



# Sacred Work: Planned Parenthood and Its Clergy Alliances

*Tom Davis*

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In the struggle for reproductive freedom, there are religious extremists at one end and liberal secularists at the other. Lost in this battle and often invisible to the public eye are the religious leaders and institutions that have worked in favor of protecting reproductive rights. In *Sacred Work: Planned Parenthood and Its Clergy Alliances*, Tom Davis brings to light the ways in which Planned Parenthood Federation of America, a leading reproductive rights organization, and the clergy are not as incongruent as they often are construed to be. Although clergy supporters of choice are rarely, if ever, given attention in the media, Davis shows that they in fact play a major role in advancing women's rights, rebutting right wing arguments, and helping to make (and keep) abortion legal nationwide. Beginning with Margaret Sanger's efforts to include mainline clergy in the fight to provide information about contraceptives to the general public, Davis details the religious and historical dimensions of this long alliance up through current debates about the future of reproductive rights. He argues that Planned Parenthood, though a secular organization, is engaged in the "sacred work" of promoting social justice and that it is this work that continues to bring clergy into alliance with it. In cutting through the male-dominated politics and often vapid semantics that typically surround the issue of reproductive rights, this book is unique in the way it addresses the plights of real women and men who are struggling to be faithful in the face of genuine dilemmas. Moreover, *Sacred Work* makes an important contribution to breaking down the religious attitudes in America that are antithetical to women's reproductive rights.

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