Susceptible to conversion

*Interpretation*:

Some people experience personal crisis, which leads to them being susceptible to religious/cult conversion.

*Options for implementation*:

1. Fraction of initial population is susceptible to conversion. “*Some people are always convertible*.
2. Non-infected fluctuate between S and non-S. “*Everyone is sometimes convertible”.*
   1. Explore difference in P(S -> non-S) and P(non-S -> S).
3. Fraction of initial population fluctuates between S and non-S (i.e. some people will never convert). “*Some people are sometimes convertible”.*

From Susceptible to Exposed

Want cooperativity. So, two people are required to turn a Susceptible to Exposed.

Geometry

*Options*:

1. Well mixed agent based.
2. 2D agent based.
3. Network.
   1. If gets two connections which are cultists, become cultist.
   2. Preferential attachment?
   3. Like in superspreader model, probability to convert. Conversion strength depending on things like “distance from prophet“, or maybe each person randomly drawn a “conversion strength” (charisma).
   4. Adjacency matrix or array with each node and connections?

Further options

*Prophet/cult leader*:

* Can single handedly convert people, so skips the Exposed state?

*Competing cults/religions*

* Like Voter model, can pull other cultists back to crisis-state.

*Need something that limits spread of cult*.

* Do people leave cult? Find apostate numbers.
* In network, could tie conversion strength to distance from prophet, idea being the prophet is the core of the cult and cannot spend time with all cultists.

Reading

*In order of (expected) relevance*

1. Rambo, L. R. (1993). Understanding religious conversion (Interdisciplinary/Psychology)
2. [Religious Conversion and the Concept of Socialization: Integrating the Brainwashing and Drift Models](https://www.jstor.org/stable/1385588)
3. [Cult formation: Three compatible models](https://academic.oup.com/socrel/article-abstract/40/4/283/1612715) (Sociological)
4. [Toward a general model of the process of radical conversion: An interactionist perspective on the transformation of self-identity](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/BF00986741)
5. [Psychology of Conversion and Spiritual Transformation](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11089-011-0364-5) (Interdisciplinary/Psychology)
6. [Oxford handbook of religious conversion](https://academic.oup.com/edited-volume/34732#login-purchase)

“Cusp catastrophe model of cult formation” from “War in Heaven/Heaven on Earth”

Maybe some of the [studies of the Moonies cult](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unification_Church#Scholarly_studies)?

Network model based on Rambo2011

**How does conversion happen?**

Conversion happens if strength of cultists is greater than non-cultists.

Alternative: Stochastic. Conversion strength vs non-cultist strength gives some probability to convert.

*“The major factor for those who remained in the group was not their level of belief but whether or not the person had stronger relationships with people in the group than he or she had with people outside of the movement”.*

*“Many scholars have found that the major ‘pathway’ for conversion is via friendship and kinship networks (e.g., Stark and Bainbridge 1980).”*

*“Thus, groups with procedures that tend to recruit members who were social isolates prior to forming bonds with group members will have a very slow growth rate. The new members do not provide the group with entree to new social networks through which the group may then spread. On the other hand, cults and sects that tend to recruit entire nuclear families (as is often the case in Mormon recruitment) may make rapid growth as they spread on through friends and relatives of the new members. Interpersonal bonds appear to be a crucial situational element for any theory of recruitment.” -*Stark1980

**Conversion strength**

The strength of the conversion depends on both the convert and the missionary. The convert has *Crisis Strength,* and the missionary has *Charisma.* The higher each are, the more likely conversion is to happen, and *Conversion Strength* is some function of the two (maybe just product). Crisis strength must be above some threshold for conversion to happen.

Could also add a compatibility between the two. Probably just a randomly drawn, but constant, number.

*“Many factors influence the outcome of the encounter. Most psychologists and human scientists believe that congruence or compatibility of ideology, age, sex, education, and similar attributes play an important role. The encounter stage includes not only the affective, intellectual, and cognitive needs of potential converts but also the needs of the advocate (missionary).”*

*“Another crucial topic is the role of charisma in the conversion process. Particularly in the encounter stage, the charisma, or personal attraction, of the religious leader or advocate can have a powerful effect on the convert”.*

**How do the parameters change?**

Charisma reflects the missionary’s ability to convince the convert. This ability grows over time, as the missionary themselves becomes deeper involved with the cult.

*“Many contemporary scholars believe that authentic conversion is an ongoing process of transformation. The initial change, while important, is but the first step in a long process, a pilgrimage.”*

*Crisis Strength* is more difficult, as there seems to be no direct consensus as to who becomes converts. Poor father role plays a large role in one study. Possible options:

* Crisis Strength biased random walk. Some people have background that lend to higher conversion chance and vice versa.

*“Joel Allison conducted a comparative study of 20 male Protestant seminary students. He compared seven who had had intense religious conversions, seven who had had mild conversion, and six who had had no conversion experience at all. He found that almost* *without exception those who converted had had absent, weak, or alcoholic fathers. Those who did not convert came from intact families. He theorized that conversion for the first group was adaptive and growth-producing; they were able to move away from dependence upon and enmeshment with the mother by identifying with strong father figures, namely God and Jesus.”*

**How do we make sure the cult does not take over the world?**

Maybe the fact that most people have low crisis strength is enough?

Defection:

*“If social ties pull people into cults and sects, it follows that the absence of such ties should influence defections. In this case a very unambiguous measure of defection was available: those who quit awaiting the holocaust and went above ground* […] *Among members who were direct kin of the leaders, only 14% quit. Of those who were related to kin of the leaders, but not directly to the leaders (e.g., in-laws), 25% defected. But of those who had no relatives in the group, two-thirds left prematurely. For those who had to abandon their families as well as their faith, defection was rare. But for those without familial ties to the group, defection was the rule!” ­– Stark1980*