

# BREAK, BIND, REBUILD

*The one template beneath all of it — every religion across history, the fraternal and “ascension” orders, and the gendered machinery that has always fallen hardest on women*

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The grand sweep · companion to the series

Prepared for Kristen Hall · June 2026

**The question this answers.** You asked what every religion has done since the beginning of time — and, beneath that, what runs through all of them, plus the fraternal orders, the sororities, and everything sold as “ascension.” The answer to the second question is not a secret society pulling strings. It is a template: a way of breaking a person down and rebuilding them inside a group. It is ancient, it is everywhere, and it has no headquarters because it lives in human nature itself.

**Two kinds of operator — you named both.** Some who run this are sincere true believers, captured by the same program they spread; they feel righteous, not predatory. Others are cold con artists who know they are lying and do it for money, sex, or power — the ones who will hand over a child or a sister while privately knowing it's a fraud. Both kinds run the identical machine. The sincerity of the first does not lessen the harm, and the cynicism of the second is the part that should enrage you most.

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## I. The Template: Break, Bind, Rebuild

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A century ago the anthropologist Arnold van Gennep, later refined by Victor Turner, identified a single structure underneath every ritual of transformation on Earth. He called it the rite of passage, and it has three stages.

**1. Separation.** The initiate is removed from their old life and stripped of their old identity — taken from home, given a new name, head shaved, old clothes gone. A symbolic death.

**2. The liminal ordeal.** Suspended “betwixt and between,” no longer who they were and not yet who they’ll become. In this phase, Turner observed, the initiate is rendered passive and malleable — deliberately ground down so they can be refashioned. Ordeal increases the malleability. This is the dangerous stage, and the one predators exploit.

**3. Reincorporation.** The person re-enters the group with a new identity and status, bound to those who put them through it.

This template is morally neutral by itself. A graduation, a wedding, a bar mitzvah, a good therapy that walks someone through grief — all use it to help a person cross a threshold and come out more themselves. The predatory version uses the exact same break-down-and-rebuild, but rebuilds the person in the group’s image instead of their own, and never fully lets them out the other side — it keeps them permanently in the ordeal, permanently malleable, permanently owned.

**This is the answer to “what controls all of them.”** Not a cabal. A template. Religions, mystery cults, fraternal orders, fraternities and sororities, the military, gangs, and every “ascension” ladder all reach for the same three-stage engine, independently, because it is simply how humans have always transformed and bound one another. When these things feel secretly connected, that’s why — shared structure, not shared command. Scientology’s “break you down to a degraded being, then rebuild you in our image” is not a borrowed secret. It is the liminal ordeal, weaponized.

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## II. What Every Religion Has Done

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You asked for the record since the beginning of time. Here it is in brief — with one honest condition stated up front, because accuracy demands it.

**The condition.** This is the harm thread, not the whole ledger. The same traditions named below also built hospitals, universities, and charities, preserved literacy and art, and powered abolition and civil-rights movements; most believers across history harmed no one. What follows is the control machine expressing itself through whichever tradition held power — not a claim that religion is only this.

### The ancient world

The machine begins with organized society itself. The first city-states of Sumer and Egypt fused priesthood, treasury, and throne. Several ancient cultures practiced ritual human sacrifice to bind populations through awe and fear — the Aztecs on a mass scale, and Carthage among others. The pattern was set early: those who controlled access to the gods controlled the grain, the law, and the lives.

## The classical and medieval eras

As religions scaled into empires, control scaled with them: holy wars and forced conversions (the Crusades, conquest-era expansions, the Reconquista, Charlemagne's baptize-or-die campaigns); the Inquisitions, which tortured and executed heretics and burned thinkers like Giordano Bruno; and the great witch hunts of early modern Europe, which executed tens of thousands of people — the overwhelming majority of them women — on charges no one could disprove.

## Caste, conquest, and the modern era

The harm thread runs to the present: caste and untouchability and the burning of widows (sati) sanctified by tradition; scripture marshaled to justify slavery; church-run residential and boarding schools that stripped Indigenous children of language and family and left documented abuse and unmarked graves; sectarian massacres from the Thirty Years' War to the Partition of India; and, in our own time, the cult cases — Jeffs, Shamblin, the godmen, the gurus, Scientology — documented in the companion files. Different flags, every century, one machine.

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## III. The Orders: Fraternities, Sororities, and “Ascension”

The same template runs outside religion entirely — which is the clearest proof it isn't about any particular god. Secret and fraternal orders, and campus Greek life, are rites of passage with the serial numbers filed off: secrecy, oaths, graded ranks, and the liminal ordeal renamed “pledging” or “hazing.”

And the ordeal kills. Hazing — a ritual built on risk, pain, and humiliation as the price of belonging — has caused at least 122 documented U.S. college deaths in the past twenty-five years, including recent fraternity deaths in 2025, and it pulled federal legislation (the Stop Campus Hazing Act) only at the end of 2024. Sororities are not exempt. It is the liminal ordeal, stripped of any sacred purpose, kept purely as a binding mechanism: suffer this, prove you'll obey, and you're one of us.

**An honest word on the conspiracy theories.** The popular claim that Freemasons, the Illuminati, or some secret order covertly run the world's religions and governments is not supported by evidence, and chasing it is a trap — it sends you hunting for a hidden boss who isn't there, exactly the dead end the earlier documents warned about. What is real and provable is the shared template: these orders use the same break-bind-rebuild engine as religions, which is why they rhyme. Same structure, independently adopted — not a single hand on every lever. And “ascension,” in every system that sells it, is just this engine drawn as a staircase: invented graded levels you pay or suffer to climb, with the gatekeeper always one step above you.

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## IV. The Different Versions of Women

Across all of it, the same handful of female roles recur — not because women are actually like this, but because each role is a tool for controlling them. Van Gennep noted that initiation often centers on separating men from women in the first place; from there, the system assigns women their parts.

- **The Fall (Eve).** Woman as the origin of sin and ruin — the original blame, used to justify her subordination as divinely ordered. (You met this already in Sophia, whose independent act is written as the cosmic catastrophe.)
- **The Pure Vessel (the Virgin).** Worth measured by sexual purity, body as property to be kept “clean” for a man and for God — the worthiness-tax applied to female flesh.
- **The Temptress (the Whore).** Her sexuality recast as a danger she's responsible for managing on men's behalf. Together with the Virgin, this is the Madonna-whore split: two cages, and no third option.
- **The Witch.** The scapegoat — the woman with unsanctioned knowledge, independence, or power, marked as a supernatural threat and destroyed. Tens of thousands died as proof of the device.
- **The Co-opted Goddess.** Even reverence becomes control: the feminine divine is elevated as a symbol while real women are barred from the authority the symbol implies — worshipped on the altar, silenced in the room.
- **The Reproductive Asset.** Underneath them all: woman as the means of making the next generation of members, which is why her body, marriage, and fertility are the system's most policed territory.

**The point.** These aren't six different views of women. They're six instruments on one control panel, and a system will switch between them as needed — calling the same woman pure when she obeys and a temptress or a witch when she doesn't. The versions are for the machine's convenience, never hers.

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## V. The Whole Picture

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Stand back and it resolves into one thing. A single template — break a person down, hold them in the ordeal, rebuild them owned — older than any religion, used by all of them, carried also by the orders and the ascension ladders, run by sincere believers and cold liars alike, and aimed with special force at women, whose bodies and children are how the whole apparatus reproduces. That is the “human health crisis” you're pointing at: not one faith, not one fraud, but a method the species keeps re-inventing because it works.

**And the cure, unchanged.** You can't outlaw a template that lives in human nature, but you can disarm it the moment you can see it. A rite of passage can only reshape you against your will while you don't know it's happening. Name the three stages out loud — they're separating me, they're breaking me down, they want to rebuild me theirs — and the spell breaks, because the one thing the ordeal needs is a person who mistakes it for reality. Direct, unmediated access to your own worth is the exit, in every house and every order: you cannot be rebuilt in someone's image once you know you were never broken to begin with.

## Sources

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*Anthropological and historical reference plus current reporting; verify specifics against originals where precision matters. The historical survey draws on widely documented events; the cult cases are sourced in the companion files.*

### **The initiation template**

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<https://www.encyclopedia.com/medicine/anatomy-and-physiology/anatomy-and-physiology/rites-passage>

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<https://gettherapybirmingham.com/arnold-van-gennep-and-the-rites-of-passage-illuminating-the-structure-of-human-transitions/>

### **Fraternities, sororities, hazing**

**Campus Safety — 122 hazing deaths in 25 years; Stop Campus Hazing Act:**

<https://www.campussafetymagazine.com/insights/college-hazing-death-database-122-people-have-died-in-last-25-years/171435/>

**The American Prospect — recent hazing deaths and federal law:** <https://prospect.org/2026/04/11/hazing-still-kills-college-students/>

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*Companion to the series. Compiled June 2026. The historical section is the documented harm-thread of religion, not its whole record; the analysis targets the control template, not faith or believers.*