

"Some of these people have blood on their hands, and so I figured if they could do horrible things in the name of Jesus then I could do wonderful things in the name of Satan. It's so liberating."<sup>1</sup>

In discussing Christian extremists, Zeke Apollyon demonstrates a common Satanist tactic where they flip the narrative of the norm.

# Satanism as an Active Purposeful Other



I developed the concept of "the Purposeful Other" during this research as a way to categorize the ways countercultures respond to the dominate culture through their use of tactics.

There are two types of Purposeful Others: Active and Passive

**Active:** a group that uses tactics with the intention to change the dominate culture

**Passive:** a group that either internally changes or isolates in response to the dominate culture's tactics

## Early Church of Satan<sup>9</sup> (CoS) – 1966 – ~2000

The CoS's tactics were targeted at the norms of Christianity, the dominate culture at the time. A common tactic used by the CoS is what I call "Flipping the Narrative." This involved taking the narrative of the norm (Satan = Evil, Selflessness = Good) and changing it to the opposite (Satan = Good, Selflessness = Bad). See quotes 1 & 2 for examples. The CoS has since moved to Passive Purposeful Other status due to decline in media presence around 2000. This left a niche to be filled by TST in 2013.

## The Satanic Temple<sup>10</sup> (TST) – 2013 – current

TST took over as the main voice of Satanism in the media with numerous lawsuits and protests<sup>11</sup>. TST's tactics are reactionary. See quotes 3 & 4. They wait for the dominate culture to gain a privilege from a law and then apply for the same privilege. This either forces the dominate culture to give up the privilege the law gave them or reinforces the idea that America is a pluralistic nation. TST's tactics, because of the reactionary nature, are not aimed at a specific religion like the CoS's tactics, but are aimed at the individual laws, forcing a conversation about the First Amendment.



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC-BY-NC](#)

This research was funded by the URECA grant. Thank you MTSU.

There are other groups of Satanists, such as CoS post 2000, Church of Rational Satanism<sup>12</sup>, and the Joy of Satan<sup>13</sup>, that have chosen to isolate and not engage with the dominate culture about their beliefs beyond individual discretion, classifying them as Passive Purposeful Others. For my research, I focused on the Active groups (early CoS and TST) due to the amount of media involved.

One Christian response to Satanist tactics is to reinforce and entrench itself in the Christian's beliefs. Their tactics are typically aimed at their own congregants rather than at Satanists with the intention to verifying that the powers of evil and good are real (quotes 7 & 8), that good will triumph over evil (quote 5), and an identification of what evil is (quote 6).

6. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=uD2HQMyy-OQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uD2HQMyy-OQ)
7. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SCI77gLVEI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SCI77gLVEI)
8. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=-BqAz27fx-8&t=1593s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-BqAz27fx-8&t=1593s)
9. [www.churchofsatan.com](http://www.churchofsatan.com)
10. [www.thesatanictemple.com](http://www.thesatanictemple.com)
11. [thesatanictemple.com/pages/campaigns](http://thesatanictemple.com/pages/campaigns)
12. [www.churchofrationalsatanism.com](http://www.churchofrationalsatanism.com)
13. [joyofsatan.org](http://joyofsatan.org)



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC-BY](#)

Lisa Quinn (ex-Satanist) utilizes a tactic where she says that she knew God was more powerful through her encounters with a minister. Tactics like this bolster in-group (Christian) belief that the power of God can defeat Satanists.

"He [a minister] was standing on spiritual laws that were superior to ours."<sup>5</sup>

"Frank Zappa declared: 'I am the devil's advocate'...Frank Zappa not only promoted Satanism, but acknowledged the subversive power of music."<sup>6</sup>

This tactic recalls Satanism's 1980s to 1990s connection to secular music, connecting Satan's power to a real world phenomenon.

With 70% of American Christians believing in literal angels and demons, this tactic reinforces the belief.

"I want to assure you that it may not make sense to you naturally, but this is all real. The Bible speaks about these things that there is an invisible world that existed before the physical world."<sup>7</sup>

"...and they are the people you will see me confront during this video. Whether or not you believe in a literal devil, you should be concerned about the plans of LaVey and Shrek to establish a Satanically ruled society."<sup>8</sup>

Bob Larson reinforces the idea that Satan is present and working in the world. This tactic bolsters belief in a spiritual war, of which Larson is on the frontlines (as an exorcist).

When asked if the Holocaust could be called 'evil', Nikolas Shrek (founder of the Werewolf Order) "flips the narrative" by saying good and evil do not exist.

"Absolutely not. Nor can any act of any human being or animal can be judged 'good' or 'evil'."<sup>2</sup>

"...but the evangelical after school clubs have created the *need* for Satanic after school clubs to offer a contrasting balance to student's extracurricular activities."<sup>3</sup>

On After School Satan's website, they explicitly state the reason they created the Satanic after school club. This is an example of the reactionary tactics of TST.

When discussing how people found a way to put up a religious monument on public grounds, Lucien Greaves (co-founder of TST) shows how this is a reactory tactic by offering their monument *because* the religious group did.

"...They said that it was a private donation so that implicitly opens up that those public grounds are where any private donations can go...we offered our Baphomet monument, which they rejected, so we're suing on the grounds of religious discrimination."<sup>4</sup>