

NOTE: This is a draft copy of the second chapter of a working draft report of a study. The final version may be quite different, but it is provided here in order to get feedback and suggestions, and so others can be apprised of this project. This chapter provides the general developmental coping model which is used as a theoretical basis for the first two parts of the study. It was presented at the Sunstone Conference in August 2007. - Gary Horlacher, University of Southern California, Sep. 17, 2007

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Beyond Right or Wrong:  
Resolving Internal Religious-Homosexual Conflict

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## CHAPTER 2

### SHIFTING PARADIGMS & BIFURCATING TRUTHS: A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

This chapter outlines the theoretical model used to study the conflict between religious beliefs or truths and a persistent sexual orientation which is precluded by those beliefs or truths. What effect does such a chronic stressor have on an individual's religiosity over time? How do individuals develop and evolve in the face of such a chronic stressor? Does this process follow similar adaptation processes as other chronic stressor situations? What are the specific factors which determine this adaptive process and what are the different ways individuals cope? What theoretical approaches are used to understand this process? This chapter provides answers to these questions and lays a foundation for subsequent chapters.

To understand this process we start with a broad category of theories known as general systems theory. Within this meta-theory, two more specific systems theories are described: dialectal theory and catastrophe theory. Research on irresolvable stressor situations suggests how these models can be applied to the religious-homosexual dialectic. Some useful sociological concepts are then introduced. Finally, a hypothesis as to the specific model variables or factors which control the dynamics of the stressor situation system is suggested.

System dynamics defined by these theories suggest thresholds for when individuals are most likely to switch between paradigms and to begin to make finer distinctions, leading to further differentiation in an ongoing, evolving process. Each adaptation can provide relief of stress until a possible transcendence position is ultimately possible.

#### General Systems Theory

General systems theory includes a broad range of theories, concepts, principles, and theorems that apply across multiple domains of application (Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993). It suggests mechanism and dynamic systems which apply to diverse phenomena. Whereas the particular variables in each context may be different, the underlying mechanisms and dynamics are the same. A botanist named Ludvig von Bertalanffy (1975) outlined general systems theory including the following five major distinctive characteristics.

First, general systems theory is trans-disciplinary. Its models can apply to economics, family life, biology, neuroscience, psychology, or other fields. The particular variables in each context may differ, but the underlying mechanisms function similarly across domains. Second, general systems theory extends or generalizes physical laws to account for more complex phenomena common in the life sciences. Physical laws are special cases of more complex laws that are apparent in the life sciences. This extension of physical laws should account for processes of living organisms and open systems. Third, whereas traditional methods look for cause-effect relationships, systems theory suggests that most change occurs as an interaction between interdependent variables. Instead of looking for a variable which causes a particular outcome, this approach looks at how the interaction between interrelated variables may lead to an outcome. Fourth, while traditional methods focus on linear change, general systems theory sees linear change as a special case of broader possibilities which include non-linear change. Finally,

whereas the narrower focus of physical systems requires systems to be reversible, open living systems include irreversible phenomenon.

Since most traditional statistics rely on assumption of *linear* relationships between *independent* variables, a linear cause-effect view of causation has come to dominate the sciences. The importance of reciprocal causation (i.e. caused by interactions between related variables) and non-linear statistical methods has been growing. Reciprocal causation fits well within general systems theories (e.g. feedback loops). The idea of causation occurring through ongoing interactions between opposites was articulated by the earliest known thinkers (i.e. Heraclitus & Lao Tsu) (Sabelli, 2005). Causation resulting from ongoing interactions between opposites is discussed next and is referred to as dialectic theory.

### Dialectic (conflict) theory

Dialectic or conflict theory were first articulated by Hegel and popularized by Marx (see Figure 1). Other subsequent sociologists have studied the effect of tension between opposites (e.g. Simmel). Hegel's dialectic suggests that an evolving system starts out with a *thesis*. An example of a thesis is the status quo or an established pattern of functioning. Opposition which arises to challenge this thesis is referred to as the *antithesis*. This opposition variable is the stressor. Through ongoing interaction between the thesis and the antithesis, eventually a new possibility emerges which may include aspects of both the thesis and the antithesis, while excluding other aspects of both. This new possibility is called the *synthesis*. The synthesis becomes the new thesis (status quo) in an ongoing evolutionary process.

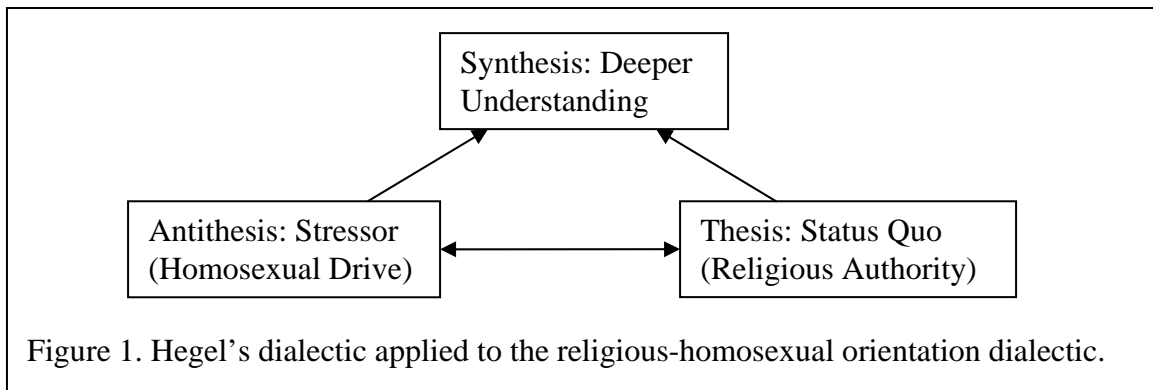


Figure 1. Hegel's dialectic applied to the religious-homosexual orientation dialectic.

For the religious-homosexual orientation dialectic, the status quo position can be equated with the level of authority one relegates to their religious authority of their religious institution. For Fundamentalist and other conservative Christians, this might equate to a literalist interpretation of the Bible as an ultimate authority. For Mormons this equates to the strength of their *testimony* of Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon (and other holy scriptures including the Bible), and the restored authority of church leaders to interpret scriptures and act in God's name. Gaining a personal testimony, for Mormons, is an important process of similar importance as a born-again experience is for conservative Christians. It involves praying, studying, and faithfully obeying the gospel principles until one gains spiritual or other validation for the belief system they accept as true. A testimony, in the Mormon context, is objectively sought after and can increase or

decrease over time depending on the amount of diligence paid to it. Just as some individuals *gain* a testimony through spiritual and conversion experiences, others *lose* their testimony through disobedience and apostasy.

The antithesis in this situation is the strength of an individual's homosexual drive or libido, which for those who have a non-heterosexual orientation, creates a conflict with their religious beliefs. The strength of the sex drive can vary across individuals and within an individual over time. The LDS church encourages people to control their sexuality by avoiding sexually arousing materials, studying scriptures, prayer, thought control, and staying engaged in worthwhile causes. If unwanted attractions or thoughts come into one's mind, they can replace them with memorized scriptures or hymns. Such techniques used to diminish unwanted sex drives are referred to in psychological literature as *sublimation*.

*Dialectic* refers to the conflictual relationship between contrasting variables which define the stressor system. More recent work in dialectic theory highlights the importance of three other major conceptual assumptions (Baxter & Montgomery, 1997): totality, praxis, and incessant achievement. *Totality* involves choosing a level of analysis which encompasses the entire system. To achieve totality, biases from both the status quo and the oppositional perspectives need to be taken into account. Some researchers are interested in studying only those who choose to remain true to their religious beliefs, repressing their sexual orientation. Others study only those who embrace their sexual orientation, often by rejecting their earlier religious views. Such selective studies consider only subparts of the entire system. Totality requires considering all of the possible adaptive strategies, not just one perspective or another. *Praxis* refers to an individual being both a producer and product of his or her choices. Once a choice is made, it constricts future choices and perspectives that are available to that individual. *Incessant achievement* is a view that the social world is in a continuous state of becoming, the present state of the system being an incessant achievement (Rawlins, 1989).

#### Catastrophe theory

Hegel and Marx's dialectic process can be modeled using concepts from catastrophe theory. In the 1960s, a few mathematicians (differential topologists), interested in how discontinuities can occur within a stable system, first began to apply the theories of singularities and bifurcations to real life contexts. A highly accomplished French mathematician, Rene Thom (1975), presented a classification theorem which demonstrates that there are seven ways in which discontinuities can occur within an overall stable system of one or two outcome variables. The first four ways involve a single outcome variable, while the remaining three ways involve two outcome variables. His English colleague Zeeman popularized the idea by publishing an article in *Scientific America* (1976) showing how catastrophe theory could be applied to a number of real-life applications. Since then hundreds of applications of the theory have been applied in different branches of psychology, economics, biology, sociology, and other fields (Horlacher, 2006a).

Discontinuities are common in social life. Examples include apostasy, born-again or conversion experiences, divorce, falling in love, death, retirement, losing one's temper, etc. A common phenomena for those dealing with homosexuality is their *coming-*

*out*, when they first accept a gay identity or begin telling others of their gay identity. Also common are stories and rumors of those who convert back to a heterosexual lifestyle, referred to as ex-gays. A further discontinuity occurs when many of these ex-gays give up and return back to a gay identity (ex-ex gays). Most instances where such discontinuities occur, the underlying dynamics can be explained and modeled using catastrophe theory.

Stress dynamics occurring involved in the dialectic process can be illustrated using catastrophe theory. Two approaches can be employed in applying the models to the religious-homosexual dialectic. The first is a developmental process involving a single outcome variable, in this case the strength of religious authority (Chaves, 1994). Religious authority for LDS participants can be measured using indicators such as frequency of attendance at religious services, payment of tithing money to the church, endorsement of the Book of Mormon as Holy Scripture, Joseph Smith as a prophet of God, and that the LDS church as the most correct church on earth. The higher a person scores on these items, the higher their LDS religious authority. As stress continues long-term, the dynamics of how this religious authority changes over time can evolve through the four increasingly complex models: the fold, cusp, swallowtail, and butterfly models. In the simplest case (fold), a single factor (predictor variable) relates to the outcome variable. Each increasingly complex model adds an additional predictor variable (factor) such that the most complex model (butterfly) includes four factors. The interactions between these four factors predict the different states of the outcome variable.

The second approach would be to apply the three models which include two outcome variables. In this case the strength of religious authority would be one outcome variable and the level of self-identifying as homosexual would be the other. Those who are very proud and outspoken about their gay/lesbian identity would be the highest on the self-identifying variable, while those who are still in denial or trying to change and diminish their homosexual orientation would be the lowest. For a conservative religion such as Mormonism, religious authority and homosexual identity would generally be inversely related. Yet eventually the two variables begin to act independent of each other. This dynamic would most likely be modeled best using the three more complex catastrophe models involving two outcome variables.

Because of the complexity involved in the second approach and the limitations of the variables in the present study, it was decided to limit the research question here to how the dynamics evolved from the perspective of a single outcome variable. Of special interest is how the societal system has evolved over time as well as how the individual system evolves more quickly across an individual's life-course. The next five chapters will look in detail at each of the four increasingly complex models and show examples of how these models have evolved and are expressed by those involved in this study. Within the LDS context, the era prior to the 1960s can be modeled using the fold model. The period from the late 1960s-1989 illustrate the cusp model dynamics, and the period since 1990 illustrate the swallowtail dynamics. It appears from the data that has been gathered that the butterfly model is in the process of emerging at present. The final two chapters of Part I of the book therefore provides a prediction as to the continuing evolution of the religious-homosexual dialectic within the context of Mormonism.

Because the societal level of analysis evolves much slower (more static), Part II of the book includes examples of the common transitions, trajectories, and developmental

processes that individuals (more dynamic) go through as they work their way through this maze. Although our research suggests that the dynamics currently at work within the gay Mormon world are best explained by the swallowtail model, individuals whose awareness is just recently dawning may be experiencing the dynamics of the fold and cusp models in their lives. Some individuals have moved also on to the butterfly model dynamics in their personal lives even though society as a whole has not yet moved there.

An example of the geometry of the cusp model is given in Figure 2.2. The cusp model is of particular interest because the geometry of the higher models are built on the same basic geometry as that shown in the cusp model. Since it has two predictor variables and one outcome variable, the relationship between these variables can be illustrated geometrically. The cusp model is bi-modal, meaning there are two qualitatively different outcomes that are attractors within the system. For the religious-homosexual dialectic these would be a high religiosity/low homosexual identity mode and a low religiosity/high homosexual identity mode. The tension within the system between these modes defines the most likely threshold point at which an individual will jump from one mode to another. This threshold point depends on the interaction between the two predictor variables.

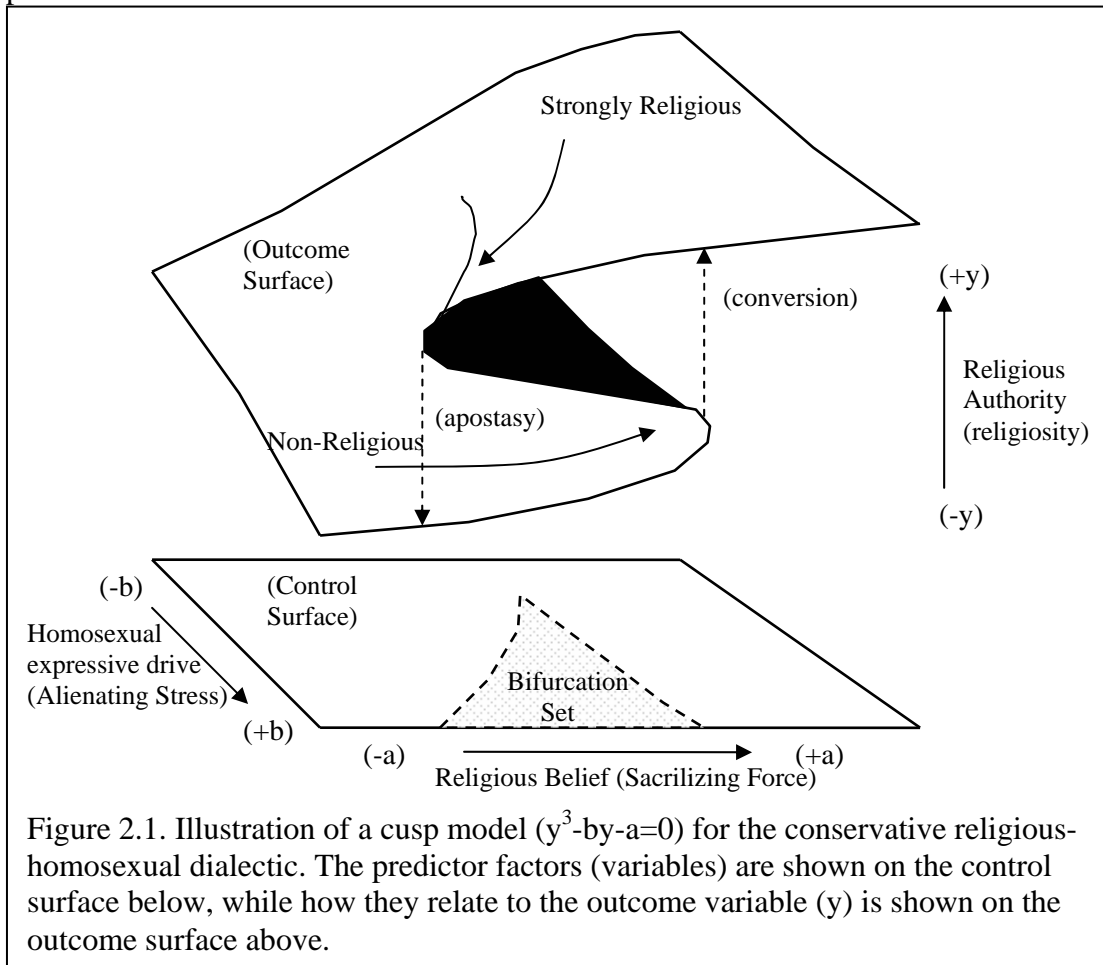


Figure 2.1. Illustration of a cusp model ( $y^3-by-a=0$ ) for the conservative religious-homosexual dialectic. The predictor factors (variables) are shown on the control surface below, while how they relate to the outcome variable ( $y$ ) is shown on the outcome surface above.

As mentioned already, the cusp model predicts the outcome ( $y$ , religious authority) as a function of two predicting factors ( $a$ -religious belief &  $b$ -undesired sex drive). The predicting factors are shown in the plane at the bottom of the figure (control

surface) and how these two variables relate to the outcome variable (y) is shown in the curved surface (outcome surface) directly above the rectangular plane. For an individual with a low religious belief (-a), the stronger their homosexual sex drive becomes (increasing b), the less likely they are to give strong authority to conservative religion. For an individual with a high religious belief (+a), the stronger the homosexual sex drive becomes (increasing b) the more likely they are to repress their sexual desires, maintaining a high religious authority. As a highly religious Mormon (+a) feels increasing stress related to the strength of their unwanted sex drive increasing (increasing b), they will move increasingly towards the threshold where a discontinuous jump towards apostasy is most likely to occur. Those who start out as non-believers (-a) who begin to increase in their religious beliefs or who begin to feel less homosexual sex drive move closer to the lower threshold point which defines the highest probability of where a discontinuous jump towards religious conversion will occur.

*Hysteresis* is a term referring to the characteristic that jumps (apostasy and conversion) occur at different points depending on whether they are approached from the top surface or the lower surface. In other words individuals tend to resist making a change and try to maintain their original position and beliefs for as long as possible before making a jump. This resistance results in the hysteresis effect. The area between the points of conversion and apostasy is referred to as the *bifurcation set*. Within this region there are two equally likely outcomes for each combination of the two predictor factors. Within this region individuals will feel increasing levels of frustration, confusion, and depression until they hit the threshold point. Which of the two possible outcomes is predicted by the combination of the predictor factors an individual experiences depends on an individual's recent history. If they had been highly religious, they continue into the bifurcation region on the upper surface of the s-curve until they hit the edge and either experience a discontinuous jump or begin to back away from the edge, remaining on the upper surface. If they had been non-religious, as they move into the bifurcation region, they will remain on the lower surface of the s-curve until they hit the edge of the bifurcation set and jump to the top surface.

The cusp model is fairly intuitive and explains the reality experienced by several individuals in our sample. It also explains the effect of the reaction of the church to the feminist and sexual revolutions of the 1950s and 1960s, resulting in the organization of the Affirmation support group. Yet this model is too simplistic to explain all of the variation that exists in our sample. For many people the choice between only two options is insufficient and eventually support groups became established for two compromise adjustment strategies. One allowed individuals to accept their attractions, while rejecting any behavior that these attractions might lead to (Evergreen), the other allowing individuals to accept their homosexuality without letting go of their religious beliefs (Reconciliation). These new compromise possibilities are illustrated in detail in chapter 6. They illustrate a more experiential or emotional type of coping strategy or trajectory.

The fourth and most complex model which explains discontinuities is the butterfly model. This model allows for the emergence of more cognitive adaptation or coping strategies. Fewer individuals in our sample showed this type of coping, suggesting that it is only beginning or on the verge of emergence on a social-cultural level. In addition to adding more cognitive adaptive strategies, the butterfly model also provides for a third modality or attractor to the earlier system (cf. synthesis). Because the butterfly

model provides a complete picture of each of the adjustment possibilities and includes all of the dynamics found in the simpler models, it provides the theoretical model guiding the research in this book. In the secular society, outside of the conservative religious communities, the full butterfly model would likely be more appropriate. Conservative religious communities in this regard, seem to be lagging behind the secular trend. Recent studies of gays and lesbians have shown that a more cognitive approach (identity-first trajectory) is now nearly as common as the more emotional approach (experiment-first trajectory) (Floyd & Bakeman, 2006; Savin-Williams & Diamond, 2000). The cognitive approach in these samples is more common among women and young adults, whereas the emotional approach is more common among the older cohorts and men. This leads to a prediction that in the next decade or two more women and young men within the conservative religious communities will likely begin to adapt to their sexual orientation in higher numbers than was the case with earlier cohorts.

Catastrophe modeling assumes that behavior follows a gradient system (Cobb, 1978; Fararo, 1978). This implies that individuals tend to make logical decisions and that they are continually moving in the next instant towards the consequences of their present decision. The success of modern engineering and other fields employing differential equations (i.e. calculus) rely on this assumption.

#### Irresolvable stressor situations

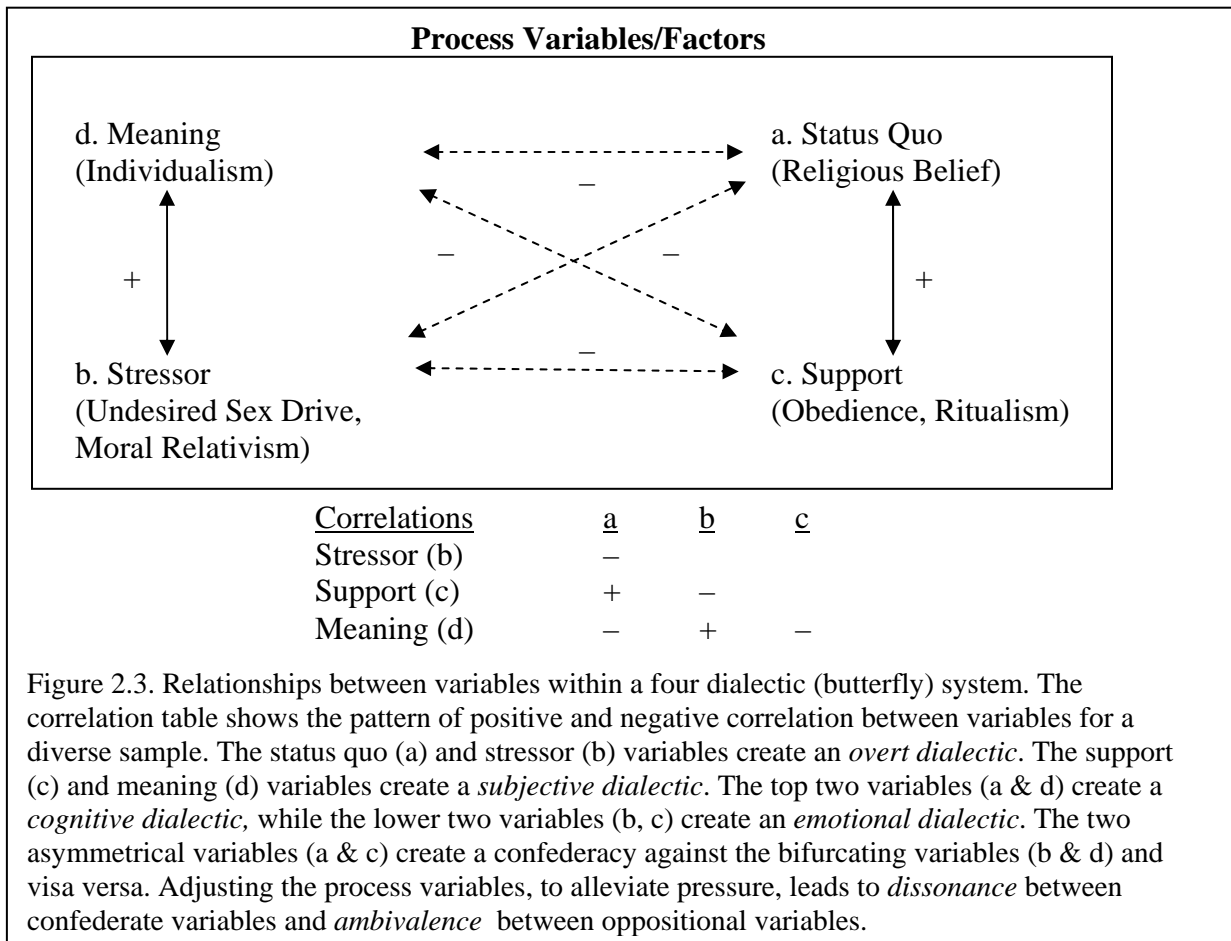
Irresolvable stressor situations have three characteristics (Boss, 2007): they are beyond an individual's control, they create long-term confusion and ambiguity, and they provide no clear solution or closure. Such situations provide optimal contexts for illustrating the developmental process whereby catastrophe theory models evolve in social applications. The natural asymmetries create pressures that lead naturally to emergent solutions. These solutions result in new problems. Eventually a possibility of transcending the stressor situation emerges. This self-perpetuating or *autodynamic* process contributes to an ongoing social-evolutionary process. It does that by combining earlier evolved competencies with ongoing agency-based adaptations (c.f. Baldus, 2006).

A series of articles suggest how this auto-dynamic process emerges in situations involving ambiguous loss and caregiver burden (Horlacher, 2006a), distance in intimate relationships (Horlacher, Holman, & Bengtson, 2006), and in understanding religious diversity and change (Horlacher, 2007). As constant stress is continually exerted in a specific context, the stress dynamics become increasingly complex. To avoid overly focusing on discontinuous jumps to the exclusion of the more prominent continuous change, instead of using the term catastrophe theory we prefer to refer to these models as continuous-discontinuous change (CDC) models. CDC models shows how continuous change can evolve to include discontinuities within a context of continuous change.

At the onset of the stressor situation, a single variable (a) explains the behavior of the outcome variable. This has been called the *normal* or first asymmetrical factor. This asymmetry factor is related to the status quo or thesis and due to its bias towards the established pattern of function, it creates a skewed or curved trajectory. In the religious-homosexual dialectic, this variable is the belief in the religious doctrines. This skewed trajectory or asymmetry stresses the system until eventually a second significant variable (b) emerges in significance within the system. This second variable (b) is referred to as the *splitting* or first bifurcating factor. It supports the antithesis and creates a way to

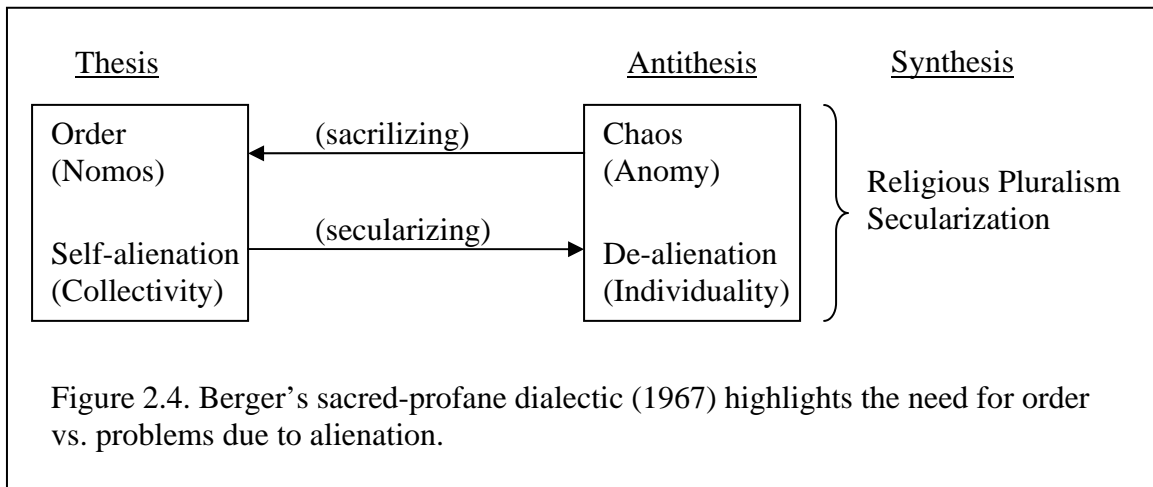
equalize the system by enabling two options. The resulting model is called the cusp model and provides two qualitatively distinct outcome possibilities or attractors (either/or).

Since neither of these two possible outcomes is satisfactory, some individuals within the system will continue to resist making a choice between the two major options. Eventually continued stress on the system will lead to additional bifurcations, allowing for compromise possibilities that support the thesis (accept attractions but not acting on them) and the antithesis (accept sexual orientation but simultaneously retaining a strong religious belief). The compromise possibilities arise as a third variable emerges in the system (c). This variable has been referred to as the *bias* or second asymmetrical factor. It represents a more emotional or ritualistic emphasis supporting the status quo or thesis. In the fourth and final model (butterfly), a fourth variable (d) emerges which supports the more cognitive aspects of the antithesis and along with the other three variables creates the possibility for a way of transcending the original stressor dialectic. Figure 2.3 illustrates the relationship between the four variables/factors which define the stress dynamics of the system. Because the four variables are interrelated and highly correlated, they are referred to as factors rather than independent variables. Factor analysis with oblique rotation can be used to obtain factor scores from observed variables to distinguish the uniqueness of each of these four factors and to avoid problems with the interdependence of the observed variables in statistical analyses.



*Additional Concepts*

*Alienation* is when an individual believes in a reality which precludes aspects of him- or herself (self-estrangement). It was first popularized by Karl Marx' work describing how the common worker became alienated and exploited (again borrowing from Hegel), often unaware of his self-alienation and how it contributes to perpetuating the system of abuse. Berger (1967) describes the conflict dynamics between modernization and religion. He suggests that alienation is when the objectified reality promoted by religions and adopted by individuals within those groups does not match with the reality experienced by individuals. The tension between a sacralizing force, which provides a feeling of security and order, and a secularization force, which leads to greater individual freedom, leads to increasing religious pluralism and secularization (see Figure 2.4). Individuals are often unaware of the exploitative nature of the social structure they trust and conform to. For example, many same-sex attracted (gay, lesbian, bisexual) individuals believe happiness can only found through a heterosexual marriage. Synonyms for this type of alienation include self-estrangement and false class consciousness.



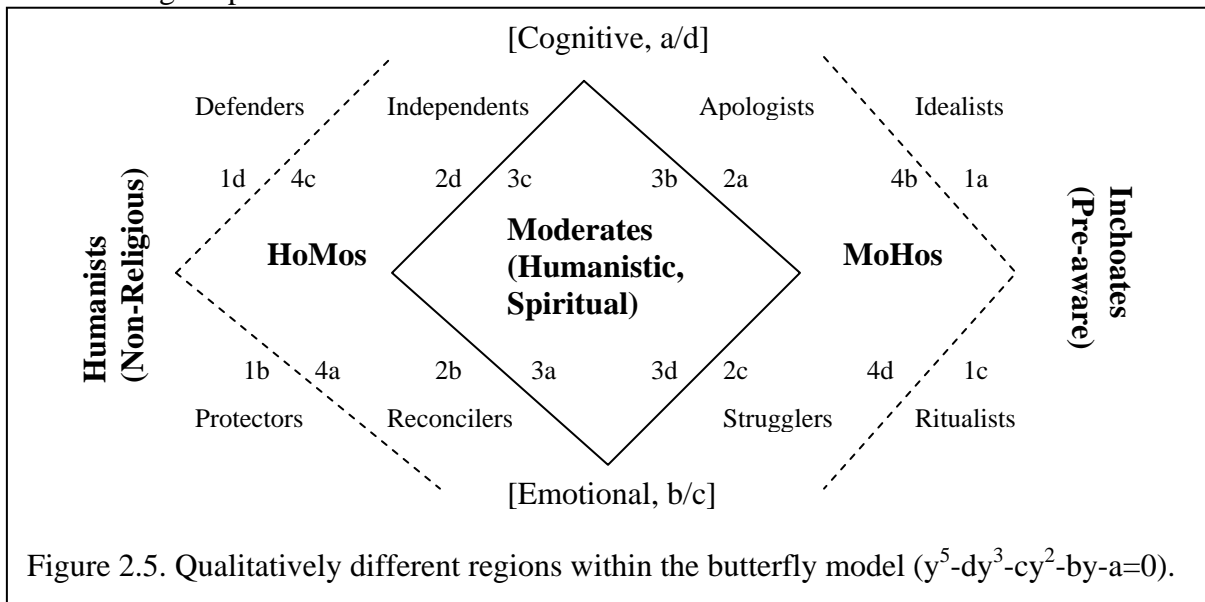
*De-alienation* (Berger, 1967) is a process whereby one begins to give validity to his/her own experiences that were previously precluded. *Coming into* (similar to, but slightly different emphasis as, the commonly discussed *coming-out process*) refers to this de-alienation process and increasing self-awareness and self-understanding. This book and the catastrophe models employed suggest the tensions that guide this coming into process. These models suggests two specific types of alienation or self-estrangement: denial and avoidance. Denial is most common among the inchoates of our study, while avoidance is common among the secular humanists. These two forms of alienation exert an unconscious force on individuals, continually pushing them towards synthesis (transcendence). Because of the self-alienation, the inchoates and humanists tend to be less self-reflective, but rather look externally for explanations and blame. As an individual becomes more self-aware (de-alienated), they can better begin to look objectively and critically at themselves.

*Trained Incapacity.* Theories such as continuity theory (Atchley, 1989) emphasize a human bias towards resisting to change. Family stress and ambiguous loss researchers assert that individuals and families will do everything they can to maintain the status quo and resist change (Boss, 1999; McCubbin, McCubbin, Thompson, & Thompson, 1998).

When individuals find a coping style that seems to work, most will cling to it, resisting new pressure to change. Trained incapacity is a sociological concept describing a case where ones abilities function as inadequacies or blind spots (Merton, 1968). Where training and skills have been successfully applied in the past, under changed conditions these capacities may lead to an inadequate flexibility. At some point, such competencies can become obstacles preventing adjustments needed to cope with building tensions. Each of the system factors can be seen as a two-edged sword, at times helping and other times hindering the adjustment process. Such adjustments require a flexibility that is difficult for most individuals to achieve. For the religious-sexual orientation conflict a testimony or conversion to a religious view that precludes homosexuality, while bringing stability and meaning to life, can subsequently lead to depression and self-destructive behavior due to chronic stress and inability to achieve socio-emotional-physical intimacy needs.

### Adjustment Categories & Factors

Categories based on the full butterfly model into which each of the participants could be grouped are listed on figure 2.5. Within each of the five major categories, sub-categories are listed for those who tend more towards cognitive or more towards emotional/experiential coping strategies. Because human perceptual capacities are limited, when the intensity of the stressor increases it becomes increasingly difficult to continue to consider all aspects of the situation. In these cases, some individuals tend to rely more on their cognitive abilities to reason through the situation, while other individuals tend to rely more on their sensory abilities to deal with the situation. This specialized focus affects the trajectory that is taken in dealing with the stressor. Examples of this cognitive-emotional/experiential coping difference will be provided throughout the following chapters.



The butterfly model identifies five qualitatively different categories define as those who have not consciously accepted their sexual orientation (inchoates), those who accept the attractions but not the behavior (mohos), those who accept a gay identity and relationships while maintaining most of their earlier Mormon beliefs (homos), those who accept a gay identity and reject the abuses of organized religion (humanists), and those

who moderate both the significance of their religiosity and their gay/lesbian identity (moderates). The term *mohos* (Mormon Homosexuals: Apologists & Strugglers) refers to individuals who value their Mormonism before their homosexual attractions. They usually reject a gay identity but admit to having a trial they deal or struggle with. The term *homos* (Homosexual Mormons: Independents & Reconcilers) value their homosexuality as God given and a positive aspect of their lives in addition to their belief in the truths of Mormonism. They recognize fallibility or naïveté of church leaders (cognitive) or that the gospel is broader than the church (emotional), while retaining many or most of their earlier religious beliefs. Truths and beliefs which define the boundaries between these groups are referred to by number and letter (see Table 1). Subcategories are listed within each of the five regions representing the more cognitive adaptive strategies (top) and the more emotional or experiential adaptive strategies (bottom).

Studying the stories of individuals within each of the groups suggested what the key truths or beliefs were which lead to a resistance of making the various jumps within the butterfly model. These truths and beliefs are given in Table 1 and represent a hypothesis concerning specific items that make up each of the four key predictive factors. The first and third factors (a, c) support the thesis position, while the second and fourth factors (b, d) support the antithesis position. The region where the third level of each variable intersects (3a, 3b, 3c, 3d) creates a diamond in the center of the model. This region represents an emerging third stable mode (moderates) which keeps an individual from becoming too extreme in any one direction. This moderation results in decreasing stress which allows individuals in this region to transcend the irresolvable stressor situation.

	<b>Belief Factor (a)</b>
1a	Marriage/family is mandatory for eternal progress and happiness.
2a	I choose to refrain from sex outside of (heterosexual) marriage, trusting God will reward in future (next life).
3a	God inspires individuals through religious traditions.
4a	Religion is important to me.
	<b>Moral Relativism Factor (b)</b>
1b	Organized religion cares more about rules than people.
2b	God loves and accepts me as a gay/lesbian man/woman.
3b	Religion is too limiting for God.
4b	Same-sex attractions are not evil and not chosen.
	<b>Ritualistic Factor (c)</b>
1c	God will change inappropriate attractions through righteous living.
2c	Same-sex relationships are a sin and not fulfilling or lasting.
3c	Religion provides individuals with structure & meaning.
4c	I believe in religious principles.
	<b>Individualism Factor (d)</b>
1d	Traditional religion (e.g. God concept) is man-made and erroneous.
2d	God wants us to think for ourselves and make decisions for our lives (personal revelation).
3d	Religious traditions can be hurtful to individuals.
4d	God has a purpose for me in this trial so I need to endure and trust in Him.
Table 1. Truths and beliefs defining boundaries within the butterfly catastrophe model of the religious-homosexual dialectic.	

## Part I

### Statics: Evolving Social Systems

The five chapters in this part of the book deals with four increasingly complex, stable social systems which evolve in response to the ongoing stress of sexual orientation precluded by a conservative religious faith. Each incrementally more complex social system or model contains the dynamics of the simpler models within it. The simpler models can be seen as special cases of the more complex system.

To visualize how these systems evolve and relate to the adaptive categories, consider an analogy of a rectangular Jacuzzi tub with four jets – one in each corner of the Jacuzzi. The turbulence of these four jets define the stress dynamics within the Jacuzzi. There are regions of lesser turbulence on either side of each spout. Like the water, individuals will tend to move to the regions of lesser turbulence. The seven categories described here are like the regions of lesser turbulence that individuals gravitate towards. After remaining in these areas of lesser tension long enough, the water molecules begin to be drawn back into the turbulence and have a potential of being swept into one of the other regions of lower intensity for a while. Those individuals experiencing the most stress are those in the process of moving from one region to another. The simplest model involves only a single water jet (force) in one corner. Eventually this is countered by the emerging significance of an oppositional force coming from the opposite corner. For irresolvable stressor situations, the corner which receives a higher proportion of water eventually develops its own resistance force, until eventually all four corners exert their own pressure on the system, which then evolves different subparts with regions of greater and lesser turbulence.

The first chapter (3) describes the simplest system (fold model) with a single predictor variable and a single outcome variable. This involves the inchoate or pre-aware stage, where an individual is in denial of his/her same-sex orientation. Individuals in this stage are unaware or in denial of the reality of their non-heterosexual orientation.

Due to continuing or increasing stress, this system eventually splits (bifurcates) into an either/or system (cusp model). Chapter 4 describes a model providing the possibility for two adaptations – either maintaining faithful religious functioning or embracing a homosexual lifestyle (implying a rejection of religious authority). This system began to be evident on a social level in the 1960s and 1970s, and was first institutionalized in the formation of the Affirmation organization. This chapter describes the rejection of religious authority category as *secular humanists*. Those in this category avoid their earlier religious beliefs and associations.

Chapter 5 describes a third social system (swallowtail model) which first emerged on a social level within the Mormon community about 1989/1990 with the organization of two support groups, each representing two compromise adaptations – Evergreen International and Reconciliation. This chapter describes two new emergent adaptive strategies, referred to here as strugglers and reconcilers.

Chapters 6 and 7 describe the fourth and final social system (butterfly model) where two additional adaptive possibilities (chapter 6) and one transcendent possibility (chapter 7) emerge. The two emergent adaptations are more cognitive strategies referred to as *apologists* and *independents*. A region in the center of this model, where each of the four predictor factors overlap, creates a third attractor for the system. This is analogous to

the synthesis and provides a way of transcending an otherwise irresolvable stressor situation. The third attractor shares a value for spirituality with the inchoates and human rights with the humanists, while not having a strong religiosity attachments or anti-organized religion sentiments typical of those respective groups.

The various groups and their respective chapters are shown on the chart below. Those on the right-hand side tend to look more towards an idealistic future, while those on the left-hand side tend to focus more on optimizing their present. Those on the upper part of the figure tend more towards individualistic and cognitive, while those on the lower part tend towards collectivity and experientialism. The latter groups have a heightened social awareness, while the former act more based on their personal logic and insights.

