

Purposeful Strangers

A Study of the ex-Mormon Narrative

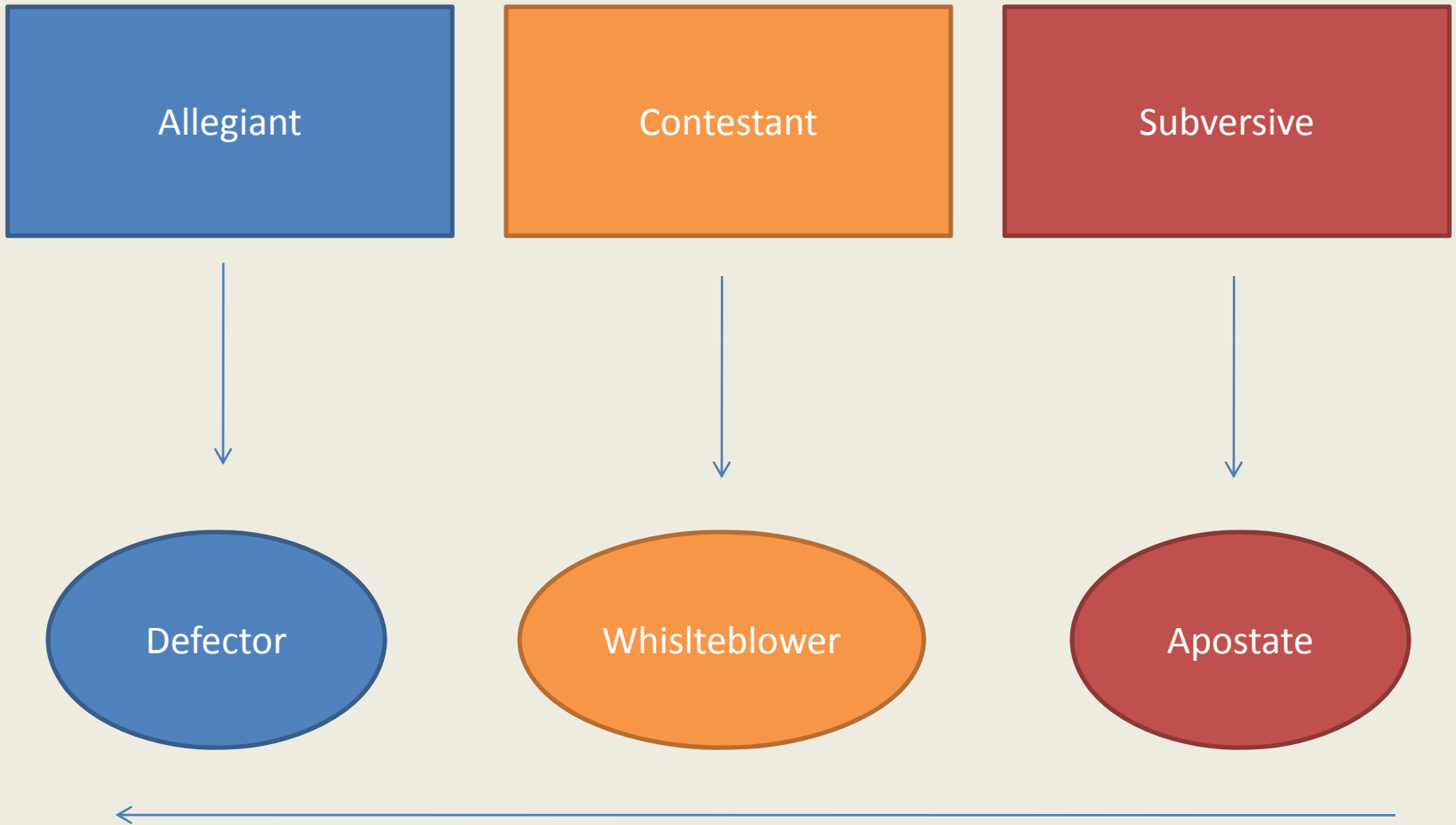
Paper and presentation slides available at:

www.mormonstudies.net

Vocal portion of ex-Mormon Culture

- Language
 - TBM – True Believing Mormon
 - The Morg – The Mormon Church
 - Morgbot – a “mindless” following Church believer
 - Mopologist – a Mormon apologist
 - TSCC – “The so-Called Church”
- Key Personalities
 - Bob McCue: ex-Mormonism intellectual – highly revered
 - Tal Bachman: popular music artist – consistently refers to Church President as “Cult Führer” and Church as “Loyalty Cult”
 - Richard Packham – considered an expert on Church History and Doctrine

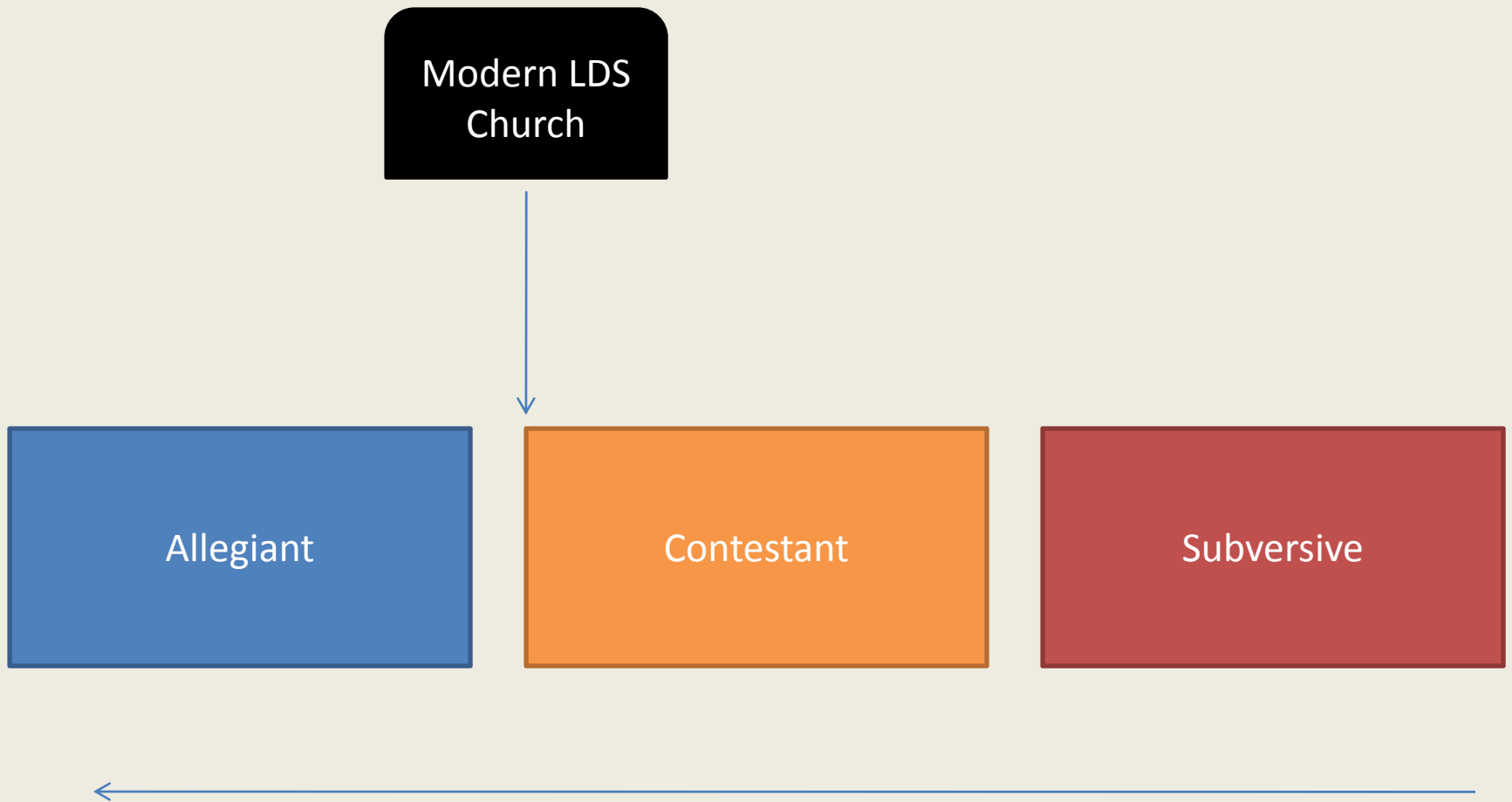
Bromley's Organizational Typology and Exit Roles



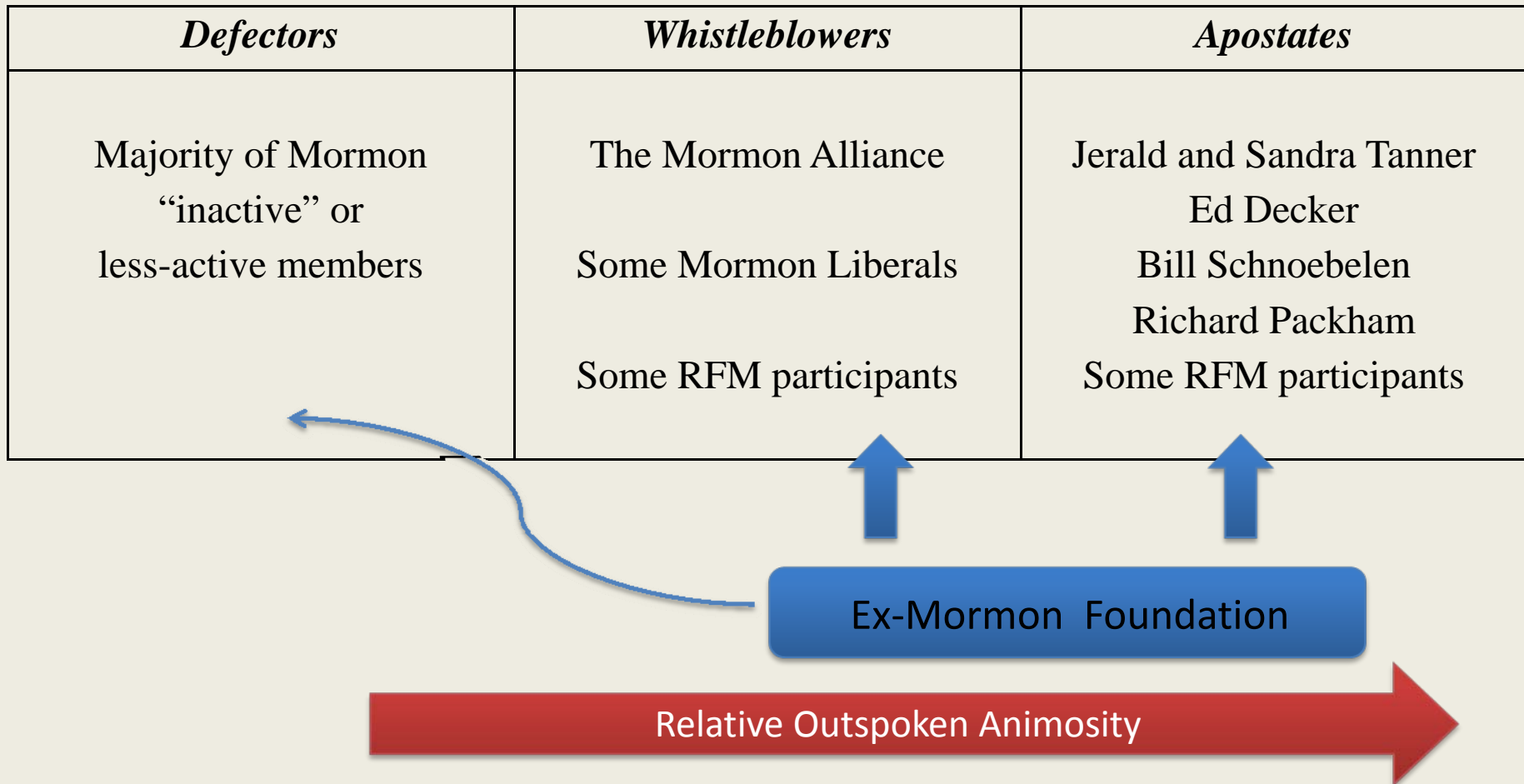
The Apostate “*Captivity Narrative*”

‘Captivity narrative’ in which apostates assert that they were innocently or naively operating in what they had every reason to believe was a normal, secure social site; were subjected to overpowering subversive techniques; endured a period of subjugation during which they experienced tribulation and humiliation; ultimately effected escape or rescue from the organization; and subsequently renounced their former loyalties and [therefore], [issue] a public warning of the dangers of the former organization as a matter of civic responsibility.

Mauss' Placement of the Modern LDS Church



Modern LDS Church Exit Roles



The Ex-Mormon Foundation

- Leadership:
 - Richard Packham: Founder of the ex-Mormon Foundation – considers some of the cultural and doctrinal results of Mormonism to be “evil.”
 - President: Chad Spjut
 - Secretary: Kathleen Jones
 - Treasurer: Dianne Ormond
 - Membership Secretary: Nathan Kennard
- Board Members:
 - Jarom Smith
 - Tom Donofrio – proponent of Spaulding theory – has done very valuable research into revolutionary war documents as they relate to the BoM.
 - Sue Emmett
- Loose alliances:
 - Recovery from Mormonism – RFM – exmormon.org
 - Postmormon.org

Methodology

- Preliminary or Pilot Study
- Sources *not* selected or solicited randomly, nor screened for bias
- 136 narratives analyzed
 - 145 unique narrative elements identified
 - One-to-many relationship between narratives and elements

Sources

- Recovery from Mormonism – exmormon.org
 - 111 unique narratives
- Evangelical Ministries: Concerned Christians, Life After
 - 26 unique narratives
 - 25% contain blatant fabrications
- Narratives from both sources exhibit similar structure

Introduction – Establishing Credibility

Introduction Elements	<i>RFM</i>		<i>Evangelical</i>	
	%	n	%	n
<i>Born/Raised LDS</i>	52%	58	48%	12
<i>LDS Convert</i>	20%	22	16%	4
<i>Pioneer Ancestry</i>	11%	12	8%	2
<i>Attended BYU</i>	17%	19	4%	1
<i>Served Full Time Mission</i>	24%	27	0%	0
<i>Seminary/Institute Attendance</i>	10%	11	12%	3
<i>Bishop</i>	2%	2	0%	0
<i>Relief Society President</i>	2%	2	4%	1
<i>Temple Worker</i>	2%	2	0%	0
Total Narratives		111		25

Statement of Disenfranchisement or Detachment – “The Apology”

Cultural Estrangement Elements	<i>RFM</i>		<i>Evangelical</i>	
	%	n	%	n
<i>Never Received Testimony</i>	27%	30	20%	5
<i>Vulnerable at time of Conversion</i>	7%	8	12%	3
<i>Long-term Discontent</i>	7%	8	12%	3
<i>Doubt Validity of Spiritual Witness</i>	16%	18	8%	2
<i>Difficulty with Church Members</i>	34%	38	24%	6
<i>Free Thought Discouraged</i>	15%	17	0%	0
<i>Temple Experience Unsettling</i>	35%	39	20%	5
<i>"One True Church" Attitude</i>	14%	15	8%	2
<i>Homosexual</i>	6%	7	0%	0
<i>Feminist</i>	16%	18	0%	0
<i>Total Narratives</i>		<i>111</i>		<i>25</i>

Doctrinal/Historical Problems – “The Laundry List”

Doctrinal and Historical Issues	<i>RFM</i>		<i>Evangelical</i>	
	%	n	%	n
<i>Unbiblical</i>	3%	3	48%	12
<i>Polygamy</i>	22%	24	20%	5
<i>Joseph Smith</i>	15%	17	8%	2
<i>Book of Mormon</i>	34%	38	16%	4
<i>Blacks and the Priesthood</i>	22%	24	16%	4
<i>Altered Church History</i>	27%	30	0%	0
<i>Adam-God Doctrine</i>	14%	16	0%	0
<i>Blood Atonement</i>	7%	8	4%	1
<i>Book of Abraham</i>	15%	17	12%	3
Total Narratives		111		25

The Testimony – “Out of Captivity”

Testimony Elements	<i>RFM</i>		<i>Evangelical</i>	
	%	n	%	n
<i>Evangelical</i>	10%	11	76%	19
<i>Agnostic</i>	7%	8	0%	0
<i>Belief in God - Not Christian</i>	9%	10	0%	0
<i>Liberal Christian</i>	5%	5	0%	0
<i>Pagan</i>	2%	2	0%	0
<i>Atheist</i>	4%	4	0%	0
Total Narratives		111		25

Mormon neo-Liberalism

- Visible
- Positive and faith affirming
- Pastoral (Mosiah 18:8-10)
 - Mourn with those who mourn
 - Carry other's burdens
 - Provide Comfort
 - Become carriers of God's Love