattle Times*’s religion editor, Ray Ruppert, covered the story and shaped the debate over the legalization of abortion: “the human crisis vs. the taking of life.” Speaking for abortion reform was psychiatrist, Dr. Goldenberg, and Ob-Gyn, Dr. McIntyre. Arguing against reform was attorney Patrick Geraghty and a pathologist from the University of Washington, Dr. Louise Wiegstein, who raised the concern of “one individual’s deciding if another would have life.” Asked when a fetus becomes a human person, Dr. Goldenberg concluded that there was great disparity within the medical and religious communities in the answer. “You’re welcome to your decision,” Dr. Goldenberg said, “but it’s not a decision that should become part of the criminal law.”¹⁵⁹ The lack of consensus from authorities meant that individuals were left to decide for themselves. This weakened the opponents’ central claim that abortion reform constituted the legal sanctioning of “taking of life.” Therefore, a discussion of the human crisis of illegal abortion was more rhetorically powerful. The injustice of the current abortion law filled the campaign rhetoric from WCAR.

Attending these public presentations with his father was Robert Campbell McIntyre. Having recently graduated from high school, he was considering what he would do next. Ultimately he decided to follow in the steps of his father, training to be an Ob-Gyn and, later, the Medical Director at Seattle Planned Parenthood from 1997-2012. Decades later, he recalled a story from one physician on staff at Harborview Hospital—and a former professor at the University of Washington’s Medical School—that there wasn’t a night that would go by without a woman who came in with a serious infection from an attempted abortion. They would sometimes die. “And that’s what happens when abortion is illegal,” Cam concluded from this story. The

¹⁵⁹ Ray Ruppert, “Think-in: Abortion; the Human Crisis vs. the Taking of life,” *Seattle Times*, March 3, 1970.

abortion rate doesn't seem to change whether abortion is criminalized or not, he noted. Women will just place their bodies at greater levels of risk.¹⁶⁰ This was the point that his father would emphasize at these debates. Thus, women's bodies presented physicians with the dilemma of illegal abortions. The unlucky never made it to Harborview. Twenty-four year-old Seattleite Raisa Trytiak was strangled and found in a garbage dump after a failed attempt at an abortion on February 1, 1967.¹⁶¹ Because of their position at Harborview, and the human crisis they saw, these doctors often campaigned to change the law. Therefore, the source of reform came from the bottom-up. Women presented their stories and bodies most often to men in various professional positions. Out of an understanding of injustice, they fought to solve this professional quagmire through channels they best understood—educating the public that political change was necessary.

When asked how Planned Parenthood was perceived by the Seattle community at the time that Cam McIntyre considered becoming the organization's Medical Director in the late-1990s, he stated that he could only speak for the medical community. In studies, seventy percent of physicians, nurses, support staff, and administrators in the medical field are "pro-choice." He continued by stating that they are more likely to be supportive of legalized abortion than the general population, voting in support of broad access to reproductive health care and donating to Planned Parenthood. When asked why, McIntyre replied that the reason is twofold: their level of education and because "they see the effects...they understand that there is a bigger picture."¹⁶² Elaborating, he explained that being in the medical field "keeps you grounded...to all walks of life." His professional experiences as an Ob-Gyn meant that he saw "all segments of society and

¹⁶⁰ R. Cam McIntyre, Interview, May 20, 2011.

¹⁶¹ "Abortion Reform in Washington State," History Link File #5313, accessed January 25, 2012.

¹⁶² A Gallup poll from the late 1960s showed that 40 per cent of American adults favored liberalization of the abortion law and among citizens with a college-education, the figure was 58 per cent. As reported in "Growing Sentiment for Abortion-Law Change is Evident." *Seattle Times*, December 1, 1969.

you see...what's going in in people's lives...very much different from the one that you may live."¹⁶³ In 1999, when Seattle Planned Parenthood wanted to raise enough capital to open a new clinic and regional headquarters, the organization conducted a public relations survey and found that more than eighty percent of those surveyed in King County had a favorable view of the organization.¹⁶⁴ The evidence suggests that, in part, because of the sheer number of people who worked in the medical field, a strong majority of Seattleites support the work of Planned Parenthood. As I have argued previously, a university education is also correlated with favorable support of contraception and abortion, as delaying or limiting reproduction coincides with extending one's education. A discussion of the founding of the WCAR by psychologist Samuel Goldenberg illuminates the middle-class nature of the reform movement, how stories from women motivated their action, and that the abortion issue was ultimately understood as a women's health issue.

Not long after Trytiak's death, two pregnant women made appointments with Goldenberg. The first was a married woman in her early 40s who was having difficulty taking care of her two children. Goldenberg referred her for a therapeutic abortion, but her case was denied by the hospital committee. Her decision to terminate the pregnancy had no grounds as a threat to her physical or mental health. The second patient was a college student and Goldenberg also approved her referral for a therapeutic abortion. It too was denied. "In my practice as a clinical psychologist I came into contact with people – men and women – who were involved because the women, or the women the men knew, were pregnant and felt it was going to be a disastrous state of affairs if they had no alternative but to carry through with the

¹⁶³ R. Cam McIntyre, Interview, May 20, 2011.

¹⁶⁴ Minto, Oral History, November 10-11, 2007.

pregnancy...partly on the basis of these two experiences I began to be more concerned with this issue.”¹⁶⁵

Discussing this further with psychiatrist Glenn Strand, with whom he shared office space, he asked Strand if he knew any obstetricians or gynecologists who had had experience with these matters. Strand mentioned Don McIntyre, who had performed some therapeutic abortions at Swedish Hospital. Talking to Don and his wife, Lenore, they got into contact with Palmer Smith, an attorney who had drafted a number of social welfare bills for the legislature. Shortly after, Lee Minto and Joel Pritchard joined the group, which began to meet monthly in 1967 to discuss what could be done. “We decided we’d like to have a representative of Catholicism involved,” he recalled, “and we ended up with two priests.”¹⁶⁶ Some members, like Minto and McIntyre, attended meetings regularly, while other lawyers, professors, researchers, parents, and police met infrequently to share their perspective.¹⁶⁷ “With the guidance of Palmer Smith,” who later drafted Referendum 20, “we made a rather thorough study of whose interests are involved in the decision to have an abortion or not – the interests of the woman, of the husband, of the child, of society, among others.” In other words, they mapped the ecology of abortion, connecting the individual to the whole.

It was not a simple question, nor did they see it as “a matter only of women’s rights.” It is important to see his reasoning for this, explained in an interview from 2000:

My recollection is that we didn’t have a direct connection with women’s rights groups, but there was an indirect connection. The impact of the women’s rights movement was to widen the context in which abortion reform was contemplated.

¹⁶⁵ “Dr. Samuel Goldenberg Recalls the Campaign to Liberalize Washington’s Abortion Laws.”

¹⁶⁶ Once the group moved from discussion to action, they were asked by their superiors to end their involvement.

¹⁶⁷ Among the early members of the group were Dr. Donald McIntyre, Dr. Ronald J Pion (associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Washington), Seattle attorney, Palmer Smith, psychiatrist Glenn T. Strand, Rev. Everett J. Jensen (general secretary of the State Council of Churches), Marylyn War of Seattle (a liberal Republican and volunteer lobbyist for welfare reform and children’s issues), Lee Minto (Executive Director at Planned Parenthood), and Republican State Senator Joel Pritchard.

It helped people to be aware of other attitudes and values and predispositions they might hold which bore on their response to questions of choice regarding pregnancy...As we became aware of the various levels of interaction, the breadth of the significance of the decision about abortion became more and more apparent.

The group was concerned with “social good and the good of individuals,” in Goldenberg’s words. Gender entered the abortion reform debate of the WCAR as a women’s health issue, not a women’s rights issue--an opinion repeated by Minto and McCaffree as they recalled the time period. This is not to say that the issue of the disproportionate injustice due to gender was ignored. Campaign literature included the support of “women’s rights.” But this did not become the central issue of the campaign. Nevertheless, women’s rights groups constituted another important ally in the abortion reform campaign.

In January 1969, the same month that *Seattle* magazine’s feature article covered the abortion debate in the state Legislature, Barbara Winslow spoke at UW about “women’s liberation and a woman’s right to abortion” on behalf of the State’s Peace and Freedom Party. Women’s Liberation-Seattle (associated with SDS) set up an abortion rights committee in 1969, two years after the formation of WCAR. To say that abortion reform in 1970 was a women’s rights’ issue is anachronistic. In fact, the strength of the movement was that its message was broad enough to include feminists and non-feminists. Campaign material favored placing the decision to have an abortion between a woman *and* her physician. The final draft of the law included a provision for consent of the husband, if the woman was currently residing with him. Thus, the reform maintained a preference for male consent even as it was one of the most liberally written abortion laws at the time. Feminists could be pleased that abortion would no longer be a crime and that women’s bodies would be put at considerably less risk. Therefore,

abortion reform promised to protect women's health, if not a women's right to reproductive autonomy. As one campaign advertisement written by WCAR stated:

*It isn't pleasant to think about abortion. But it isn't pleasant to think about women mutilating themselves and ruining their lives either. Remember, abortion reform is overwhelmingly endorsed by doctors, clergymen, nurses and social workers. They know the tragedy caused by our present laws. They believe in this humane and compassionate reform.*¹⁶⁸

The making of a women's health issue fit within the context of the era. One of the city's earlier opportunities to be exposed to the problem of therapeutic abortions was presented via the *Seattle Times*'s coverage of what became known as the Thalidomide Case. In August of 1962, the same year that Seattle hosted the World's Fair, news of the denial for a therapeutic abortion of "pretty" Phoenix television performer, Sherri Finkbine, reached Washington. Finkbine had been prescribed Thalidomide, a drug which was later discovered to cause birth defects, to help alleviate nausea. Finkbine's therapeutic abortion was denied, despite the referral for a therapeutic abortion from "six doctors and two psychiatrists," the AP release stated.¹⁶⁹ Her husband began to seek the possibility of getting an abortion done legally abroad. The *Times* continued to cover the AP releases following their case. On August 8, 1962 they announced that the couple had boarded a plane for Sweden, one of seven countries permitting abortion in cases like Finkbine's. The Swedish Board of Health had already granted seven requests for abortions for women who had used thalidomide.¹⁷⁰ This story illuminated two narratives that the campaign for abortion reform repeated. The first case demonstrated how women of means could access safe, legal abortion by flying outside of the country. Second, the criminalization of abortion was preventing women from following the advice of professionals. The system of therapeutic abortions was not

¹⁶⁸ "Ephemera," Box 1, Folder 16, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁶⁹ "Thalidomide Case: Finkbines May Face Delay in Sweden," *Seattle Times*, August 4, 1962.

¹⁷⁰ "Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Finkbine: Thalidomide-taker's Mail Increased," *Seattle Times*, August 2, 1962.

working. This position was repeated in 1970 with another advertisement in support of Referendum 20:

*Does the state have the right to deny professional medical care to any woman who is determined to have an abortion? Does the state have the right to punish any doctor who tries to help? Let's come out of the dark ages. Vote for abortion reform.*¹⁷¹

As discussed previously, when the WCAR formed, they collected case studies from medical and mental health doctors from around the state. Their encounters with “attractive,” young, married, educated white women made up the majority of the stories. This reflects the class nature of the campaign in which members of the WCAR were especially troubled by and empathetic to middle-class women’s dilemmas with unwanted pregnancies and illegal abortions. Though stories of the “hypocrisy” of the law along class lines constituted a portion of the campaign’s rhetoric, race was not explicitly discussed. Nevertheless, stories of white, middle-class women risking their health to seek an illegal abortion resonated with the white majority’s sense of injustice perhaps more than the plight of African American women. For example, one advertisement from the WCAR explained that “any woman can obtain a safe and legal abortion by going out of the country. If she has the connections. If she has the money. Vote against hypocrisy.”¹⁷² The economic argument that unwanted children cost society had gained currency during the Great Depression, when stories of infanticide, abortion, and orphanages circulated in the popular media.¹⁷³ Instead, the WCAR felt the need to repeat the message that unwanted pregnancies constituted a threat to families and society. But did it pose the same threat to all? The evidence suggests that people responded to calls for abortion reform by considering their local conditions.

¹⁷¹ “Ephemera,” Box 1, Folder 16, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁷² “Ephemera,” Box 1, Folder 16, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁷³ See Reed, *From Private Vice to Public Virtue*.

For example, Susan A. Rock of Port Angeles requested information from the WCAR because as “a registered nurse,” she was “very concerned about the problems in my area.”¹⁷⁴ This resulted in continuity in the language used to argue for abortion reform around the state, though the message was not perceived equally. Revealing their class predilection for education, the “Do’s and Dont’s for Speakers” began with: “We believe that given the facts, most people will vote for abortion reform.” A few of its main points encourage speakers to emphasize that abortion reform is supported by various professionals—“mature, responsible people who have seen firsthand the tragic results of our present laws.” Preferring to emphasize how abortion reform was a women’s health issue, it states: “Do make the point that at present abortion is the only medical procedure legislated by the State. It should be put back where it belongs – between a woman and her physician.”¹⁷⁵ The packet reminded potential speakers to avoid trying to convince people who are “unalterably opposed” to abortion. It concludes with the remark that the campaign “will be won or lost in the middle spectrum of voters,” and indeed its message spoke to the concerns of the middle class.

For example, in January of 1969, the cover of *Seattle* magazine featured a dramatic image of abortion: the worried, tearful look of a young, attractive, white woman looking squarely at the reader behind the lettered-cut-out of the word “ABORTION” (see Figure 5). The feature article begins by seeking to understand “the middle,” stating that the majority of Americans reject the “extreme” views of the women’s right argument and the sanctity of life of “even an hour old” embryo. “The current trend toward ‘abortion reform’ – not only in Washington but throughout the country – reflects the majority view.”¹⁷⁶ In 1969, fourteen states were considering abortion

¹⁷⁴ “Letters – Incoming,” Box 1, Folder 1-1, WCAR, UWSC.

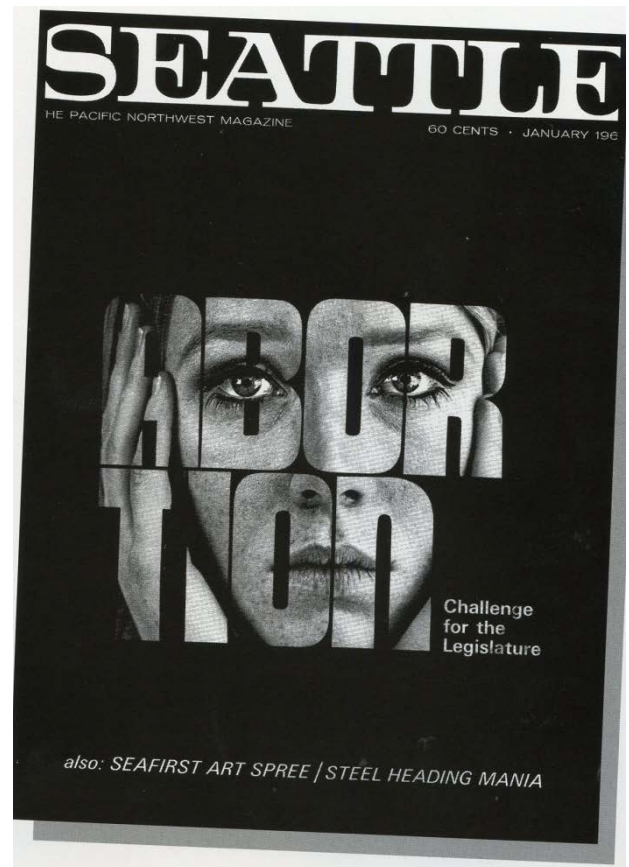
¹⁷⁵ “Ephemera,” Box 1, Folder 16, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁷⁶ Ruth Wolf, “The Dilemma of Abortion,” *Seattle*, January 1969, 17.

reform, and five other states had already liberalized their law to some degree.¹⁷⁷ From the perspective of the author, new mores about sex and the “abortion epidemic” were the two most powerful impetuses for the spirit of reform. Revealing the power of stories, the author stated that, “contrary to the popular stereotype of a young, unmarried girl in the hands of a midwife-abortionist wielding a rusty knitting needle, indications are that more than 80 per cent of all illegal abortions are performed on respectable married women by trained doctors.”¹⁷⁸

This article repeats a personal story of one physician who admitted to performing “more than 20,000” abortions, which he used to explain his reasoning that the law he had broken was unjust. “The first abortion I ever did,” he retold, “was as a favor to a patient. I had delivered her fifth child only a few months before, her husband was out of work, and the last thing they needed or could care for was another baby. She begged me to help her out. I didn’t have the heart to refuse.” Of his profession as an obstetrician, he said, “I am a humanitarian whose chosen field is one of the most important and useful medical specialties.”¹⁷⁹ That same month, the board of trustees at Group Health Cooperative on Capitol Hill, where Kenneth McCaffree had been a board member from 1955-66, voted unanimously to support abortion reform in Washington

Figure: 5



¹⁷⁷ Before 1969, Colorado, North Carolina, Georgia, Maryland, and California. By 1970 New York, Alaska, Hawaii, Washington D.C., Arkansas, Delaware, Kansas, New Mexico, Oregon, Mississippi, had liberalized their laws to varying degrees. “Ephemera,” Box 1, Folder 16, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁷⁸ Wolf, “The Dilemma of Abortion,” 18.

¹⁷⁹ Wolf, “The Dilemma of Abortion,” 18.

State. But Referendum 20 failed to reach the floor in the State House of Representatives, because the chair of the House Rules Committee—a Catholic—blocked it. As progress slowed through the mechanism of government, the campaign for abortion reform received a powerful boost from outside the WCAR.

“We are putting our heads in the sands,” the *Seattle P.I.* and *Times* quoted Dr. Franz Koome, a doctor in the Seattle suburb of Renton who had just announced, in a letter addressed to Governor Dan Evans, that he had “treated” thousands of “unwanted pregnancies.” Trained at the University of Washington, the Amsterdam-born Catholic had opened a general medical practice in Renton in 1961. After the story broke, a local television channel did a special report on abortion the following month and interviewed some of Koome’s former patients. One college student said of Koome, he “stuck himself out on a limb for me as well as other girls.”¹⁸⁰ Without anyone willing to testify against the doctor, King County Prosecutor Charles O. Carroll said his office lacked sufficient evidence to prosecute him. He told reporters that he had done 22 abortions one week, 29 the next, more than 3,000 a year, which seemed astonishing to the reporters who continued to ask for his tally.¹⁸¹ In reality, he could only accept about one request in ten.¹⁸²

Shortly after Koome’s story was reported, *Times* editorialist Herb Robinson posited that this “theatrical” act would have a strong impact on the abortion reform campaign: “few would argue against its potential for forcing a showdown on the abortion issue in this state.”¹⁸³ The article reported that a recent Gallup poll showed that 40 percent of adults in America favored abortion reform. The figure for college-educated adults was higher, at 58 percent. Just a week

¹⁸⁰ *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, December 4, 1969. “Clippings,” Box 4, Folder 1-5, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁸¹ “Koome, Dr. Adriaan Frans (1929-1978),” History Link File # 2642.

¹⁸² “Letters – Incoming,” March 4, 1970, Box 1, Folder 1-1, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁸³ Herb Robinson, “Growing Sentiment for Abortion- Law Change is Evident,” *Seattle Times*, December 1, 1969.

prior to Koome's announcement, "The Advocates," a live, Sunday evening public affairs television series, broadcast a debate on the question of abortion, asking: "Should the State adopt Legislation Allowing any Woman to Terminate Pregnancy at Any Time During the First Three Months?" During the broadcast, Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm was among those who supported legalized abortion. After the show, they heard from 11,311 individuals from 49 states, writing in to express their opinion. The WCAR requested the results of the poll, which revealed that 83 per cent of respondents favored legalized abortion, while seventeen per cent did not. A total of 367 people from Washington State responded, and 88 percent were in favor of legalized abortion. As Herb Robinson stated, there was growing sentiment for abortion reform.

The impact of Koome's decision to publicly announce that he was "treating unwanted pregnancies" had a strong effect on the campaign. By writing a letter addressed to Governor Evans, he dared to state to enforce the law by punishing him. Betting that the public would side with him that the law was unjust, he told the media that he would continue to treat unwanted pregnancies as he quietly gave the WCAR a \$10,000 donation to promote Referendum 20.¹⁸⁴ Regarding the impact of Koome's statement, Minto said: "Dr. Koome wanted to call attention to how desperate women were. It electrified people to know there was this kind of need."¹⁸⁵ Indeed it legitimized the campaign effort to reform the abortion law by having the public support of professionals in the field of medicine. As Koome said, those directly involved in the issue – physicians and women – represent the majority of persons favoring reform.¹⁸⁶ In other words, the relationship between physician and patient is the foundation of the movement for reform, according to Koome. Because the WCAR emerged out of this relationship, the campaign in

¹⁸⁴ "Koome, Dr. Adriaan Frans (1929-1978)," History Link File # 2642.

¹⁸⁵ "Lee Minto, Director of Planned Parenthood from 1967-1993, Recalls History of Abortion Reform," Interview of Lee Minto by Cassandra Tate, August 31, 2000, Seattle, Washington, *HistoryLink: The Free Online Encyclopedia of Washington State History*, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=2643.

¹⁸⁶ Al Dieffenback, "Renton Doctor Treating Unwanted Pregnancies," *Seattle Times*, November 27, 1969.

Washington State emphasized abortion as a women's health issue, which aided the approval of the public. By reforming the law by popular vote, it influenced the nature of the campaign to emphasize the reasons which would have the broadest appeal. They accomplished this by arguing that abortion would help individual women, families, and society in ways that echoed new ideas from the environmental and women's movement. The following section takes a closer look at the campaign methods and message which put abortion to a vote of the people.

Putting Abortion to a Vote

*This is, if not a popular session, then at least an extraordinary one...But if it is an Extraordinary Session, then I would remind you...that these are extraordinary times...Not in the history of all mankind have those of us who represent the people been faced with such awesome challenges...We must now share in the responsibility to deal with the overwhelming impact of change...if there is a danger in action, so there is a greater danger in delay. For while this state may be salvageable, it is by no means secure.*¹⁸⁷

-Governor Dan Evans, January 1970

With these words, Governor Dan Evans addressed the opening of the 41st legislative session in Washington State, the longest in its history and the "most productive."¹⁸⁸

In November, 1964, with more "guts than good sense," Dan Evan had run successfully for Governor. In doing so, the Seattle-born moderate Republican won the attention of the national media and Republican Party as the only Republican to beat an incumbent Democrat in any gubernatorial race that year.¹⁸⁹ *Time* credited his "earnest and considerable intelligence," along with his "progressive brand of Republicanism" for helping him win the campaign. The Republican Leadership team, Pritchard, Gorton, and McCaffree, had helped him to craft an ambitious and comprehensive, thirty-five-point "Blueprint for Progress." Work as a civil

¹⁸⁷ Quoted in McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 392-394.

¹⁸⁸ McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 421.

¹⁸⁹ "Washington: Dan Evans, That's Who," *Time*, November, 13, 1964, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,898221,00.html>.

engineer shaped Evans' political style: identify a problem, study it, know your resources, and search for practical simple, efficient solutions. Among other things, the Blueprint detailed "fresh" ideas for providing mental health services, boosting tourism and industry, streamlining state government, and establishing safeguards for the environment. Many Democrats, like former speaker of the House, William "Bill" Day from Spokane, were not thrilled to see their power slip or a successful reform effort under Republican leadership. Considering such controversial and divisive issues, such as the proposal to allow eighteen--year-olds to vote, a possible income tax, environmental protection measures, and the restructuring of unemployment benefits - slowed the mechanism of a democratic form of government. But Washington voters, who historically preferred a Democrat as Governor, reelected Evans in 1968 and in August his face, according to the cover of *Time*, represented a new breed of Republicans.

The 41st Legislative session that began in January of 1969 repeated the same story of slow progress for the measure in the Blueprint. But the events of the previous year had created a sense that something had to be done. Pressure from McCaffree's constituents manifested in periodic student protests against the Vietnam War at the University of Washington, angry voices, placards, and letters written calling for change. "Politics this year," she remembered, "are in tight, critical focus."¹⁹⁰

Urban violence and environmental disasters provided a backdrop from which to justify supporting progressive reforms and two extra legislative sessions to "get the job done." As the 41st session began, news broke about the Santa Barbara oil spill. That spring, several armed Black Panthers were on the steps of the Washington State Capitol in 1969 demanding safe streets, real black history curriculum, and respect.¹⁹¹ The previous summer, the McCaffree

¹⁹⁰ McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 336.

¹⁹¹ McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 356-357.

family had toured the U.S. on vacation, noting the still visible effects from urban riots in the wake of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination in April of 1968. "American cities this very moment are embroiled in bitter racial battles as angry black populations lash out in pent-up rage," McCaffree recalled of her vacation, touring D.C. and New York City. To date, Seattle had not experienced the level of violence that had devastated cities like Detroit. "I'm knocking on wood," McCaffree wrote. Urban planning, she hoped, would prevent an urban crisis in Seattle. "A nagging sensation of national chaos and fear begins to seep in. These are changing times indeed. Sobering and unsettling."¹⁹²

Repeating the same sense of urgency as Governor Evans as he addressed elected officials in Washington, urging them that action had to be taken, Dr. Koome, an abortion provider in Renton, wrote: "Too many words have been said, too little is actually done, further waiting and debating is detrimental, cruel and impractical for the persons involved." Dr. Koome stated in a later interview that he received 15 to 20 requests for abortions a week and that other clinics received up to 60 such requests.¹⁹³ Dozens of women, he suggested, were in need of abortions every week. By 1970, the demand for reform fell on ears susceptible to calls for swift reform which promised to stave off a potential crisis. "For many, this is the most ethically-wrenching, personally agonizing vote they've ever cast," McCaffree surmised. "For so many, this is a choice between personal principle and the principle of allowing all voters their constitutional voices."¹⁹⁴ Thus, abortion reform in Washington State passed the Senate, 25-23, and House, 60-36, as Referendum 20. Voters would decide its fate in November.

Representative McCaffree was not alone in seeing the connection between the spirit of reform during the extraordinary session which passed Ref. 20 and the historical context of civil

¹⁹² McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 332.

¹⁹³ Dieffenbach, "Renton Doctor Treating Unwanted Pregnancies."

¹⁹⁴ McCaffree, *Politics of the Possible*, 415.

unrest. In a letter to the WCAR, a professor in the Psychology Department at Western Washington University, Evelyn Mason, wrote on June 2, 1970, that support for abortion reform “undoubtedly reflects to some degree the over-whelming concern with student unrest, Cambodia, and police action.”¹⁹⁵ Without the cooperation of the press, enough support within chambers of state government, voters would have never had the opportunity to reform the law. Nevertheless, abortion reform occurred in the state because enough voters supported it. The final discussion will focus on a few of the voices that supported Referendum 20. What they reveal is the continuity between ideas circulating in public discourse and the justifications of some who worked for and voted for the referendum.

In March of 1969, the American Association of University Women reported the results to the WCAR of a survey of its 41 state branches regarding the issue of abortion reform. Twenty-six branches responded, twenty-one in favor of the Association’s taking a stand on Abortion Reform. The Legislative Chairman of AAUW, Washington Division, called abortion reform “an extremely important piece of social legislation.” The organization officially endorsed the referendum during their convention in April. As established elsewhere in this study, the legalization of abortion held special significance for the college-bound, middle-class woman.

The vice president of the WCAR, and General Secretary of the Washington State Council of Churches, Rev. Everett Jenson, sent a letter to national denominations of Protestant Churches to provide data for sermons regarding abortion reform and a list of campaign supplies that they could buy. “Many Protestant Church bodies have taken strong stands urging abortion reform at the national and state level,” the letter explained. Clergymen, he continued, “have expressed concern that restrictive legislation prohibits caring for women at a crisis situation in their

¹⁹⁵ “Letters – Incoming,” Box 1, Folder 1-1, WCAR, UWSC.

lives.”¹⁹⁶ State law, in other words, competed with spiritual leaders as the authority in matters related to sexual relations.

State law also threatened the authority of professionals by intervening in the patient-doctor relationship, according to the North Pacific District Branch of the American Psychiatric Association in Seattle. In a letter to the WCAR from January of 1970, they reiterated their year-old support for abortion reform as such in Washington State. They explained: “Essentially our members wanted to further promote and protect the health of women and to enhance the nature of the doctor-patient relationship.”¹⁹⁷

The activities of Washington State gained national attention when the WCAR wrote to the Playboy Forum, announcing their actions for abortion reform. As a consequence, the WCAR received letters from across the nation regarding the issue. Many letters told of the often hidden lives of women who spoke of their struggle to control their reproduction. One woman from Inglewood, California, wrote, expressing her experiences with an abortion. Reflecting the reality of many women, she recalled her history of eight pregnancies, three miscarriages, four living children, and one early death of a child. Describing how she felt when she found out she was again pregnant, she wrote: “to have given birth to another child would have meant wrecking the lives of my family.” A study from the 1980s by a moral psychologist confirmed that this was one of the most common reasons that women sought an abortion, reflecting the conclusion that by the 1960s, abortion became a tool for maintaining the family.¹⁹⁸ “I am not sorry I had an abortion

¹⁹⁶ “Letters – Incoming,” Box 1, Folder 1-1, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁹⁷ Letters – Incoming,” Box 1, Folder 1-1, WCAR, UWSC.

¹⁹⁸ See Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*. In this study, she hypothesizes about two modes of viewing modes of perceiving moral dilemmas and the construction of self and other. To reach this conclusion, in part, she surveyed the women considering the termination of early pregnancies. What this study revealed was that the women considered the effect of “the other” to determine the morality of a choice and, for those who chose abortion based upon this schema of morality, the decision to terminate the pregnancy was based upon the decision that it would be better for the relationship with their respective partner and/or their family.

and I don't feel that I committed murder," she continued, "I'm only sorry that it cost my husband so much and that I had to become a criminal in the eyes of the law in order to do what I felt necessary."¹⁹⁹ For this woman, the law was wrong, not abortion, and being made to feel a criminal was clearly not within her realm of class expectation.

Abortion reform, for some, represented an important piece of reform that promised to alleviate the pressures on American cities and the planet. It also represented a new tool that complemented an emerging middle-class ideal: greater control over limiting family size. Middle-class women expected to be able to plan their families just as civic leaders held faith that urban planning could transform cities into spaces where middle class families could seek a quality life. "Limits to growth" was the key to both. Abortion also became a palatable solution during an era in which sex/gender norms posited that sex was healthy but unwanted pregnancies were bad for individuals and for society. Religious authorities disagreed and lacked consensus about the morality of limiting reproduction at the same time that Americans, especially those who had attended university, increasingly turned to science and scientists as the preferred authorities on matters related to sex and the family. Ultimately, fear of the population bomb created a sense that spiritual and secular leaders must respond, *now*. The image of the population bomb represented the anxiety that science had created the means of our own destruction. It had created atomic weapons and the means to decrease the death rate. It had also enabled a higher level of material comforts for an expanding population, at least from the perspective of the American middle class. But ecologists warned that this growth was not sustainable, that nature created real limits to check population growth. Furthermore, if the American middle class hoped to maintain their new material wealth, the number of people on the planet with whom they had to share these

¹⁹⁹ "Letters – Incoming," Box 1, Folder 1-1, WCAR, UWSC.

limited resources had to change. This framework brought together a diverse alliance that supported the legalization of abortion in Washington during the 1960s.

Not all voters in Washington State responded similarly to the same rhetoric about a national crisis, so often articulated as a crisis of American cities. Voters in King County favored abortion reform 2:1. As the most populous county in the state, King County alone nearly won the election. The 238,043 King County voters who supported Referendum 20 constituted almost 40 per cent of the State-wide total votes “for” reform.²⁰⁰ This was due to many reasons. To begin, the strongest supporters for reform were a network of professors, legislators, physicians and clergymen from Seattle, who used their alliances through Seattle-based institutions to build a network of support. Furthermore, as has been suggested, personal encounters with illegal abortions seemed to correlate with support for reform and, though evidence is not conclusive, it appears as if the urban corridor between Tacoma and Vancouver B.C. had more abortionists. Lastly, a central claim of this study is that concerns about overpopulation resonated with Seattleites who, since the 1962 World’s Fair, engaged in discussion about the promises and perils of growth. As Washington State transitioned from a resource extraction-based economy to a “big science” economy, the state’s two largest employers—Boeing and the University of Washington, both located around Seattle—encouraged the migration of university-educated technocrats and professionals who were more likely to be middle-class, married men. Thus, members of the WCAR saw abortion reform as a measure to make Seattle into a good place for middle-class families. As the 1960 Washington State census confirmed, while the state’s rural population was contracting, the urban population was increasing.

Therefore, a geographic divide existed between support for and against Referendum 20 along the eastern and western part of the state. King County voters approved the referendum by

²⁰⁰ Ludlow, *Abstract of Votes*, 1970, 2.

the greatest margin.²⁰¹ This is due to several factors discussed in this work. First, the WCAR which organized the campaign for reform was based in Seattle and its members were Seattleites who used their professional and class identity to build a heterogeneous alliance of support based in Seattle. Furthermore, the metropolis' economy transformed from a resource-based to scientific research and technology with the aid of federal funds that had allowed the University of Washington and Boeing to become the state's two largest employers during the postwar period. Lastly, Seattle became a regional medical hub and as discussed earlier, the support of the medical community was vital to the campaign. Thus, the campaign's messages about this reform effort did not resonate similarly with residents of other counties. As one doctor from rural Pasco wrote to the WCAR: "Some of you people living in the city should take a trip to the farm."²⁰² Fears about overcrowded cities and anxiety about rapid modernization, sentiments to which the WCAR's campaign literature responded, resonated more strongly with Seattleites who could cite tangible examples from their community about the social threat of too many people and the archaic nature of the state's prohibition against abortion, using language from the women's and environmental movement. The sentiment from the doctor from Pasco suggests a geographic limit to "the shadow of the population bomb."

As demonstrated elsewhere, messages about unwanted pregnancies and the need for an ecological perspective were more closely associated with gender and class than an urban setting and therefore helped to create the basis for a national movement to support abortion reform. Seattleites, seeing themselves on the new frontier of science at a time of rapid growth, worked to make the city into the place for progressive views about women's health. The McCaffrees, Mintos, McIntyres, and many others worked to build a medical infrastructure, via the University

²⁰¹ Ludlow, *Abstract of Votes*, 2.

²⁰² "Letters, Incoming" Folder 2, Box 3, WCAR, UWSC.

of Washington, Group Health Cooperative, and Seattle Planned Parenthood, that has lasted into the twenty-first century. When clinics across the nation prepared to deliver abortion services after 1973, PPFA turned to their Seattle affiliate to help write their national medical protocols. Because Washington State changed their abortion law by popular vote, the WCAR had to build a network of support within the medical community and beyond. The foundation for this network was rooted in 1960s notions about progressive women's health care. Speaking to this legacy, Dr. Jack Leversee, volunteer physician and member of the Medical Advisory Committee at Seattle Planned Parenthood from 1967-69, felt best about his work with the organization that "if anybody in the country wanted to know about a technique or use of something or how to help women with reproductive rights [Seattle Planned Parenthood] was the place people came to."²⁰³ The Seattle Planned Parenthood affiliate has involved members of the medical community more than any other and that, according to members of Seattle Planned Parenthood, has made all the difference.

The history of the national movement for abortion reform relegates the role of physicians to the periphery of the women's movement. This history suggests rethinking the inextricable alliance between the reformation of women's health care and the growing environmental and women's movements. As argued, the shadow of the population bomb helped to bring together a heterogeneous alliance to support abortion reform in Washington State during the 1960s. The popularization of the science of ecology and the transformation of motherhood during the postwar period aided the WCAR's claim that Referendum 20 was good for women, families, and society. As argued, criminalized abortion represented a dilemma for many women and their physicians, and their stories drove the campaign. Without unwanted pregnancies there would have been no movement for reforming the law. Yet, without an alliance of middle-class

²⁰³ *From Humble Beginnings*, 45.

professionals which provided legitimacy and social-political power necessary for a reform campaign by referendum, the reform movement may not have been successful. This history explains the role of abortion reform in making Seattle into a progressive metropolis in ways that suggest that women's bodies – as consumers, laborers, and mothers – were at the heart of America's transformation into a post-industrial society. Access to abortion was supported by voters who understood that the ability to limit reproduction was good for middle-class women and America's economy.

Epilogue: Abortion in the Real Century 21

In April of 2011, with a new Republican majority in the U.S. House of Representatives, the federal government almost shut-down over a budget debate regarding Title X. Because Planned Parenthood clinics across the nation are eligible to receive this federal support and since part of their services includes abortion care, some Representatives and Senators called for an end of the four-decade long support of Title X as a targeted attack on abortion. According to *New York Times* reporter Gail Collins, the dispute represented another act in the “abortion war” drama.²⁰⁴ The issue for Senator Jon Kyl from Arizona was abortion, which he infamously and erroneously claimed constituted “90 per cent of what Planned Parenthood does.”²⁰⁵ Collins concluded her coverage of the federal debate by judging that the “attempt to end federal financing for Planned Parenthood, which uses the money for contraception services but not abortion, is portrayed as an anti-abortion crusade. It makes sense, as long as you lay off the factual statements.”²⁰⁶

Evidently we are still debating the social value of abortion reform in the United States a half-century later. Contemporary discussions from opponents and proponents assume that divisiveness about the issue falls along a clearly defined fault line between red states and blue states, conservatives and liberals, religious and secular, even men and women. As this study makes clear, this was not the case during the 1960s, and perhaps support for abortion today is still much more heterogeneous than the popular media or national politics would suggest. Indeed, support for the legalization of abortion in Washington State had important allies that appear absolutely unlikely today. This study argued that the reform effort was successful because the

²⁰⁴ Gail Collins, “Behind the Abortion War,” *New York Times*, April 13, 2011.

²⁰⁵ According to Planned Parenthood, abortion represents three percent of total services. Collins, “Behind the Abortion War,” *New York Times*, April 13, 2011.

²⁰⁶ Collins, “Behind the Abortion War.”

WCAR made abortion reform an important issue for the middle class as a matter of women's health and in making Seattle into a progressive metropolis and regional medical hub. The rhetoric of the WCAR built upon larger social movements such as environmentalism and women's rights in important ways, arguing that too many people threatened the planet and an inability to control reproduction destabilized women, marriage, and the family. If the politics of abortion is as divisive as pundits would like us to think, perhaps one is more likely to find the divide where the city ends and the country begins. Abortion reform was an effort by urbanites to make the city hospitable to middle-class families as a response to the transformation into a post-industrial nation.

This state-level study of abortion reform is timely and important given the fact that the federal government has retreated from its support for family planning. Contrary to an erosion of *Roe v. Wade* in some states, Washington State elected officials and voters have had additional opportunities to express their continued support for women's health.²⁰⁷ In 1991, state voters again expressed support for access to abortion. Initiative 120 declared that "every individual possesses a fundamental right of privacy with respect to personal reproductive decisions," essentially writing the ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 decision into Washington State law. In 2012, Washington State legislatures considered a bill "concerning health plan coverage for the voluntary termination of a pregnancy" and almost became the first state to require insurers who cover maternity care to include coverage of abortion. By contrast, fifteen states had already passed laws restricting insurers from covering abortions and twelve others were considering similar laws. The Representative who sponsored the measure, Eileen Cody, a Democrat representing West Seattle, stated that historical precedents justified the decision.

²⁰⁷ For example, some states mandate a 24-hour waiting period, parental, spousal, or partner consent, or a patient must watch a video, see an ultrasound, or hear a presentation before receiving an abortion. For more, see Melody Rose, *Safe, Legal, and Unavailable? Abortion Politics in the United States* (Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2007).

“Washington State has historically been in the forefront for women’s reproductive rights,” she said, indicating that she was “just trying to maintain the status-quo.”²⁰⁸ This study of the campaign for abortion reform analyzes the making of Washington State’s support for women’s health. Because the WCAR built a campaign based upon women’s health, argued that abortion was another component of family planning, and that society is threatened by too many people, support for abortion came from the political middle, not the fringe, and that has made a lasting difference.

This study traced the historical context in which Seattle became the city on the frontier of science and proposes implications for broadening the contemporary alliance of support for what has become known as “reproductive rights.” The medical community in Seattle that emerged during the postwar era has grown and with it, I would add, has the network of abortion supporters in the name of good women’s health. As the 2004 cover of *The Stranger* suggested, Seattleites need not feel that they needed to become Canadians as the nation appeared to move more to the political right. It encouraged them to see themselves as citizens of the United Cities of America. The implications of this urban/rural divide for contemporary abortion campaigns are important. As studies have shown, rural counties are less likely to have abortion providers. Furthermore, my study indicates that one of the best allies of legalized abortion is the middle class. Messages about “women’s rights” do not speak to the middle class as effectively as “women’s health,” I would argue. Feminists are important allies to which women’s health is important. In seeking “the middle,” supporters of maintain access to abortion should be wary of alienating their “natural” religious allies.

²⁰⁸ “Wash. Could Be the First to Require Abortion Coverage,” February 27, 2012, <http://www.king5.com/news/local/Wash-could-be-first-to-require-abortion-coverage-140547233.html>.

Recalling the words of Dr. Koome and Dr. Cam McIntyre, the majority of abortion-supporters are physicians and their female patients. Therefore, as long as women demand abortions there will always be a *basis* for the pro-choice movement. To redress the urban-rural gap in support for abortion, an era of reform must occur in rural America as it did for urban America during the 1960s. Perhaps, the contextual differences of urban and rural communities are too great for a similar campaign. Yet, as this study showed, it is these interactions between women and providers that motivate the politically powerful middle class. Therefore, if a reform movement is to occur within rural communities, it will most certainly acquire a different agenda to meet the different needs of women in those communities.

Activists in the current reproductive movement, who tend themselves to be middle-class urbanites, may need to remind themselves that this new movement may not look like they may expect, but should remember the words of historian Edith Sanders, that “ideas have a way of being accepted when they become useful as a rationalization of an economic fact of life.”²⁰⁹ Activists must ask themselves what are the economic realities of rural Americans and how does access to abortion aid women, families, *and* their communities? As this study argued, in the shadow of the population bomb, unwanted pregnancies represented a threat to the middle class in Seattle during the postwar period. But unwanted pregnancies are not unique to the middle class, and activists on all sides of the abortion debate are mistaken if they forget that reproductive politics in America is about women’s changing roles in the economy.²¹⁰ Though the rhetoric has cooled regarding the threat of too many people in the twenty-first century, the ecological

²⁰⁹ Edith Sanders, “The Hametic Hypothesis: its Origin and Functions in Time Perspective,” *Journal of African History*, 10, no. 4 (1969): 522.

²¹⁰ See “Contraception Increases Financial Stability and Educational Opportunity, Women Say,” http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/09/26/contraception-financial-educational-security_n_1917535.html. See also Erin Gloria Ryan, “It’s Time to Stop Pretending Abortion and Birth Control Aren’t Economic Issues,” <http://jezebel.com/5940740/its-time-to-stop-pretending-abortion-and-birth-control-arent-economic-issues>.

framework that posits limits to growth has not fractured and provides a broad ideological framework within which a heterogeneous alliance of support can be maintained. As the history of reform in Washington State shows, a diverse alliance between the medical, religious, and political community strengthened the successful campaign to convince voters to approve Referendum 20. This study reminds those who work for maintaining access to abortion care for all women that as long as women feel economically threatened by limited control over reproduction, there will always be the basis for a powerful movement.

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