

## Bohemian Rhapsody

Paul Haggis and Deborah Rennard married in 1997, soon after Paul's divorce from Diane became final. Paul was still seeking joint custody of his three daughters. Without consulting him, Diane had taken Lauren and Katy out of the Delphi Academy, apparently intending to enroll them in public school. Paul and Diane were ordered by the court to undergo psychiatric evaluation, a procedure that Scientology abhors. In December 1998, the court surprised everyone by awarding Paul full custody of his daughters. According to court records, the ruling followed the discovery that the girls were not enrolled in school at all.

The girls were stunned. They had watched the hostilities through Diane's eyes. No one had prepared them for the possibility that they might be taken from her—until then, it had been the three girls and their mother against the world. The girls thought the decision was unbalanced and unfairly influenced by the fact that their father had more money. Alissa vowed she would never speak to him again.

Haggis was also caught short by the court's decision. In addition to the year-old son, James, he had with Deborah, he suddenly had two teenage daughters on his hands as well. (Alissa was twenty-one at the time, and lived on her own.) The girls felt uprooted and they missed the emotional support of their mother. They didn't resent Deborah; actually, they appreciated her advocacy and the way she balanced out Paul. Still, it was a difficult adjustment for everyone.

Paul put the girls in a private school, but that lasted only six



months. They weren't entirely comfortable talking to people who weren't Scientologists, and basic things like multiple-choice tests were unfamiliar. They demanded to be sent to a boarding institution on an isolated hilltop near Sheridan, Oregon, called the Delphian School—or the “mother school,” as it was known to Scientologists.

Alissa had gone there when she was fourteen years old. It had been a mixed experience for her. She had brought a copy of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* and books of eighteenth-century poetry, a CD of great speeches by Lincoln and Martin Luther King, and a pack of tarot cards. Although she loved the school, she never felt she fit in with the other kids. They wanted to talk about boys and pop culture, and she was more interested in philosophy and religion. But Delphian was just what Lauren needed. She got intensive tutoring to help her overcome her educational deficits; however, she also began to come up against some of the constraints of her church.

While she was at Delphian, Lauren decided to write a paper about religious intolerance. In particular, she felt that Scientology was under attack and she couldn't understand why. When she went online to see what the opposition was saying, a fellow student turned her in to Ethics. Lauren was told that Scientologists shouldn't look at negative stories about their religion. She was supposed to be saving the planet, so why was she wasting her time reading lies? Because of her isolation, and the censorship imposed on her education, when Lauren finally graduated from high school, at the age of twenty, she had never heard anyone speak ill of Scientology, nor did she question the ban on research about her religion. She thought, “I guess I'm not supposed to do these things. I will stay away.” Like her father, she learned it was easier not to look.

Alissa had a different issue. She didn't really date in high school,



and by the time she got to junior college it began to dawn on her that she was gay. She actually wasn't sure what that meant. She had two uncles who were gay, but for the longest time she didn't know what a lesbian was. Then her sister Katy, who is five years younger, and had grown up in the Internet-savvy culture, came out to her parents. Paul told Katy that there was no way that he would ever love her less. That made it easier for Alissa to talk about what she was discovering about herself. The vow never to speak to her father again began to lose its hold on her.

All the girls had grown up hearing prejudiced remarks from people in the church who saw homosexuality as an "aberration" that undermined the survival of the species; gays themselves were seen as sinister perverts. These attitudes were informed by Hubbard's writings on the subject. But it wasn't just Scientology, Alissa realized; the entire society was biased against homosexuals. In her early twenties, Alissa finally found the courage to come out to her father. "Oh, yeah, I already knew that," he told her. He said he wondered why she had ever dated boys in the first place.

"You knew?" she said. "I didn't know! How did you know? Why didn't you tell me? You could have clued me in. It would have made it easier for me."

That was so typical of her father. He was maddening in that way, completely accepting but disengaged, as if it really didn't matter one way or the other.

To signify her newfound identity, Alissa got a tattoo of her favorite Latin poem, the opening line of Carmen 5 by Catullus: "Vivamus mea Lesbia, atque amemus" (Let us live, my Lesbia, and let us love). It snaked all the way down her left arm.

EVER SINCE the Time exposé, the church had been frantically trying to recover Tom Cruise. Both Cruise and Nicole Kidman were



attaining ever greater success; Cruise became the first actor to star in five consecutive films to gross more than \$100 million in the United States, including Jerry Maguire and the first Mission: Impossible; Kidman was also gaining international renown with her roles in Batman Forever and To Die For. They gave the impression that they were putting Scientology behind them.

In 1996, Marty Rathbun had gone to Los Angeles to audit Cruise, but that one session went nowhere. According to Rathbun, Miscavige blamed Nicole Kidman, and viewed her as a gold digger who was faking Scientology. He says that Miscavige was hopeful that if they portrayed Nicole Kidman as a Suppressive Person, Cruise could be peeled away from her.

It was two years before Cruise agreed to go through another bout of auditing. This time, strict secrecy was imposed. Worried about scaring off the tentative star, Rathbun arranged the sessions so that even top officials in the church were unaware that Cruise was receiving services. For five days in October 1998, Cruise drove into a private parking lot in the back of the historic Guaranty Building on Hollywood Boulevard, with the yellow Scientology sign atop it that looms over the fabled district. Charlie Chaplin and Rudolph Valentino used to have their offices here. Now the lobby is a shrine to the life and works of L. Ron Hubbard. A giant bust of the founder greets the occasional visitor. Embedded in the sidewalk in front of the building are the stars of bygone celebrities on the Hollywood Walk of Fame—Otto Kruger, Tony Martin, Ann Rutherford, Richard Carlson, Jetta Goudal, Paul Winchell—who had their own moments of great renown and are now largely forgotten.

Cruise went in a back door that led to a basement hallway. There was an elevator at the end of the hallway that went directly to the “secret” eleventh floor, where both Miscavige and Rathbun maintained offices. The World Series was under way—New York



versus San Diego—and Cruise wore his Yankees hat. “He was not in good shape, spiritually or mentally,” Rathbun observed. “He was personally very enturbulated.”

After that episode of auditing, Cruise went quiet again. He and Kidman were in England filming *Eyes Wide Shut* for Stanley Kubrick. In any case, Rathbun and Miscavige had their hands full, fending off the lawsuits and reporters swirling around the McPherson case. Rathbun said that, in January 2001, he got a call from Cruise asking for help. Cruise said that he and Kidman were finished.

Cruise never offered a public explanation for the divorce, and Kidman herself was clearly surprised by his decision. She later revealed that she had suffered a miscarriage two months after Cruise moved out, and she had asked the doctors to preserve samples of the fetus’s DNA to prove that Cruise was the father. She pleaded with him to undergo marriage counseling at the church. Cruise refused, publicly declaring, “Nic knows exactly why we are getting a divorce.”

This was a decisive moment in Cruise’s relationship with Scientology. Rathbun provided the star with more than two hundred hours of auditing over the next couple of years. From July through Thanksgiving, 2001, Rathbun was with Cruise at the Celebrity Centre frequently, doing auditing rundowns and the PTS/SP (Potential Trouble Source/Suppressive Persons) course. He paired Cruise with another actor, Jason Beghe, to do training drills; for instance, Beghe would think of a hypothetical date, which Cruise had to figure out, using the E-Meter, an exercise Cruise found really frustrating.

A young man named Tommy Davis began acting as Rathbun’s assistant. He brought sandwiches and helped out with Cruise’s children, making sure they were receiving church services. Despite his youth, Davis was already a unique figure in the church: He was



a second-generation Scientologist, a Sea Org member, and the scion of the Hollywood elite. His mother was Anne Archer, a talented and popular actress who had starred in a number of movies, including *Patriot Games* and *Fatal Attraction*, for which she was nominated for an Academy Award. She had been a deeply committed Scientologist since she began studying with Milton Katselas at the Beverly Hills Playhouse in her twenties. She had always been proud to associate herself with Scientology in public, speaking at innumerable events on behalf of the church. Her son Tommy embodied the aspiration of the church to establish itself in the Hollywood community; indeed, he was living proof that it had done so. He had known Cruise since he was eighteen years old, so it was natural that he soon became the church's liaison with the star, reporting directly to Shelly Miscavige. He had a relationship with Cruise similar to the one that Spanky Taylor once enjoyed with John Travolta. Rathbun assigned Davis to sit with Cruise in the parking lot of Home Depot in Hollywood while the star was doing his Tone Scale drills—guessing the emotional state of random people coming out of the store.

Cruise then took a break to promote his movie *Vanilla Sky*. The following February through April 2002, Cruise and Rathbun were once again working together full-time, mostly at Gold Base. Cruise was preparing for his role in *The Last Samurai*, directed by Ed Zwick, and between sessions with Rathbun he would go into the courtyard to practice his swordplay.

Cruise had begun dating the Spanish actress Penélope Cruz, and in the fall of 2001 Rathbun began auditing her as well. At the same time, he was still acting as Nicole Kidman's Ethics Officer in the church, even though she and Cruise were engaged in a bitter divorce proceeding. One of the issues was whether the children would be educated in schools using the Hubbard method, which Kidman opposed. That was another battle she lost. Although Tom



and Nicole split custody of their children, both Isabella and Connor soon chose to live exclusively with their father. Rathbun says this was because the Scientology staff, especially Tommy Davis, quietly worked to turn the children against Kidman. “Tommy told them over and over again their mother was a sociopath and after a while they believed him,” he recalled. “They had daily sessions with Tommy. I was there. I saw it.”

According to several former Sea Org members, Rathbun’s auditing sessions with Cruise were videotaped. Tom De Vocht, a former church official, said Miscavige would watch them and then regale his inner circle, over his nightly whiskey, with stories of Cruise’s confessions, dwelling especially on his sex life.<sup>1</sup>

Rathbun was opposed to the endless courtship of Cruise. In his opinion, there was no need for it once Cruise was securely back on the Bridge. Rathbun told Miscavige, “I think I’m done with this guy.” Miscavige responded, “He’ll be done when he calls me.” The leader was galled by the fact that Cruise had never contacted him when he came back for counseling. Rathbun continually urged Cruise to call “COB,” as Miscavige is known in the church—Chairman of the Board. At one point Cruise asked for Miscavige’s number, but then failed to call. His tentativeness was worrisome.

Whatever restraint Cruise felt about Miscavige eventually fell away, however, and Miscavige was once again folded into the star’s inner circle. There were movie nights in Cruise’s mansion. Miscavige flew with Cruise in the Warner Brothers jet to a test screening of *The Last Samurai* in Arizona. The two men became closer than ever. Cruise later said of Miscavige, “I have never met a more competent, a more intelligent, a more compassionate being outside of what I have experienced from LRH. And I’ve met the leaders of leaders. I’ve met them all.”

Cruise’s renewed dedication to Scientology permanently changed the relationship between the church and the Hollywood celebrity



community. Cruise poured millions of dollars into the church—\$3 million in 2004 alone. He was not simply a figurehead; he was an activist with an international following. He could take the church into places it had never been before. Whenever Cruise traveled abroad to promote his movies, he used the opportunity to lobby foreign leaders and American ambassadors to promote Scientology. Davis usually accompanied him on these diplomatic and lobbying missions. Cruise repeatedly consulted with former President Clinton, lobbying him to get Prime Minister Tony Blair's help in getting the Church of Scientology declared a tax-deductible charitable organization in the United Kingdom. Rathbun was present for one telephone call in which Clinton advised Cruise he would be better served by contacting Blair's wife, Cherie, rather than the prime minister, because she was a lawyer and "would understand the details." Later, Cruise went to London, where he met with a couple of Blair's representatives, although nothing came of those efforts. In 2003, he met with Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and Vice President Dick Cheney's chief of staff, Scooter Libby, to express the church's concerns over its treatment in Germany. Cruise had access to practically anyone in the world.

That same year, Cruise and Davis lobbied Rod Paige, the secretary of education during the first term of President George W. Bush, to endorse Hubbard's study tech educational methods. Paige had been impressed. For months, Cruise kept in contact with Paige's office, urging that Scientology techniques be folded into the president's No Child Left Behind program. One day Cruise flew his little red-and-white-striped Pitts Special biplane, designed for aerobatics, to Hemet, along with his Scientologist chief of staff, Michael Doven. Miscavige and Rathbun picked them up and drove them to Gold Base. Rathbun was in the backseat and recalls Cruise boasting to COB about his talks with the secretary.

"Bush may be an idiot," Miscavige observed, "but I wouldn't



mind his being our Constantine.”

Cruise agreed. “If fucking Arnold can be governor, I could be president.”

Miscavige responded, “Well, absolutely, Tom.”<sup>2</sup>

IN 2001, Haggis was fired from Family Law, the show he had created. His career, which for so long seemed to be a limitless staircase toward fame and fortune, now took a plunge. He began working at home.

Within a week, he started writing a movie script called Million Dollar Baby, based on a series of short stories by F. X. Toole. He spent a year working on it, drawing upon some of his own painful memories. He identified with the character of a sour old boxing coach, Frankie Dunn. Like Haggis, Frankie is estranged from his daughter. His letters to her are returned. He turns to religion, going to Mass every day and seeking a forgiveness that he doesn't really believe in. Into the coach's dismal life comes another young woman, Maggie Fitzgerald, an aspiring boxer from a white trash background. All of the loss and longing he feels for his daughter is apparent in his mentoring of this gritty young fighter, who has more faith in him than he has in himself. But Maggie is paralyzed when her neck is broken in a fight. In a climactic moment, she begs Frankie to pull the plug and let her die. Haggis faced a similar choice in real life with his best friend, who was brain-dead from a staph infection. “They don't die easily,” he recalled. “Even in a coma, he kicked and moaned for twelve hours.”

Haggis dreamed of directing the movie himself. But as much as studios admired the writing, the story was so dark nobody wanted to get near it. Haggis began borrowing money to stay afloat. He turned down another TV series because he realized that his heart hadn't been in television for years.



One of his abandoned TV projects still haunted him. The idea sprang from an unsettling incident a decade before, when he and Diane were driving home from the premiere of *Silence of the Lambs*. Paul was wearing a tuxedo and driving a Porsche convertible. He stopped at a Blockbuster Video store on Wilshire Boulevard to rent some obscure Dutch film. When they got back into the car, two young black men with guns suddenly rushed up to them. The robbers ordered them out of the car and told them to walk toward a dark parking lot. That seemed like a really bad idea. Haggis pretended not to hear them. He put Diane in front of him and headed down Wilshire instead.

“Stop!”

Paul and Diane froze. They heard footsteps, and one of the thieves snatched the video out of Diane’s hand. Then the Porsche roared off. That was the last Haggis ever saw of it.

Ten years later, Haggis awakened in the middle of the night and began chewing over this frightening episode once again. He often thought about it. The entire experience had lasted less than a minute, but it had colored his stance toward life in complicated ways. Where did these kids come from? They were living in the same city as he, but a universe of race and class separated them. He could imagine who he was in their eyes, just some rich white guy with much more than his share of what life had to offer. In a way, Haggis was on their side. But it could have turned out so much worse; guns always make things dangerously unpredictable. He was shaken by that thought. The unexpected coda of snatching the rented videotape was intriguing. Haggis had managed a wisecrack to the cops at the time. “I think you’ll discover that these men have been here quite often, looking for that video, and it was never in.”

Specifically, what he thought about in the middle of the night was what those kids said to each other as they sped out of the



Blockbuster parking lot onto Wilshire in his pearlescent Cabriolet. Could he find himself in them? Haggis got out of bed and began writing. By mid-morning he had a lengthy outline. It was about the manifold ways that people interact with each other—how the experience of having someone honk at you in traffic and shoot you the finger can affect your mood, so that you take it out on someone else at the first opportunity; or how, alternatively, someone lets you into a long line of traffic, and your day brightens. He saw life in America as a volatile collision of cultures—of immigrants who fail to read the codes that underlie our system, of races that resent and mistrust each other, of people coexisting in different social strata who look at each other with uncomprehending fear and hatred.

He had shopped the proposal around to different television producers, but they unanimously passed on it. Now, as he was struggling financially and artistically, Deborah suggested he consider writing the script as a movie. “You’ll win an Academy Award,” she told him.

Haggis contacted his friend Robert Moresco, who had been a writer on Haggis’s series *EZ Streets*. He told Moresco, “I don’t think anybody’s going to make this, but it’s a great story.” The two men began working in Haggis’s home office, next to the laundry room. They wrote a first draft in two weeks. Haggis decided to call it *Crash*.

The title refers to a fender bender that sets off a chain of events, revealing the contradictory elements of the characters and the city they inhabit. In the dizzying seconds after the collision an LAPD detective suddenly realizes what’s missing in his life. “It’s the sense of touch,” he says in the movie’s opening lines. “In LA no one touches you.... We’re always behind metal and glass. Think we miss that touch so much, we crash into each other just to feel something.”



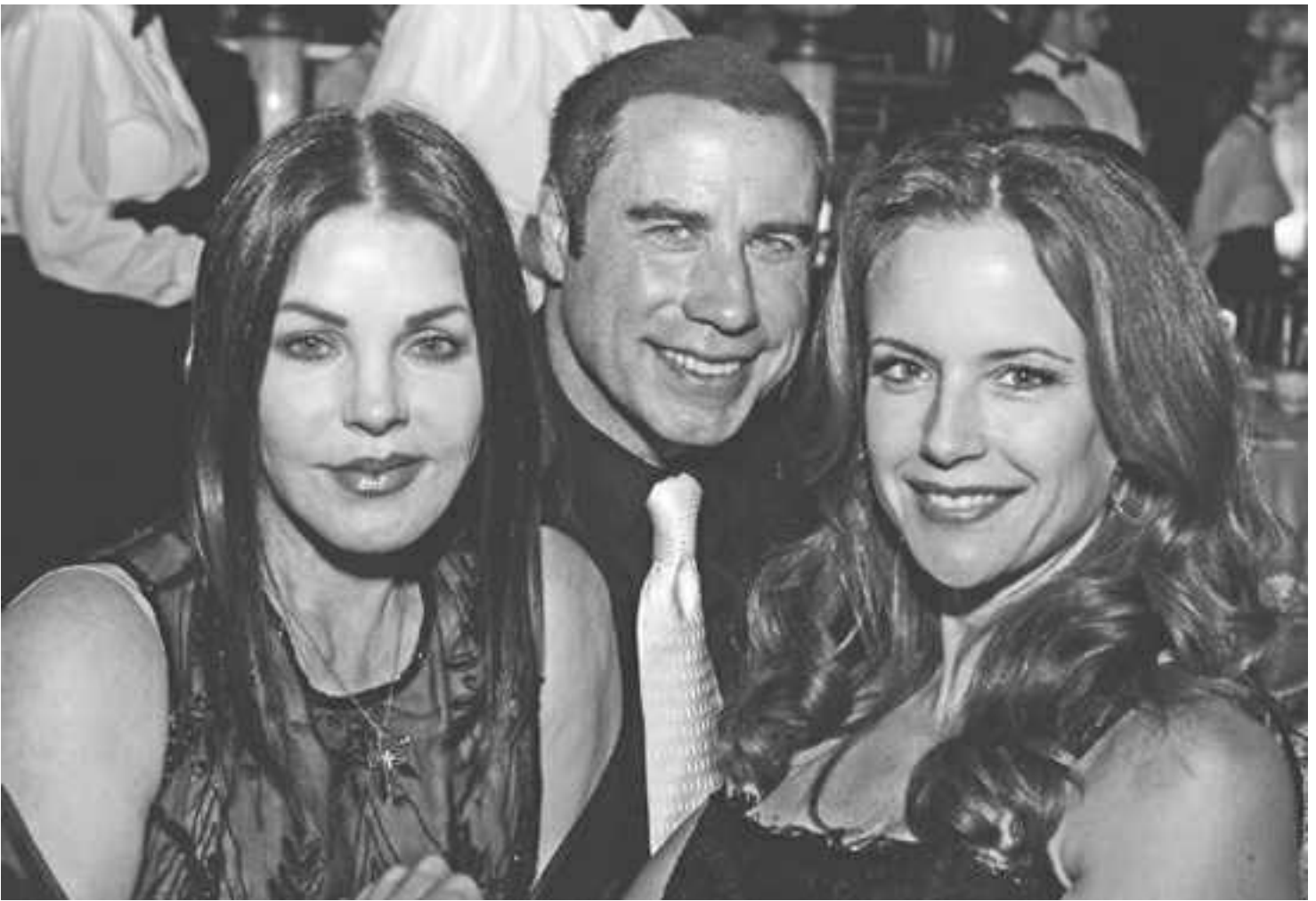
Haggis insists on turning his heroes into villains and vice versa, such as the racist white cop who molests a tony, upper-class black woman in one scene, then saves her life in another. Haggis felt that by exploring such complexities he was teasing out the dark and light threads of his own personality.

For the next year and a half, he struggled to get the movie green-lit. He was still a first-time movie director, and that posed an obstacle. Moreover, the script called for an ensemble cast with no single starring role—always an obstacle in Hollywood. Haggis finally interested a producer, Bob Yari, who agreed to make the movie for \$10 million if Haggis could assemble a star-studded cast.

Don Cheadle was the first to sign on, both as an actor and a producer, and his name added credibility to the project. Matt Dillon and Tony Danza came aboard. Heath Ledger and John Cusack agreed to work for scale, as everyone did. Still, the project dragged on. Finally, Haggis was told the movie was a go. He then sent the script to John Travolta and Kelly Preston, who he thought would be perfect as the district attorney and his wife.

“That’s great, because now we really need them,” one of the producers, Cathy Schulman, told him the next day. Heath Ledger had dropped out and Cusack was not far behind. Once again, the movie would need more big-name stars to get the financing. Haggis immediately sent a note to Preston, telling her he was withdrawing his offer. As a matter of pride, he felt it was wrong to use his friends in such a way—especially other Scientologists. Preston was miffed, since he had failed to explain his decision.





Priscilla Presley, John Travolta, and Kelly Preston at the Church of Scientology Celebrity Centre's thirty-seventh-anniversary gala, Hollywood, August 2006

But without two more signature names the movie was back in limbo. Haggis was about to lose Cheadle as well, because he was scheduled to make *Hotel Rwanda*. Yari finally told Haggis to shut the production down.

The following Monday, when Schulman came into the production office, she found Haggis there, alone.

"What are you doing?" she asked.

"I'm prepping the movie."

Yari agreed to keep the office open for one more week, and then another, as each Monday Schulman would find Haggis at work preparing for a movie that now had no budget at all. Gradually, other people began working with him, for no pay.

"If you get Sandy Bullock, you got a green light," Schulman told him.



Haggis got Sandra Bullock for the role of the district attorney's wife, a brittle, racist socialite, a role far from the plucky gamines she had played in the past. In the movie, she's the one who gets carjacked at gunpoint. But the producers wanted one more name: Brendan Fraser. Haggis thought he was much too young for the part, as did Fraser, but he agreed to do it. The movie was finally green-lit, just four weeks before the shooting started. Only now, the ten million dollars had shrunk to six and a half.

For Haggis, everything was riding on this film. He mortgaged his house three times; he also used it as a set, in order to save on his location budget. He canceled many of the exterior scenes and borrowed the set of the television show *Monk* to film interiors. He was eating carelessly and smoking constantly. He lost weight. He desperately needed more time.

When he finished shooting a scene in Chinatown, Cathy Schulman caught up with him to ask about the next day's shoot. "You look like you're clutching your chest," she observed.

Haggis admitted that he was having some pains.

"Sharp pains?" Schulman urged him to see a doctor. He didn't want to hear that. He went home.

He woke the next morning in agony. He called his doctor, who told him it was probably stress, but agreed to see him just to set his mind at ease. By now, Paul was short of breath, so Deborah drove him to the doctor's office. The doctor did a few tests and said yes, it was stress and muscle fatigue. "But we'll do an electrocardiogram just in case."

A few moments later the doctor returned. His face was snow white. "Don't stand up!" he said in a professionally measured voice. "You've had a heart attack!"

That night in the hospital, Haggis suffered another cardiac failure. He received three stents in the arteries to his heart in an emergency operation. He was able to watch the entire procedure



on the monitor. It was really like an out-of-body experience, watching his own fragile heart being repaired. The movie he was making didn't seem so important anymore.

That changed as soon as the operation was over.

Schulman arrived with some more bad news. "I talked to your doctor," she told Haggis. "He's not going to allow you to go back to work for another four or five months. I've got to hire another director."

"Fine," Haggis responded. He said he'd talk it over with his doctor.

The doctor confirmed the decision. "Paul, it's not just your heart attack," he told him. "You've had an operation. It'll put too much stress on your heart."

"I totally understand," Haggis replied. "Let me ask you how much stress you think I would be experiencing if I were just sitting at home while another director is finishing my fucking film!"

Production was shut down for a week and a half until Haggis returned, with a nurse at his side who checked his vital signs every quarter hour. Sandra Bullock brought him green tea and refused to let him drink coffee. Every time Haggis tried to stand up, she told him to sit down. She had a kind of implacable maternal authority. He finished the film in his chair with a cup of tea in his hands.

Clint Eastwood had been asked to read *Million Dollar Baby* for the role of Frankie Dunn, the boxing coach. He loved the script, but said he would only do the role if he could direct as well. Although Haggis hated to surrender the opportunity to direct, he knew it would be a bigger picture if Eastwood were behind it. Hilary Swank was cast as Maggie Fitzgerald, a part that would bring her an Academy Award. Morgan Freeman also would win in a supporting role, and Eastwood for directing—all that in addition to winning the Oscar for Best Picture. Haggis would be nominated for Best Screenplay. But that was still on the horizon.



While he was still editing *Crash*, Haggis began writing another movie for Eastwood, *Flags of Our Fathers*. They went to visit the producer of that project, Steven Spielberg, on the set of *War of the Worlds*, which he was shooting with Tom Cruise. Spielberg had called Haggis to talk over an idea for another script.

Haggis had met Cruise on a couple of occasions, once at a fundraiser and again at the Celebrity Centre. As the most popular and sought-after leading man in Hollywood, Cruise was given perks that few other stars could match. He had asked Tommy Davis, now his full-time Scientology handler, to set up a tent on the set of *War of the Worlds* in order to distribute church materials to the crew and provide Scientology assists. The precedent alarmed many in Hollywood, and Spielberg was widely criticized for letting it happen.

“It’s really remarkable to me,” Spielberg observed, as he and Haggis walked to his trailer. “I’ve met all these Scientologists, and they seem like the nicest people.”

“Yeah, we keep all the evil ones in the closet,” Haggis replied.<sup>3</sup>

A couple of days later, Tommy Davis called Haggis at home and told him someone from senior management needed to see him urgently. Haggis had no idea what was going on. He assumed that the church was going to pressure him to take some more auditing or another course, as had happened so often in the past. Davis met him at the Celebrity Centre and escorted him to a room where Greg Wilhere was waiting. Wilhere, a handsome former college football player, was a senior executive in the church assigned to be Cruise’s personal auditor. (He accompanied the star even to the shooting of *Days of Thunder*, where a character in the movie was named after him.) Wilhere was livid because Haggis had upset Tom Cruise by subverting years of work on Cruise’s part to recruit Spielberg into the church.

“It was a joke,” Haggis protested. He said he had no idea how



that could have undermined Cruise's efforts to draw the most powerful man in Hollywood into Scientology. Wilhere said that Steven was having a problem with one of his seven children, and Tom was working to "steer him in the right direction." All that was ruined, Wilhere said, because Spielberg now believed there were evil Scientologists who were locked in a closet.

Haggis felt like he was trapped in a farce. It all seemed wildly ridiculous, but he was the only one who thought so. Still, he'd be crazy to antagonize Tom Cruise and Steven Spielberg. He offered to explain to Spielberg that he had been kidding, there were no evil Scientologists, and if there were, they wouldn't be kept in a closet. He couldn't believe that Spielberg would actually think he had been serious.

Wilhere was unappeased. He said Cruise was apoplectic. He directed Haggis to write the star a letter of apology—this minute. Haggis dutifully wrote out a note on the paper handed to him, but Wilhere said it wasn't sufficient. Haggis wrote a more contrite note. Wilhere said he would pass it along. But Haggis never got a response from Cruise.<sup>4</sup>

Haggis came away from that meeting with a new appreciation of the significance of Tom Cruise to Scientology. He had heard that Cruise had often been enlisted to try to recruit famous people. They included James Packer, the richest man in Australia; David Beckham, the British soccer star, and his wife, Victoria, the former Spice Girl; and Cruise's good friends, the actors Will and Jada Pinkett Smith, who later funded a school that used Hubbard educational techniques. But there was no one else like Spielberg. Had Cruise been successful in his efforts, it would have been a transformative moment in the history of the church, especially in its relation to Hollywood. It would have given reality to the mythology of Scientology's influence in the entertainment industry. Who could guess how many recruits would flood into the church



because of Spielberg's imprimatur? Or how much money would pour into Scientology's coffers by moguls and agents and aspiring movie stars seeking to gain favor? The ambition behind such a play on the part of the church was breathtaking. And Haggis had stepped into the middle of it with an innocent jest.

Cruise turned his attention to the other Scientologists in the industry. Many had gone quiet following the scandals in the church or had never openly admitted their affiliation with the church. Cruise called a meeting of other Scientology celebrities and urged them to become more outspoken about their religion. The popular singer Beck, who had grown up in the church, subsequently began speaking openly about his faith. Erika Christensen, a rising young actress who was also a second-generation Scientologist, called Cruise her spiritual mentor.

Inspired by a new sense of activism, a group of Scientology actors turned against Milton Katselas, the gray eminence of the Beverly Hills Playhouse. No one had been more instrumental in forging the bond between Scientology and Hollywood. Katselas had been a longtime friend of Hubbard's and still kept a photograph of him on his desk. The two men were similar in many ways, but especially in their transformative effect on those who studied under them. Humorous, compassionate, and charismatic, but also vain and demanding, Katselas was not above bullying his students to make a point; however, many of them felt that he had taken them to a higher level of artistry than they had ever thought they could achieve. When Katselas addressed an acting student, it wasn't just about technique; his lessons were full of savvy observations about life and behavior.

One of those students, Allen Barton, was a classical pianist as well as a promising actor. When Katselas heard him play, he found him a teacher and paid for his piano lessons. Barton eventually arranged a recital on a Sunday evening. Katselas showed up at the



theater at eight that morning, just as the piano was being delivered. He noticed that the stage was scratched, there were piled-up boxes spilling out of the wings, and a large spiral staircase—a prop from an old production—was left on the stage, because it was simply too big to move. Barton explained that he was going to cover up as much as possible with black drapes. Katselas called his office and within an hour ten people arrived. He sent Barton off to relax and prepare himself for the performance. When Barton returned that afternoon, the staircase was gone, the boxes had disappeared, the stage had been sanded and painted, and four trees surrounded the piano. Even the pots the trees were planted in had been painted to match the backdrop. The overall effect was stunning. “Have a good show,” Katselas said, and walked away. Overwhelmed, Barton ran after him. “How can I ever thank you?” he asked. As he drove off, Katselas said, “Learn to expect it of yourself.”

Such stories became a part of the Katselas legend. He was an OT V and a very public Scientologist, but he had stopped moving up the Bridge, in part because he refused to travel to Flag, where the upper-level courses were offered. Moreover, he had gotten into Ethics trouble because of his behavior with some of his female students. Jenna Elfman was a leader of the revolt against Katselas. She had been one of his prize students, winning a Golden Globe Award in 1999 for her free-spirited performance in the sitcom *Dharma & Greg*. Allen Barton, who had become a teacher at the Playhouse, wrote Elfman a letter in June 2004, begging her to relent. He called the movement against Katselas “Scientological McCarthyism,” harking back to the blacklisting of Hollywood celebrities in the 1950s because of their supposed Communist sympathies. “As Scientologists, are we now a group that blacklists, that casts aside friendships and alliances on the basis of how fast someone is moving up the Bridge?” he wrote. “If we as a group are



going to take on the billions of wogs out in the world, how can we disconnect from each other?” Elfman never responded.

After Cruise rallied the Scientology celebrities, a group of students demanded that Katselas make the Playhouse a “WISE” business. The acronym stands for World Institute of Scientology Enterprises. Katselas refused, even though he lost a hundred students in a mass Scientology walkout. Many of them went to another school, the Acting Center, which was founded in 2006, based in part on Scientology techniques. Katselas died of heart failure in 2008, and the Beverly Hills Playhouse is no longer connected with the church. The long line of protégés that Katselas left behind cemented the association between the church and the Hollywood acting community, but in the end he was ostracized by the very people whose careers he had nurtured.

Tom Cruise was now considered the unofficial Ethics Officer of Hollywood. He was the embodiment of Hubbard’s vision of a church with temples dedicated to celebrity rather than God. Cruise’s intensity and commitment, along with his spectacular ambition, matched Miscavige’s own. It was as if Miscavige had rubbed a magic lantern and Cruise had appeared, a genie who could open any door. He was one of the few people that Miscavige saw as a peer. Miscavige even wondered if there was some way to appoint Cruise the church’s Inspector General for Ethics—Rathbun’s job. “He’d say that Tom Cruise was the only person in Scientology, other than himself, that he would trust to run the church,” one former Sea Org member recalled. Rathbun observed: “Miscavige convinced Cruise that he and Tom were two of only a handful of truly ‘big beings’ on the planet. He instructed Cruise that LRH was relying upon them to unite with the few others of their ilk on earth to make it onto ‘Target Two’—some unspecified galactic locale where they would meet up with Hubbard in the afterlife.”

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HAGGIS HAD ALSO BEEN folded into the celebrity recruitment apparatus. He had put his money and his reputation in the hands of the church. He, too, was serving Scientology. But he rarely spoke about his affiliation to his employees or associates. Even his close friends were surprised to learn that he was in the church. "He didn't have that sort of straight-on, unambiguous, unambivalent view that so many Scientologists project into the world," Marshall Herskovitz observed.

For years, Herskovitz and several of Haggis's closest non-Scientology friends participated in an irregular Friday get-together called Boys' Night. They met at an Italian restaurant on Montana Avenue in Santa Monica. The actor Josh Brolin usually attended, along with director Oliver Stone, producer Stephen Nathan, and a peace activist and former priest named Blase Bonpane, among others. One night an attractive New York Times reporter came to write about the event, and the men decided that she made them all a lot more appealing than they were on other occasions. After that, they voted to invite one woman to join them whenever they met. Usually, it's a beautiful actress. Julie Delpy and Charlize Theron have both been accorded this honor. Madeleine Stowe recalled it as the funniest evening she had ever had, although she had the sense to bring her husband along. She remembered Haggis sitting back, wisecracking, smoking a cigarette, watching it all happen.

Although Brolin, Nathan, and Stone are three of Haggis's closest male friends, they never talked to him about Scientology. And yet each of the three had an experience in the church, which the others weren't aware of. Steve Nathan had been hooked up to an E-Meter in the late 1960s by some British Scientologists who were looking for recruits, but he hadn't been impressed. Oliver Stone didn't even know Haggis was in Scientology. But for that matter, few knew that Stone had also spent a month in the church. He was a young man just back from Vietnam, full of trouble and questions. He



signed up at the church's New York center in the old Hotel Martinique. "It was like going to college and reading Dale Carnegie, something you do to find yourself." The difference was that in Scientology there were nice parties and beautiful girls. Scientology didn't answer his questions; but on the other hand, he noted, "I got laid."

Brolin had known Haggis for many years. They had worked together in television, and Brolin had helped with Haggis's charities. Brolin and his wife, actress Diane Lane, shared a house in Italy during the summers with Paul and Deborah. One evening, lubricated with grappa, Brolin began recounting a story of a friend who had "infiltrated" Scientology. He wondered why Paul and Deborah were listening stony-faced. When he finished the tale, Deborah finally said, "You know, we're Scientologists."

"What?" Brolin exclaimed. "When the fuck did that happen?"

"A long time ago," Deborah said.

"I am so sorry, I had no idea!" Brolin said.

After that, Brolin went with Deborah to a couple of gatherings to hear about Scientology's opposition to psychotropic drugs. Although Brolin had never talked about it, he had gone to the Celebrity Centre himself, "in a moment of real desperation," and received spiritual counseling. He quickly decided Scientology wasn't for him. But he still wondered what the religion did for celebrities like Tom Cruise and John Travolta: "Each has a good head on his shoulders, they make great business decisions, they seem to have wonderful families. Is that because they were helped by Scientology?"

Brolin once witnessed Travolta giving a Scientology assist at a dinner party in Los Angeles. Marlon Brando arrived with a cut on his leg. He had been injured while helping a stranded motorist on the Pacific Coast Highway pull his car out of a mudslide, and he was in pain. Travolta offered to help, saying that he had just



reached a new level in Scientology, which gave him enhanced abilities. Brando said, “Well, John, if you have powers, then absolutely.” Travolta touched Brando’s leg and they each closed their eyes. Brolin watched, thinking it was bizarre and surprisingly physical. After ten minutes, Brando opened his eyes and said, “That really helped. I actually feel different!”

IN 2003, Cruise continued working with Rathbun on his upper levels. While he was at Gold Base, instead of staying in the cottage he had formerly shared with Nicole Kidman, Cruise moved into the guesthouse of L. Ron Hubbard’s residence, Bonnie View. One Sunday night, following a late-night meal in Hubbard’s baronial dining room, Cruise got food poisoning. The culprit was thought to be an appetizer of fried shrimp in an egg roll. The cook was summarily sent to Happy Valley.

Rathbun accompanied Cruise to Flag Base in Clearwater where he could perform the exercises required to attain OT VII. Because Miscavige depended on Rathbun to handle so many of the church’s most sensitive problems, he had been lulled into feeling a kind of immunity from the leader’s violent temper. In September, he returned to Gold Base and gave a report to Miscavige about Cruise’s progress.

Miscavige asked where Cruise would be doing his semiannual checkups. “At Flag,” Rathbun said. All OT VIIs do their checkups at Flag.

“Who’s going to do it?”

Rathbun named an auditor in Clearwater that he thought highly of.

Miscavige turned to his wife and said, “Can you believe this SP?” He declared that unlike any other OT VII, Cruise would get his checkups at Gold Base.



When Cruise duly arrived at Gold for his semiannual check, he was preparing for his role as a contract killer in *Collateral*. Miscavige took him out to the gun range and showed him how to shoot a .45-caliber pistol. Meanwhile, Rathbun administered the star's six-month checkup.

Because of his insubordination, Rathbun had to go through a program of penitence. One of the steps was to write up a list of his offenses against the church, which Miscavige had sketched out for him. "I am writing this public announcement to inform executives and staff that I have come to my senses and I am no longer committing present time overts and have ceased all attacks and suppressions on Scientology," Rathbun admitted in September 2003, adopting the abject tone that characterizes many Scientology confessions. Speaking in full-blown Scientologese, he wrote, "The end result is unmocked org form, overworked and enturbulated executives and staff." This meant that he had not thought out his intentions clearly, causing the church and the people who worked for it to be in disarray. He had a particular apology to make to David Miscavige: "Each and every time on major situations, COB has had to intervene to clean up wars I had exacerbated.... The cumulative amount of COB's time I have cost in terms of dropping balls, creating situations internally and externally, is on the order of eight years."

Rathbun was shocked, not just by being declared an SP, but also by the changes at Gold Base in the year and a half he had been posted to Flag. All communications into and out of the base had been cut off. The leader had several of his top executives confined to the Watchdog Committee headquarters—a pair of double-wide trailers that had been married together. By the end of the year, the number who were living there under guard had grown to about forty or fifty people. It was now called the Hole. Except for one long conference table, there was no furniture—no chairs or beds,



just an expanse of outdoor carpet—so the executives had to eat standing up and sleep on the floor, which was swarming with ants. In the morning, they were marched outside for group showers with a hose, then back to the Hole. Their meals were brought to them—a slop of reheated leftovers. When temperatures in the desert location mounted to more than a hundred degrees, Miscavige turned off the electricity, letting the executives roast inside the locked quarters.

The leader ordered them to stay until they finally had rearranged the “Org Board”—the church’s organizational chart—to his satisfaction, which was never given. Photographs of Sea Org personnel were continually moved from one position to another on the chart, which meant that people were constantly being reassigned to different posts, whimsically, and no post was secure. About nine hundred positions needed to be filled at Int and Gold Bases, and the stack of personnel and ethics files was five feet high. This anarchic process had been going on more or less intensively for four years.

At odd, unpredictable hours, often in the middle of the night, Miscavige would show up in the Hole, accompanied by his wife, Shelly, and his Communicator, Laurisse Stuckenbrock, each of whom carried a tape recorder to take down whatever Miscavige had to say. The detainees could hear the drumbeat of the shoes as Miscavige’s entourage marched toward the trailers. The leader demanded that the executives engage in what were termed “séances”—endless hours of confessions about their crimes and failures, in this and previous lives, as well as whatever dark thoughts—“counter-intentions”—they might be harboring against him. If someone was not forthcoming with such confessions, the group would harass that person until he produced a confession. Sometimes these were sexual fantasies. That would be written up in a report, which Miscavige would then read aloud to other church



officials.

The entire base became paralyzed with anxiety about being thrown into the Hole. People were trying desperately to police their thoughts, but it was difficult to keep secrets when staff members were constantly being security-checked with E-Meters. Even confidences whispered to a spouse were regularly betrayed. After one of COB's lengthy rants, recordings of his statement would be sent to a steno pool, then transcripts were delivered to the executives in the Hole, who had to read them aloud to each other repeatedly.

Mike Rinder was in the Hole for two years, even though he continued to be the church's chief spokesperson. Bizarrely, he would sometimes be pulled out and ordered to conduct a press conference, or to put on a tuxedo and jet off to a Scientology gala; then he would be returned to confinement. He and other executives were made to race around the room on their hands and bare knees, day after day, tearing open scabs on their knees and leaving permanent scars. Miscavige once directed De Vocht to rough up Rinder, because "he's just an SP." De Vocht took Rinder outside and gave him a going-over. But De Vocht was also frightened of Miscavige. He took to sleeping with a broken broom handle. When another executive spoke up about the violence, he was beaten by two of Miscavige's assistants and made to mop the bathroom floor with his tongue.





Mike Rinder, former chief spokesperson for the church, in Florida, 2012

The detainees developed a particular expression whenever Miscavige came in, which he took note of. He called them “Pie Faces.” To illustrate what he meant, Miscavige drew a circle with two dots for eyes and a straight line for a mouth. He had T-shirts made up with the pie face on it. Rinder was “the Father of Pie Faces.” People didn’t know how to react. They didn’t want to call attention to themselves, but they also didn’t want to be a Pie Face.

In Scientology, there is a phrase that explains mob psychology: Contagion of Aberration, meaning that groups of people can stimulate each other to do things that are insane. According to former church executives, one day Miscavige arrived at the Hole and demanded that Marc Yager, the Commanding Officer of the Commodore’s Messengers Org, and Guillaume Lesevre, the Executive Director of the Church of Scientology International,



confess that they were homosexual lovers. He threatened that Tom Cruise would come to “punch you guys out” if the other Sea Org members in the Hole failed to get a confession from the two men. The captive executives took this threat seriously. When Miscavige left, a group of women executives who had been appointed as leaders of the detainees urged some of the bigger men in the Hole to “give some people some black eyes before Tom has to.” Several men dutifully beat up Lesevre and Yager. Then one of the women reported to Miscavige that the men had confessed that they were gay lovers. When Debbie Cook, the former Captain of Flag Service Org and one of the most respected executives in the church, said that wasn’t true, she was declared a traitor. She was made to stand in a garbage can for twelve hours, as the other detainees demanded that she confess her own “homosexual tendencies.” The women in the room repeatedly slapped her and poured water over her head. A sign was hung around her neck, saying LESBO.

Rathbun was seen as being COB’s chief enforcer. During meetings in the Hole or elsewhere on the base, he would stand to one side and glare at his colleagues while he says Miscavige berated and abused them. Although he was physically intimidating, Rathbun was suffering from a number of physical ailments, including a bad back, gallstones, calcium deposits in his neck, and painful varicose veins, which he believed came from having to stand at attention for hours on end. He, too, was prone to bursts of sudden violence. “Once on a phone call I saw him get so mad that he put his fist right through a computer screen,” his former wife recalled. Miscavige would send him down to observe what was going on in the Hole and come back with reports. In January 2004, when Rinder was accused of withholding a confession from the group, Rathbun took him outside and beat him up. Rathbun says Miscavige wasn’t satisfied. He called Rathbun into his massive office in the Religious Technology Center, a cold and imposing



room with steel walls and eighteen-foot ceilings, and accused him of letting Rinder “get away with murder.” Then, according to Rathbun, out of nowhere, Miscavige grabbed him by the throat and slammed his head against the steel wall.<sup>5</sup> Rathbun blacked out for a moment. He wasn’t hurt, but the terms had changed.

A few days later, Rathbun found himself in the Hole, along with the entire International Management team and other executives. Miscavige said they were going to stay there until they got the Org Board done.

Scientologists are trained to believe that whatever happens to them is somehow their fault, so much of the discussion in the Hole centered on what they had done to deserve this fate. The possibility that the leader of the church might be irrational or even insane was so taboo that no one could even think it, much less voice it aloud. Most of the people in the Hole had a strong allegiance to the group—Scientology and the Sea Org—and they didn’t want to let their comrades down. Many had been in the Sea Org their entire adult lives and portions of their childhood. Mike Rinder joined the Sea Org when he was eighteen. Amy Scobee was sixteen. Tom De Vocht was thirteen. They had already surrendered the possibility of ordinary family life. Sex outside of marriage was taboo, so many members married in their teens; but since 1986, children have been forbidden to Sea Org members. Former church executives say that abortions were common and forcefully encouraged. Claire Headley married Marc when she was seventeen; by the time she was twenty-one she had been pushed to have two abortions. She estimates that sixty to eighty percent of the women on Gold Base have had abortions. “It’s a constant practice,” she said.<sup>6</sup>

Worried about pillow talk, Miscavige instituted a policy of imposed divorces in 2004; people in the Religious Technology Center, the Commodore’s Messenger Organization, and Golden Era



Productions could not be married to members in other divisions. For many of those people in the Hole, everyone they knew or cared about was in the church. The cost of leaving—emotionally and spiritually, as well as financially—was forbidding. And they knew if they tried to run away, they'd likely be found and punished.

Those who attempted to leave the Sea Org through the formal process of “routing out” would be presented with a freeloader tab for all the coursework and counseling they had received over the years. Claire and Marc Headley, for instance, were billed more than \$150,000 when they left and told they would have to pay if they ever wanted to see their family again. Those who accept this offer can spend years paying off their debt. Those who don't stand to lose any connection to their friends and family who remain in Scientology.

Many had long since turned their back on friends and family who were not in the church, and the prospect of facing them again brought up feelings of shame. The thought of leaving loved ones still in the church was even more fraught. All of these conflicting emotions were informed by the Scientology theory that life goes on and on, and that the mission of the church is to clear the planet, so in the scheme of things the misery one might be suffering now is temporary and negligible. There is a larger goal. One is always working for “the greatest good for the greatest number of dynamics,” as Scientology ethics prescribed. And so the executives of the church who had given their lives to the Sea Org directed their confusion and their anger inward, or toward their helpless colleagues.

Rinder was an inevitable target. He was seen as being arrogant and above it all. Few people other than Rathbun really understood Rinder's job; unlike the others, the two men were often off the base, dealing with lawyers, the government, and the press. No



doubt there was resentment at work as well. The next time the Sea Org executives turned on Rinder, Rathbun exploded. He caught his friend in a headlock and slammed him to the ground, then sat astride him, pounding his head into the floor and shouting at him, nose to nose. Rinder managed to whisper, “Marty, I don’t want to play this game anymore.”

Suddenly, Rathbun froze. Words had been spoken that broke the spell. But it was only a moment.

One evening about eight o’clock, Miscavige arrived, with his wife and his Communicator, Shelly and Laurisse, flanking him as usual with tape recorders in their hands. He ordered that the conference table be taken away and chairs be brought in for everyone in the Hole—about seventy people at the time, including many of the most senior people in the Sea Org. He asked if anyone knew what “musical chairs” meant. In Scientology, it refers to frequent changes of post. About five hundred people had been moved off their jobs in the last five years, creating anarchy in the management structure. But that wasn’t the point he was trying to make. Finally, someone suggested that it was also a game. Miscavige had him explain the rules: Chairs are arranged in a circle and then, as the players march around them, one chair is removed. When the music stops, everybody grabs a seat. The one left standing is eliminated. Then the music starts again. Miscavige explained that in this game the last person to grab a chair would be the only one allowed to stay on the base; everyone else was to be “offloaded”—kicked out of the Sea Org—or sent away to the least desirable Scientology bases around the world. Those whose spouses were not in the Hole would be forced to divorce.

While Queen’s Greatest Hits played on a boom box, the church executives marched around and around, then fought for a seat when the music stopped. As the number of chairs diminished, the game got more physical. The executives shoved and punched each



other; clothes were torn; a chair was ripped apart. All this time, the biting lyrics of “Bohemian Rhapsody” floated over the saccharine melody:

Is this the real life?  
Is this just a fantasy?  
Caught in a landslide  
No escape from reality.

Rathbun, with his bad back, was eliminated fairly quickly. Rinder, De Vocht, Marc Headley—one by one, they found themselves standing alone, behind low cubicle walls, watching the surviving contestants desperately fighting to remain in the Hole rather than be sent off to God knows where. There was a clock over the door marking the hours that passed as the music played on and on then suddenly stopped and the riot began again. As people fell out of the game, COB had airline tickets for distant locations printed up for them at the base’s travel office. There were U-Haul trucks waiting outside to haul away their belongings. “Is it real to you now?” Miscavige teased. They were told that buses would be ready to leave at six in the morning. Many were in tears. “I don’t see anybody weeping for me,” Miscavige said. The utter powerlessness of everyone else in the room was made nakedly clear to them. The game continued until 4 a.m., when a woman named Lisa Schroer grabbed the final chair.

The next morning the whole event was forgotten. No one went anywhere.

In several legal declarations he has made over the years, Miscavige has protested, “I am the ecclesiastical leader of the religion, not the Church.” The distinction is important when the church is dragged into lawsuits or threatened with criminal



liability; Miscavige can point to a chart that assigns organizational responsibility to other departments, whereas the sole responsibility of the Religious Technology Center, which he heads, is to protect Scientology doctrine and literature. And yet, Miscavige freely consigned those other department heads to the Hole or sent them to RPF. During the period that the organizational chart was being constantly rearranged, the only reliable posting on the base was his, that of COB RTC; everyone else was constantly being uprooted and repotted in other temporary assignments. There is really only one person in charge of the Church of Scientology.

A few days after the musical chairs episode, Miscavige ordered everyone in the Hole to report to Golden Era Productions to stuff CDs into cases. At one point, he began sharply interrogating De Vocht, who was shaken and stuttered in response. According to De Vocht, Miscavige punched him in the face. He felt his head vibrate. He tried to turn away from the next blow, but Miscavige grabbed his neck and shoved him into the floor, pummeling and kicking him.<sup>7</sup> De Vocht had served Miscavige for years, and had even considered him a friend. He had dedicated his life to Scientology and had been in the Sea Org for nearly thirty years. He recalls thinking, “Now here I am, being beat up by the top dog in front of my peers.”

After the attack, Miscavige continued his speech. De Vocht was so humiliated that he couldn't bring himself to look at his companions. Finally, he managed a glance at them. Pie faces.

Rathbun was there, and at that moment he made a decision. As the other executives were being led back to the Hole, he slipped away and got his motorcycle and hid in the bushes. When a car finally approached, he raced through the open gate into the outside world.



- <sup>1</sup> The church denies that Cruise was videotaped, or that Miscavige watched such tapes, or used such information to manipulate anyone. Noriyuki Matsumaru, who worked in the RTC with Miscavige, confirms De Vocht's account.
- <sup>2</sup> Cruise, through his lawyer, denies this exchange and says he has no political ambition.
- <sup>3</sup> Spielberg's publicist says that the director doesn't recall the conversation.
- <sup>4</sup> Tom Cruise's lawyer says that the actor doesn't remember the incident or his being upset with Haggis.
- <sup>5</sup> As previously noted, the church denies all allegations of abuse by Miscavige.
- <sup>6</sup> The church denies that anyone in the Sea Org has ever been pressured to have an abortion.
- <sup>7</sup> The church denies that Miscavige has ever abused members of the church.



## TC and COB

Great fame also imposes a kind of cloister on those who join its ranks. Tom Cruise had been a movie star since he was twenty-one, with two popular movies in the same year, *The Outsiders* and *Risky Business*. By age twenty-five, he was the biggest star in Hollywood, on his way to becoming one of the most famous movie legends in history. At the same age, Miscavige had become the de facto leader of Scientology. Each of these men assumed extraordinary responsibilities when their peers were barely beginning their careers. Their youth and position set them apart. So it was natural that two such powerful, isolated men would see themselves mirrored in each other.

A number of Sea Org members who observed Cruise when he came to Gold Base remarked that he seemed liberated to be in an environment where no one hassled him, or took his photograph, or asked for autographs. There are cottages built for the use of other well-known Scientologists, such as John Travolta, Kirstie Alley, Edgar Winter, and Priscilla Presley, so the base can sometimes feel like a secret celebrity spa. Once, Miscavige had the entire Gold Base crew line up at the gate and salute Cruise when he arrived. Cruise must have felt self-conscious about this display, because it happened only once. People on the base have been directed not to speak to Cruise at all, unless spoken to. In this way, Cruise tastes the life that Miscavige has lived for decades, one of seclusion and deference, concentrated on spiritual advancement.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, after becoming associated with Cruise, the style of



Miscavige's life began to reflect that of a fantastically wealthy and leisured movie star. He normally awakens at noon, with a cup of coffee and a Camel cigarette. The coffee is fresh-ground Starbucks, preferably a Guatemala or Arabian Mocha Java, made with distilled water, to which he adds raw sugar and half-and-half. Then he takes breakfast, the first of his five meals.

According to Miscavige's former chef, Sinar Parman, the church leader was eating "three squares and a snack at night," until the late nineties. One day, while on a Delta flight from LA to Clearwater, Miscavige walked to the cabin from his seat in first class and showed some photos from a muscle magazine to Parman and his steward, who traveled with him. He told them he wanted to "get ripped and have six-pack abs." After the flight, Miscavige changed physical trainers and began taking bodybuilding supplements. He also adopted a strict diet that requires each meal to be at least forty percent protein and to contain no more than four hundred calories. Soon, he was looking like the men in the muscle magazines.

To maintain his physique, Miscavige's chefs have to enter each portion size into a computer, including the cream in his morning coffee. Miscavige often starts with an omelet of one whole egg and five egg whites. Two and a half hours later, lunch is provided. Two choices would be prepared daily, for both him and his wife—four meals altogether. Miscavige prefers pizza, soup, and submarine sandwiches. Throughout the day cigarettes, bottled water, and protein bars are stationed wherever he might be working. Dinner is a five-course meal, and once again, dual entrées are prepared for him to choose from. Miscavige's favorite foods include wild mushroom risotto, linguine in white clam sauce, and pâté de foie gras. Fresh fruit and vegetables are purchased from local markets or shipped in from overseas. Several times a week, a truck from Santa Monica Seafood brings Atlantic salmon, or live lobster, flown



in fresh from the East Coast or Canada. Corn-fed lamb arrives from New Zealand. When guests such as Tom Cruise come to dinner, the kitchen goes into extravagant bursts of invention, with ingredients sometimes flown in from different continents. Two hours after dinner, the first evening snack arrives, with lighter offerings, such as Italian white bean soup or clam chowder. After midnight, there is a final late-night snack—a selection of nonfat cheeses, an apple crisp, or blueberry crepes, often garnished with edible flowers. Shelly usually preferred a fruit platter. She would drink only almond milk, which was made on-site from organic almonds. She insisted that all the food be consistent with the diet recommended for their blood type (both Shelly and David are type O). Two full-time chefs work all day preparing these meals, with several full-time stewards to serve them.

According to Claire Headley, who oversaw the finances for the Religious Technology Center between 2000 and 2004, the food costs for David and Shelly and their guests would range between \$3,000 to as much as \$20,000 per week. At the end of the evening, Miscavige retires to his den and drinks Macallan Scotch and plays backgammon with members of his entourage, or listens to music on his \$150,000 stereo system (he loves Michael Jackson), or watches movies in his private screening room (his favorite films are Scarface and the Godfather trilogy). He usually turns in around three or four in the morning.

Miscavige enjoys shooting pool or playing video games in his lounge. He has a tanning bed, and a high-end gym that few people other than Cruise are permitted to use. Although he is short in stature, Miscavige exudes physical power. He favors tight-fitting T-shirts that show off his chiseled biceps. He collects guns, maintains at least six motorcycles, and has a number of automobiles, including an armor-plated GMC Safari van with bulletproof windows and satellite television, and a souped-up Saleen Mustang



that Cruise gave him to match his own. His uniforms and business suits are fashioned by Richard Lim, a Los Angeles tailor whose clients include Cruise, Will Smith, and Martin Sheen. Miscavige's shoes are custom-made in London by John Lobb, bootmaker to the royal family. His wardrobe fills an entire room. Two full-time stewards are responsible for his cleaning and laundry. Cruise admired the housecleaning so much—even Miscavige's lightbulbs are polished once a month—that the church leader sent a Sea Org team to Cruise's Telluride retreat to train the star's staff.

Until 2007, when he traveled, Miscavige would often rent Cruise's Gulfstream jet, but he has since upgraded to a roomier Boeing business jet, at a cost of thirty to fifty thousand dollars per trip. He brings along his personal hairdresser and chiropractor. He loves underwater photography, and when he returns from his annual trip on the Freewinds, he has the photography staff put the photos into slides so they can be appreciated by the entire Gold Base staff.

The contrast with the other Sea Org members is stark. They eat in a mess hall, which features a meat-and-potatoes diet and a salad bar, except for occasional extended periods of rice and beans for those who are being punished. The average cost per meal as of 2005 (according to Marc Headley, who participated in the financial planning each week) was about seventy-five cents a head—significantly less than what is spent per inmate in the California prison system. When members join the Sea Org, they are issued two sets of pants, two shirts, and a pair of shoes, which is their lifetime clothing allotment; anything else, they purchase themselves. Although the nominal pay for Sea Org members is fifty dollars a week, many are fined for various infractions, so it's not unusual to be paid as little as thirteen or fourteen dollars. Married couples at Gold Base share a two-bedroom apartment with two other couples, meaning that one pair sleeps on the couch. In any



case, few get more than five or six hours of sleep a night. There are lavish exercise facilities at the base—an Olympic pool, a golf course, basketball courts—but they are rarely used. Few are permitted to have access to computers. Every personal phone call is listened to; every letter is inspected. Bank records are opened and records kept of how much money people have. Cultural touchstones common to most Americans are often lost on Sea Org members at Gold Base. They may not know the name of the president of the United States or be able to tell the difference between the Republican and Democratic parties. It's not as if there is no access to outside information; there is a big-screen television in the dining hall, and people can listen to the radio or subscribe to newspapers and magazines; however, news from the outside world begins to lose its relevance when people are outside of the wider society for extended periods of time. Many Sea Org members have not left the base for a decade.

On April 30 of each year, Scientology staff from around the world are pressed to contribute to Miscavige's birthday present. One year, as birthday assessments were being passed around, few could contribute because they hadn't been paid for months. Finally, staffers got their back pay so that they could make their donations. Janela Webster, who worked directly under Miscavige for fifteen years, received \$325, out of which she paid \$150 for Miscavige's gift. Such presents include tailored suits and leather jackets, high-end cameras, diving equipment, Italian shoes, and a handmade titanium bicycle. One year Flag Service Org in Clearwater gave him a Vyrus 985 C3 4V, a motorcycle with a retail price of \$70,000.<sup>2</sup> Another division presented him with a BMW.

Miscavige keeps a number of dogs, including five beagles. He had blue vests made up for each of them, with four stripes on the shoulder epaulets, indicating the rank of Sea Org Captain. He insists that people salute the dogs as they parade by. The dogs have



a mini-treadmill where they work out. A full-time staff member feeds, walks, and trains the dogs, takes them to the veterinarian, and enters one of them, Jelly, into contests, where he has attained championship status. Another of Miscavige's favorites, a Dalmatian-pit bull mix named Buster, went on a rampage one day and killed ten peacocks on the property, then proudly laid them out for all to see. Buster has also attacked various members of the staff, sending one elderly woman to the emergency room and earning Buster his own Ethics folder. Miscavige eventually had the dog taken away to another Sea Org base, even though he believed that Buster had a nose for "out ethics" behavior. The relieved staff members joked that Buster had been sent to Dog RPF.

From an early age, Miscavige had taken control of his family. His father, Ron Senior, joined the Sea Org following a charge of attempted rape lodged against him in 1985. Former church members say that significant church resources were used to contain the scandal, and that David forced his father to join the Sea Org. Because David's mother, Loretta, refused to sign up for that, she and Ron agreed to divorce. She continued in Scientology, rising to the summit as an OT VIII. She worked as an accountant for the law firm of Greta Van Susteren, the television commentator, and her husband, John Coale, both Scientologists, who maintain a mansion on Clearwater Beach. Loretta was a heavy smoker who suffered from emphysema and obesity—scarcely the image of an Operating Thetan—but her self-deprecating, sometimes goofy sense of humor made her popular among the staff and upper-level Scientologists—"the court jester of the Scientology country club," as Rathbun called her. Loretta's regal position as the leader's mother allowed her to give rein to gossip stories about Dave's childhood, which she told in a thick Philly accent. Miscavige complained that his mother was trying to destroy him. He ordered Rathbun to run a security check on her, using the E-Meter. When Loretta realized



what he was up to, she burst out laughing.

Miscavige sent his personal trainer to help his mother get in shape, and he had church members monitoring her diet, but her chronic health problems overtook her. “She was sick for a long time,” her granddaughter, Jenna Miscavige Hill, recalled. “She was not happy with the turn the church took.” Sometimes Loretta would burst into tears. “I would try to help her the only way I knew how,” Hill said. “She was an amazing grandma.” (Loretta Miscavige died in 2005.)

THE LEVEL OF ABUSE at the Gold Base was increasing year by year as—unpoliced by outside forces—other senior executives began emulating their leader. Rinder, De Vocht, and Rathbun all admit to striking other staff members. Even some of the women became physically aggressive, slapping underlings when they didn’t perform up to standard. Debbie Cook, the former leader of Flag Base, says that although Miscavige never struck her, he ordered his Communicator to do so. Another time, she said, he told his Communicator to break Cook’s finger. She bent Cook’s finger but failed to actually break it.

Miscavige can be charming and kind, especially to Sea Org members who need emotional or medical assistance. He has a glittering smile and a commanding voice. And yet former Scientologists who were close to him recall that his constant profanity and bursts of unprovoked violence kept everyone off balance. Jefferson Hawkins, a former Sea Org executive who had worked with Paul Haggis on the rejected Dianetics campaign, says he was beaten by Miscavige on five occasions, the first time in 2002. He had just written an infomercial for the church. Miscavige summoned him to a meeting, where about forty members were seated on one side of a long conference table; Miscavige routinely



sits by himself on the other side. He began a tirade about the shortcomings of the infomercial. When Hawkins started to respond, Miscavige cut him short. “The only thing I want to hear from you is your crimes,” Miscavige said, meaning that Hawkins was to confess his subversive intentions. Then, without warning, Miscavige jumped on the table and launched himself at Hawkins, knocking him against a cubicle wall and battering him in the face. The two men fell to the floor, and their legs became entangled. “Let go of my legs!” Miscavige shouted.

Miscavige extricated himself and left the room, leaving Hawkins on the floor, shocked, bruised, disheveled, humiliated, and staring at the forty people who did nothing to support him. “Get up! Get up!” they told him. “Don’t make him wrong.”

Even if he had had access to a phone, Hawkins wouldn’t have called the police. If a Sea Org member were to seek outside help, he would be punished, either by being declared a Suppressive Person or by being sent off to do manual labor for months or years. Far more important, Hawkins believed, was the fact that his spiritual immortality was on the line. Scientology had made him aware of his eternal nature as he moved from life to life, erasing his fear of mortality. Without that, he would be doomed to dying over and over again, “in ignorance and darkness,” he said, “never knowing my true nature as a spirit.” Miscavige, he concluded, “holds the power of eternal life and death over you.”

The church provided an affidavit of a former Sea Org member, Yael Lustgarten, who stated that she was present at the meeting and that the attack by Miscavige never happened. She claims that Hawkins made a mess of his presentation—“He smelled of body odor, he was unshaven, his voice tone was very low and he could hardly be heard”—and he was merely instructed to shape up. On the other hand, Amy Scobee said she witnessed the attack—it was her cubicle the two men fell into—and after the altercation, she



recalled, “I gathered all the buttons from Jeff’s shirt and the change from his pockets and gave them back to him.”

Tommy Davis later testified that he had conducted an investigation of the charges of abuse at the base. He said that all of the abuse had been committed by Rinder, Rathbun, and De Vocht—none by Miscavige.

TOM DE VOCHT GREW UP in a little central Florida town called Fort Meade. When he was ten years old, in 1974, his cousin, Dicky Thompson, a keyboardist in the Steve Miller Band, came to visit, riding a Harley-Davidson motorcycle. That year the band had a number one song, “The Joker,” and Thompson rode into town with a glow of fame around him. “He had a weird stare,” De Vocht remembered. “He invited my sister to meet Steve Miller and John Travolta.” Within a year, most of De Vocht’s family had joined the Church of Scientology. In July 1977, thirteen-year-old Tom De Vocht signed the billion-year contract for the Sea Org.

De Vocht became one of Miscavige’s allies and moved up the bureaucratic ladder quickly. In 1986, he was appointed the Commanding Officer of the Commodore’s Messengers Org at Flag. In 2001, Miscavige called him, complaining, “Tom, I can’t get my building done.” The new headquarters for the Religious Technology Center at Gold Base, Building 50, was years behind schedule and well over budget. Miscavige directed De Vocht to come to Gold Base and oversee the construction. The first day he got there, De Vocht realized that “this building is going to be the end of me.”

Forty-seven million dollars—more than a thousand dollars per square foot—had previously been spent on the new center. The building had already been completed a couple of times, using the highest-grade materials—cold rolled steel, and anigre, a beautiful but extremely hard, pinkish African wood—only to have



components ripped out because they didn't meet Miscavige's standards. Miscavige's desk, also made of steel, was so heavy that De Vocht worried whether the structure would support it. He discovered that there were no actual architectural drawings for the building; there were only renderings of what it should look like. The stucco exterior walls were already cracked because the whole edifice was at a 1.25-inch tilt. The walls weren't actually connected to the floors. Even a minor earthquake (Gold Base was just west of the San Andreas Fault) might cause the whole building to collapse. De Vocht recommended that the building be torn down and rebuilt from scratch, but Miscavige rejected that idea.

The expense of essentially rebuilding a poorly constructed building from the inside was immense. When De Vocht had almost finished construction, having spent an additional \$60 million, Miscavige still had a list of complaints. He was also critical of the landscaping. Gold Base is in a desert, but Miscavige demanded that the building appear to be set in a forest.

One morning, De Vocht says, Miscavige and his wife were inspecting the large vault in the legal department of Building 50, when the leader stopped in his tracks and began rubbing his head. He turned pale. "Where did we put the gold bullion?" he asked his wife. For a full minute, Miscavige kept rubbing his head and asking about the gold, but then he snapped out of it and went on as if nothing had happened. De Vocht recalls that forty-five minutes later, Shelly Miscavige called him and asked him, "What are we going to do? He's losing it." She told him that Dave had gone "Type 3"—psychotic—because of all the Suppressive Persons at the base.<sup>3</sup>

While De Vocht was working on Building 50, he was forced to attend a séance with five hundred other Sea Org members on Gold Base. People were called out by name and asked, "What crimes have you committed against David Miscavige?" One after another, people approached the microphone and confessed to ways in which



they were suppressing the dissemination of Scientology or thinking taboo thoughts. De Vocht was disgusted by the orgy of self-abasement. One night, he simply took over the meeting and brought some semblance of order to it. That night, Shelly Miscavige asked him to be the Commanding Officer of the Commodore's Messengers Org, which essentially put him in charge of the entire base. "It's out of control," she pleaded, saying that her husband counted on him and had no one else to turn to.

In 2004, De Vocht finished reconstructing the 45,000-square-foot Building 50, which wound up costing \$70 million. "You're the biggest spender in the history of Scientology," Miscavige told him. "You should be shot."

EVEN THOUGH MEMBERSHIP in the church has been declining for years, according to polls and census figures, money continues to pour into Scientology coffers in fantastic sums. Donors are accorded higher status depending on the size of their gifts to the International Association of Scientologists—Patron Maximus for a \$25 million pledge, for instance. Nancy Cartwright, the voice of Bart Simpson, became a Patron Laureate for her \$10 million gift to the association in 2007. The IAS now holds more than \$1 billion, mostly in offshore accounts, according to former executives of the church. Scientology coursework alone can be very pricey—as much as \$400,000 to reach the level of OT VIII. That doesn't count the books and materials or the latest-model E-Meter, which is priced at \$4,650. Then there is the auditing, which ranges in price from \$5,000 to \$8,000 for a twelve-hour "intensive," depending on the location and the level of the auditor. Services sold in Clearwater alone amount to \$100 million a year.

Despite the frequent cost overruns on construction, Scientology undertook a worldwide building campaign, kicked off by



Miscavige's decision to use the occasion of 9/11 to issue a call for a massive expansion of the church. "Bluntly, we are the only people of Earth who can reverse the decline," he announced. "The way to do better is to get big."

In some cases, the building projects have become significant moneymakers for the church. Across the street from Scientology's Fort Harrison Hotel in Clearwater is the Super Power Building, intended to be a training facility to enhance the perceptions of upper-level thetans. The fund-raising kicked off with a \$1 million gift from the Feshbach brothers. Despite years-long construction delays and fines imposed by the City of Clearwater, the 380,000-square-foot Super Power Building has proven to be a bonanza for the church, which has taken in at least \$145 million in donations to complete the project—\$120 million more than it was projected to cost when first proposed, in 1993. The church explains that the plan has been enlarged from its original goals, which has created delays and additional expenses. Tom De Vocht, who worked on the construction for years, said that the building remained unfinished for so long because no one knew what super power was.

Under Miscavige's leadership, the church has aggressively launched a program called Ideal Orgs, which aim to replicate the grandeur of Hubbard's Saint Hill Manor. A number of the Ideal Orgs have been shuttered—including Seattle, Boston, and New Haven—because the local Scientology communities were unable to support them. Other notable churches and missions are now boarded up or unloaded—including one in Santa Monica that Paul and Deborah Haggis raised money to establish.

THE INTENSITY OF the pressure on Sea Org members to raise money for the church—while working for next to nothing—can be understood in part through the account of Daniel Montalvo. His



parents joined the Sea Org when he was five, and the very next year he signed his own billion-year contract. He says that he began working full-time in the organization when he was eleven and recalls that, along with other Sea Org members, including children, his days stretched from eight in the morning until eleven thirty at night. Part of his work was shoveling up asbestos that had been removed during the renovation of the Fort Harrison Hotel. He says no protective gear was provided, not even a mask. He rarely saw his parents. While he was at Flag Base in 2005, when he was fourteen, he guarded the door while Tom Cruise was in session. The sight of children working at a Sea Org facility would not have been unusual. They were separated from their parents and out of school. According to Florida child labor laws, minors who are fourteen and fifteen years old are prohibited from working during school hours, and may work only up to fifteen hours a week. Daniel said that he was allowed schooling only one day a week, on Saturday.

When Daniel was fifteen, he was assigned to work on the renovation of Scientology's publications building in Los Angeles, operating scissors lifts and other heavy equipment. According to California child labor laws, fifteen-year-old children are allowed to work only three hours per day outside of school, except on weekends—no more than eighteen hours per week total. Sixteen is the minimum age for children to work in any manufacturing establishment using power-driven hoisting apparatus, such as the scissors lift. Daniel graduated to work at the church's auditing complex nearby, called the American Saint Hill Organization; then from six in the evening until three in the morning he volunteered at Bridge Publications. He was paid thirty-six dollars a week.

Daniel's work at Bridge Publications was sufficiently impressive that he was posted full-time in the manufacturing division there the following year. The church had issued a new edition of Hubbard's



books and lectures called The Basics, which was being aggressively marketed to Scientologists. One of Daniel's jobs was to cut the "thumb notches" that mark the glossary and the appendix in these handsomely made books, like the notches one would find in an unabridged dictionary. A machine with a guillotine steel blade slices through the pages to produce the half-moon indentation. California law specifically forbids the operation of the machine by anyone under the age of eighteen. Daniel noted about twenty other minors working at the plant, all of them sleep deprived and working around heavy equipment. One night Daniel chopped off his right index finger on the notching machine. A security officer picked up his finger and put it in a plastic bag with ice, then took Daniel to the children's hospital in Hollywood. He was instructed to tell the admitting nurse that he had injured himself in a skateboarding accident. The doctors were unable to reattach his finger.

After that, Daniel was sent to the sales division of Bridge Publications. Sales had been declining since The Basics had first been published in 2007. The Basics included eighteen books and a number of Hubbard lectures on CD; the complete package cost \$6,500. Sea Orgs all over the world had call centers set up to sell them. In Los Angeles, there were hourly quotas to be met, and those who failed suffered various punishments, such as having water dumped on their head or being made to do push-ups or run up and down the stairs. There were security guards on every floor. A salesperson had to get a slip verifying that he had made his quota before he was permitted to go to bed.

Often it was simply impossible to make the quota legitimately, so people ran unauthorized credit cards. Members of the Sea Org sales force would break into the church's financial records and pull up the credit card information of public members. Members who had money on account at the church for future courses would see it



drained to pay for books they didn't order. Parishioners who balked at making contributions or buying unwanted materials were told they were in violation of church ethics, and their progress in Scientology was blocked or threatened.

Members who pledge more than they can afford can find themselves in a compromised situation. One Scientologist who was a bank teller says he was told to comply with a robbery in order to pay off his debt to the church; the robbers took four thousand dollars. In 2009, Nancy Cartwright's fiancé, Stephen E. Brackett, a contractor, had taken a substantial construction advance to renovate a restaurant. The company that insured the project later sued Cartwright, claiming that she and Brackett had diverted the money to the Church of Scientology. Brackett, an OT V, had been featured in a church ad for the Super Power Building, identified as a "key contributor." "Mankind needs your help," Brackett was quoted as saying in the ad. He later took his life by jumping off a bridge on Pacific Coast Highway near Big Sur.<sup>4</sup>

The biggest financial scandal involving church members was a Ponzi scheme operated by Reed Slatkin; he was one of the co-founders, with Paul Haggis's friend Sky Dayton, of EarthLink. Slatkin's massive fraud involved more than half a billion dollars in investments; much of the initial "profit" was returned to Scientology investors, such as Daniel and Myrna Jacobs, who earned nearly \$3 million on a \$760,500 "investment." According to Marty Rathbun, Slatkin's Scientology investors included Anne Archer and Fox News commentator Greta Van Susteren. Later investors were not so lucky. Slatkin was convicted of defrauding \$240 million; it is still not known how much of that money went directly to the church, although the court found that about \$50 million was funneled to the church indirectly by investors with massive gains. In 2006, groups affiliated with the Church of Scientology, including the Celebrity Centre, agreed to pay back



\$3.5 million.

IN JULY 2004 Miscavige hosted Tom Cruise's forty-second birthday party aboard the Scientology cruise ship Freewinds. The Golden Era Musicians, including Miscavige's father on trumpet, played songs from Cruise's movies as film clips flickered on the giant overhead screens installed especially for the occasion. Cruise himself danced and sang "Old Time Rock and Roll," reprising a famous scene in Risky Business, the movie that firmly established him as a star.

Occasionally, the Freewinds is used to confine those Sea Org members that the church considers most at risk for flight. Among the crew on the ship during Cruise's birthday party was Valeska Paris, a twenty-six-year-old Swiss woman. Paris had grown up in Scientology and joined the Sea Org when she was fourteen. Three years later, her stepfather, a self-made millionaire, committed suicide, leaving a diary in which he blamed the church for fleecing his fortune. When Valeska's mother denounced the church on French television, Valeska was isolated at the Clearwater base in order to keep her away from her mother. The next year, at the age of eighteen, she was sent to the Freewinds. She was told she would be on the ship for two weeks. She was held there against her will for twelve years. Shortly before Cruise arrived, Paris developed a cold sore, which caused Miscavige to consign her to a condition of Treason, so she wasn't allowed to go to the birthday party, but she later did wind up serving Cruise and his girlfriend at the time, the Spanish actress Penélope Cruz.

In October, Miscavige acknowledged Cruise's place in Scientology by awarding him the Freedom Medal of Valor. Miscavige called Cruise "the most dedicated Scientologist I know" before an audience of Sea Org members who had spent much of



their lives working for the church for a little more than seven dollars a day. Then he hung the diamond-encrusted platinum medallion around the star's neck.

"I think you know that I am there for you," Cruise said to the thrilled audience. "And I do care, so very, very, very much." He turned to an imposing portrait of Hubbard, standing beside a globe. "To LRH!" he said, with a crisp salute.

Lana Mitchell, the cook who had been accused of feeding Cruise the poisoned shrimp a few months before, had gotten out of Happy Valley, but she watched the ceremony while in RPF, along with some two hundred of her detained colleagues. About fifty of them were Sea Org executives who had been purged by Miscavige. They were being held in the Los Angeles complex on L. Ron Hubbard Way, in the massive blue former hospital where Spanky Taylor and so many others had been confined. Some had been in the organization for more than twenty years and had worked directly for Hubbard. They were completely cut off from the outside world—no television, radio, or even any music. As many as forty people were crammed into each of the former hospital rooms, with only one bathroom to share. Often there was not enough food to go around. Some of those confined had severe medical conditions, including Uwe Stuckenbrock, the former international security chief, who suffered from multiple sclerosis and had deteriorated to the point of being unable to speak. One of the jobs Mitchell was assigned on RPF was welding, but she had never done it before, and she burned her eyes because she wasn't wearing the protective glasses correctly. She got no medical attention at all.

Every effort was made to keep RPF'ers out of view. Windows were curtained so no one could see in or out. They traveled through tunnels and over rooftops when they needed to move about within the complex. There were no days off, although they were allowed to call their families on Christmas. Their sole



diversion was watching the big Scientology galas on television. After all, the elaborate sets for these events were constructed by the RPF'ers in Los Angeles or at Flag Base in Clearwater. To view the big Cruise event, they were all taken to the mess hall.

One of the penitents was Mark McKinstry, who had been National Sales Manager at Bridge Publications when the movie version of *Battlefield Earth*, starring John Travolta, came out in 2000. Hubbard's tale is about an alien race of "Psychlos," who have turned people into slaves—until a hero arises to liberate humanity. Travolta had worked for years to get the movie made, and wound up paying a significant portion out of his own pocket. It was at the peak of his career. "I told my manager, 'If we can't do the things now that we want to do, what good is the power?'" he remarked at the time. Miscavige had been deeply involved in the filming from the beginning. He would watch dailies of the film in Clearwater while he was overseeing the handling of the Lisa McPherson case. His critiques would then be typed up and sent to the Scientology representative who was always at Travolta's side. When the movie was completed, Miscavige called Travolta to congratulate him, saying that LRH would be proud. He predicted it was going to be a blockbuster.

McKinstry had been working for a year promoting the movie edition of the book. He traveled across the country with Travolta to push the book in bookstores, malls, and Walmarts. About 750,000 copies were sold. Like many others who have spent time with Travolta, McKinstry came to like him immensely. The actor was devoting a substantial amount of his own time and energy to making the book a success. But when the movie came out, it was a critical and box-office catastrophe. Even at the premiere, Sea Org members had to be bused in to Mann's Chinese Theatre on Hollywood Boulevard to fill the empty seats for as many as three shows a day. For some of them, it was the first movie they had



seen in years. “ ‘Battlefield Earth’ may well turn out to be the worst movie of this century,” the New York Times critic observed, in what proved to be a typical review. There were false accusations that the film contained subliminal messages promoting Scientology. Travolta’s career went into a lengthy dark period. Cruise later complained to Miscavige, saying that the movie was terrible for the church’s public image.<sup>5</sup> Miscavige responded that it would never have been made if he’d had anything to do with it.

McKinstry was dismayed when he went to a screening of the movie and watched people walking out or booing. His wife could see that he was upset and asked what was wrong. “Why didn’t anyone watch this movie before it was released?” he said. She reported to the church what he had said, and he was ordered to RPF.

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SHORTLY BEFORE HE RECEIVED Scientology’s top award, Cruise ended his three-year relationship with Penélope Cruz. Shelly Miscavige had been supervising her auditing and helping her through the Purification Rundown. But, like Nicole, Penélope was suspect in the eyes of the church’s leader. She was an independent-minded person and continued to meditate and identify herself as a Buddhist.

Cruise traveled with a Scientology delegation to open a magnificent new church in Madrid, where he read his speech to the crowd in halting Spanish. Before the opening, however, he was sitting with his sister Lee Anne, who had become his publicist. Mike Rinder, who was in the room, remembers that Cruise heatedly complained to his sister that no one had been able to find him a new girlfriend. Miscavige walked in, Rinder says, and Cruise made the same complaint to him.<sup>6</sup>

Miscavige took the hint. “I want you to look for the prettiest



women in the church,” Tom De Vocht remembers Miscavige saying. “Get their names and phone numbers.” Miscavige then assigned Greg Wilhere and Tommy Davis to audition all the young actresses who were in Scientology—about a hundred, according to Marc Headley, who observed some of the videos. Shelly Miscavige, the leader’s wife, oversaw the project personally. Wilhere and Davis immediately went to work. The women weren’t told why they were being interviewed, but they were asked about their opinions of Cruise and where they were on the Bridge. Wilhere, who was actually in the Hole at the time, was taken out of confinement, given a BlackBerry and five thousand dollars to buy civilian clothes at a Saks Fifth Avenue outlet, then sent to New York and Los Angeles to videotape the interviews. Rinder noticed that when Cruise arrived at the Freedom Medal of Valor ceremony a month later, he was accompanied by a raven-haired young actress and model, Yolanda Pecoraro. She was born into Scientology and had completed a number of courses at the Celebrity Centre and on the Freewinds, but she was only nineteen years old. Cruise was forty-two at the time.

The Scientology search team came up with another aspiring actress, Nazanin Boniadi, twenty-five years old, who had been born in Iran and raised in London. Naz was well educated and beautiful in the way that Cruise was inclined to respond to—dark and slender, with large eyes and a flashing smile. She had studied pre-med at the University of California at Irvine before deciding to try her luck as an actress. More important for the purposes of the match, however, was the fact that Boniadi was an OT V. Her mother was also a Scientologist.

In early November 2004, Naz was informed that she had been selected for a special program that was critical to the future of the church, but it was so secret she wouldn’t be allowed to tell anyone, even her mother. Naz was moved immediately into the Celebrity



Centre, where she spent a month going through security checks and special auditing programs. She hoped the project had something to do with human rights, which was her special interest, but all she was told was that her participation would end bigotry against Scientology.

At one point during the intensive auditing and security checks, Wilhere informed her that she would have to break up with her longtime boyfriend in order for the project to proceed. She refused. She couldn't understand why her boyfriend posed any kind of problem; indeed, she had personally introduced him to Scientology. Wilhere persisted, asking what it would take for her to break off the romance. Flustered, she responded that she would break up if she knew he had been cheating on her. According to Naz's friends, the very next day, Wilhere brought in her boyfriend's confidential auditing files and showed her several instances of his infidelities, which had been circled in red. Naz felt betrayed, but also guilty, because Wilhere blamed her for failing to know and report her boyfriend's ethical lapses herself; after all, she had audited him on several occasions. Obviously, she had missed his "withhold." She confronted her boyfriend and he confessed. That was the end of their relationship.<sup>7</sup>

Another time, Naz was asked what her "ideal scene for 2-D"—in other words, her dream date—would be. It was eating sushi and going ice-skating. But she wondered why that was important.

One of her assignments was to study a bulletin of Hubbard's titled "The Responsibilities of Leaders." It is Hubbard's deconstruction of the lives of the nineteenth-century South American military leader Simón Bolívar and his ferociously protective mistress, a socialite named Manuela Sáenz. Bolívar, Hubbard writes, "was a military commander without peer in history. Why he would fail and die an exile to be later deified is thus of great interest. What mistakes did he make?" Sáenz, his



consort, “was a brilliant, beautiful and able woman. She was loyal, devoted, quite comparable to Bolívar, far above the cut of average humanoids. Why then did she live a vilified outcast, receive such violent social rejection and die of poverty and remain unknown to history? What mistakes did she make?”

Hubbard’s analysis was that Bolívar knew how to do only one thing brilliantly—to lead men in battle—and therefore he tended to resort to military solutions when diplomacy or politics would better serve. “He was too good at this one thing,” Hubbard observes. “So he never looked to any other skill and he never even dreamed there was any other way.” Bolívar failed to use his immense authority to reward his friends and punish his enemies; thus his friends deserted him and his enemies grew stronger. Craving glory and the love of his people, Bolívar disdained the bloody intrigues that might have kept him in power. “He never began to recognize a suppressive and never considered anyone needed killing except on a battlefield,” Hubbard coldly sums up. “His addiction to the most unstable drug in history—fame—killed Bolívar.”

Manuela Sáenz might have saved him. She had qualities that he lacked, but she, too, made mistakes. For all her cleverness, she never contrived to make Bolívar marry her, which would have given her the standing that she badly needed. “She was utterly devoted, completely brilliant and utterly incapable of bringing off an action of any final kind,” Hubbard notes. “She violated the power formula in not realizing that she had power.” She should have taken on the portfolio of Bolívar’s secret police chief (as Mary Sue did for Hubbard). “She was not ruthless enough to make up for his lack of ruthlessness and not provident enough to make up for his lack of providence,” Hubbard writes. “She was an actress for the theater alone.”

In Hubbard’s view, the moral of Bolívar and Sáenz’s tragedy is



that those with power must use it. Someone close to power, like Manuela, has to dedicate herself to enlarging the strength of her partner. “Real powers are developed by tight conspiracies of this kind,” Hubbard writes. If Manuela had been willing to support Bolívar completely, Hubbard concludes, she would have been a truly historic figure, rather than being “unknown even in the archives of her country as the heroine she was.”

Nazanin Boniadi was obviously being groomed for leadership. Why else would she be reading about Bolívar and Sáenz? But what lesson was she supposed to draw? She was puzzled by the demands the church was placing on her, which had little to do with human rights. Along with the security checks and the coursework, Naz was told to have her braces taken off and was given very expensive beauty treatments. Wilhere informed her that the “director” of the special project had decided that her hair had too much red in it, so a stylist to the stars came to the Celebrity Centre to darken and highlight her hair. Then came the shopping spree. Wilhere took Naz to Rodeo Drive and spent twenty thousand dollars for her new wardrobe.

Finally, Naz and Wilhere flew to New York, first class. She guessed that the mission would finally be revealed to her. They stopped at the New York Org, ostensibly on routine business, but there they happened to run into Tom Cruise. Tommy Davis was with him. Although it all seemed like a happy coincidence, Naz was a little flustered. Not only was Cruise the biggest star in the world, he had also just been accorded the highest honor in Scientology. She said to him, “Very well done, sir.” (Later she was corrected for saying that, because you don’t commend your senior.)

Cruise was charming. He said that he and Davis were headed over to the Empire State Building and then to Nobu for some sushi—why didn’t they join them? Afterward, they all went skating at Rockefeller Center, which was closed to the public while they were



on the rink. It was beginning to seem a little too perfect. She spent that first night with Cruise in the Trump Tower, where he had taken an entire floor for his entourage.

Cruise invited Naz to hang out on the set of *War of the Worlds*, which was shooting in Athens, New York, the next morning. At the end of the day, Davis accompanied her back to the city. In the limo, he handed Naz a non-disclosure agreement. There was no lawyer present, and she wasn't given a copy of what she signed. He informed her that the "mission" was now off the table. This—the relationship with Cruise—was far more important. Davis warned that if she did anything to upset Cruise he would personally destroy her.

Naz wasn't resistant. She wanted to help the world, and she had faith that Scientology could do that. Cruise was dazzling. Scientology was deeply important to both of them. It was obviously meant to be, so why question it?

According to several knowledgeable sources, within a few weeks Naz moved into Cruise's house. Davis and Jessica Feshbach were constantly tutoring her in how to behave toward the star. One evening, she and Cruise had dinner with several Scientologists, including Tommy Davis and Cruise's niece, Lauren Haigney, who was in the Sea Org and was posted to Gold Base. She had been Katy Haggis's best friend all through their childhood. They were at the Delphian School together. At the dinner, Lauren talked about her friendship with Katy, and how she had decided to break off their relationship when Katy said she was a lesbian. Naz was shocked, not just by the comment but by the fact that everyone agreed with her decision.<sup>8</sup>

In December, Cruise took Naz to his vacation house in Telluride, where they were joined by David and Shelly Miscavige. While they were at Cruise's retreat, David and Shelly watched a screener of *Million Dollar Baby*. Afterward, Miscavige said it had been difficult



to sit through. He complained about what a poor example of a Scientologist Haggis was, and said that he needed to get back on the Bridge and stop making such awful, low-tone films. Cruise agreed. “He needs to get his ethics in,” he remarked.

Naz was having an awful menstrual period, and she wanted to beg off the festive dinner they had planned, but she knew she was obliged to play the hostess. Still, she felt miserable and her mind was foggy. A couple of times, Miscavige addressed comments to her, and she couldn’t quite understand what he said. Miscavige speaks in a rapid-fire Philly brogue, and Naz had to ask him to repeat himself more than once. The next day, both Davis and Cruise dressed her down for disrespecting the church leader—specifically, for “insulting his TR 1.” In Scientology lingo, that refers to the basic Training Routine about communicating with another person. Naz had embarrassed Miscavige because he wasn’t able to get his message across. Davis said that her conduct was inexcusable. If she was in pain, she should have taken a Tylenol.

With his characteristic intensity, Cruise himself later explained the seriousness of the situation: “You don’t get it. It goes like this.” He raised his hand over his head. “First, there’s LRH.” He moved his hand down a few inches. “Then, there is COB.” Bringing his hand down to his own eye level, he said, “Then there’s me.”

Two weeks later, Jessica Feshbach told Naz to pack her things. Cruise was too busy to say good-bye. Naz’s last glimpse was of him working out in his home gym.

Davis later explained to her that Cruise had simply changed his mind about the relationship, deciding that he needed someone with more power. But the star was willing to make amends by paying for a package that would allow her to attain OT VII. Continuing up the Bridge would help her deal with her grief and loss, Davis assured her.

In February 2005, Naz went to Clearwater to take the courses. At



first, she was treated like a VIP, but soon one of her friends noticed dramatic changes in her—she was weeping all the time. Naz confided that she had just gone through a wrenching breakup with Tom Cruise. The shocked friend immediately reported her to Ethics. Naz was assigned a condition of Treason and ordered to do reparations for the damages she had done to the group by revealing her relationship with Cruise. She was made to dig ditches and scrub public toilets with a toothbrush. Finally, in June, she worked her way back into good standing with the church, but she was ordered to stay away from the Celebrity Centre. Davis advised her to go live in some far corner of the world and never utter another word about Tom Cruise.<sup>9</sup>

The search for a new mate for the star now went beyond Scientologists. Cruise briefly courted the Colombian actress Sofía Vergara, whom he met at a pre-Oscar party hosted by Will and Jada Pinkett Smith, but that relationship dissolved when Vergara refused to become a Scientologist. The religion was a crucial factor, both for Cruise and for the church. Cruise was particularly interested in Jennifer Garner. Other actresses were invited to the Celebrity Centre to audition for what they believed was a role in the *Mission: Impossible* series. The names included Kate Bosworth, Jessica Alba, Lindsay Lohan, Scarlett Johansson—and Katie Holmes.

Holmes was an ingenue with almond-shaped brown eyes, who described herself as a twenty-six-year-old virgin. She had been a top student at an all-girls Catholic high school in Toledo, Ohio, but like Tommy Davis, she had dropped out of Columbia University after a single semester. Soon she was starring on the teenage soap opera *Dawson's Creek* and had a modest film career in coquettish roles. Church researchers discovered an interview she had given to *Seventeen* in October 2004. "I think every young girl dreams about [her wedding]," Holmes told the magazine. "I used to think I was



going to marry Tom Cruise.” She had developed a crush on the actor when he appeared in Risky Business. At the time, she was four years old.

Katie and Tom met in April 2005. “I was in love from the moment that I shook his hand for the first time,” she later told talk-show host Jay Leno. Cruise is famous for his ardent courtship—flowers, jewelry, and imaginative dates. He took Katie on a nighttime helicopter ride over Los Angeles, with take-out sushi. Within a little more than two weeks, she had moved into Cruise’s Beverly Hills mansion, fired her manager and agent and replaced them with his representatives, and had begun to be accompanied by Jessica Feshbach, who was explained in press interviews as being her “best friend.”

In May, Cruise appeared on The Oprah Winfrey Show. The audience, nearly all women, were in a near-hysterical state of anticipation even before Cruise came out on the stage, so his behavior has to be seen against a backdrop of a highly titillated screaming mass, to which he responded like a surfer catching a massive wave. He pumped his fist in the air and knelt on the floor. “Something’s happened to you!” Winfrey exclaimed.

“I’m in love!” he explained.

“We’ve never seen you behave like this before!”

“I know!” Cruise said, jumping backward onto her couch. Then he grabbed Winfrey’s hands and began wrestling with her. “You’re gone!” she kept saying. “You’re gone!” It was a scene of complete delirium.

Cruise’s spectacular and highly public romance was overshadowing the promotion for War of the Worlds, the movie he had just made with Spielberg, which would be released the following month. A few weeks after the Winfrey show, Cruise did an interview with Today show host Matt Lauer as Holmes sat nearby. The questions were friendly, and Cruise seemed happy and



relaxed until Lauer mentioned that Holmes had agreed to take up Scientology. “At this stage in your life, could you be with someone who doesn’t have an interest?” Lauer asked.

“You know, Scientology is something that you don’t understand,” Cruise responded. “It’s like, you could be a Christian and be a Scientologist, okay.”

“So, it doesn’t replace religion,” Lauer offered.

“It is a religion, because it’s dealing with the spirit. You as a spiritual being.”

Lauer then asked about a comment that Cruise had recently made about actress Brooke Shields, who had written that antidepressants had helped her get through her postpartum depression. “I’ve never agreed with psychiatry—ever!” Cruise said. He was dressed in black, his muscular arms on display; he had a stubble beard and his hair was draped in bangs across his forehead. He radiated an athletic intensity and a barely contained fury. “As far as the Brooke Shields thing, look, you’ve got to understand, I really care about Brooke Shields. I think, here’s a wonderful and talented woman. And I want to see her do well. And I know that psychiatry is a pseudo-science.”

“But, Tom, if she said that this particular thing helped her feel better, whether it was the antidepressants or going to a counselor or psychiatrist, isn’t that enough?”

“Matt, you have to understand this,” Cruise said, glowering. “Here we are today, where I talk out against drugs and psychiatric abuses of electric-shocking people—okay, against their will—of drugging children with them not knowing the effect of these drugs. Do you know what Adderall is? Do you know Ritalin? Do you know now that Ritalin is a street drug? Do you understand that?”

“The difference is—”

“No, no, Matt.”

“This wasn’t against her will, though.”



“Matt, Matt, Matt, Matt.”

“But this wasn’t against her will.”

“Matt, I’m asking you a question.”

“I understand there’s abuse of all these things.”

“No, you see, here’s the problem,” Cruise said. “You don’t know the history of psychiatry. I do.”

Lauer was taken aback by Cruise’s aggressiveness, but he pressed on. “Do you examine the possibility that these things do work for some people? That yes, there are abuses, and yes, maybe they’ve gone too far in some areas. Maybe there are too many kids on Ritalin. Maybe electric shock—”

“Too many kids on Ritalin?” Cruise said, shaking his head. “Matt.”

“Aren’t there examples where it works?”

“Matt, Matt, Matt, you don’t even—you’re glib. You don’t even know what Ritalin is.” He said there were ways that Shields could solve her depression—he mentioned diet and exercise—other than drugs. “And there are ways of doing it without that, so that we don’t end up in a brave new world. The thing that I’m saying about Brooke is that there’s misinformation, okay. And she doesn’t understand the history of psychiatry. She doesn’t understand in the same way that you don’t understand it, Matt.”

SCIENTOLOGY’S HISTORY OF psychiatry holds it responsible for many of the ills that have affected humanity—war, racism, ethnic cleansing, terrorism—all in the pursuit of social control and profit. The church has opened an exhibit, “Psychiatry: An Industry of Death,” on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood. It describes the often grisly and benighted practices that have characterized the evolution of the profession, including madhouses, lobotomies, electroshock therapy, and the proliferation of psychiatric drugs to treat spurious



diagnoses. Scientology views this history as a long march by psychiatrists to manipulate human behavior and institute world government.

Although it's not included in the exhibit, Hubbard's chronology of psychiatry actually begins "five billion years ago" with the development of a particular technique that was developed "in the Maw Confederation of the Sixty-third Galaxy":

Take a sheet of glass and put it in front of the preclear—clear, very clear glass—which is supercooled, preferably about a –100 centigrade. You got that? Supercooled, you know? And then put the preclear right in front of this supercooled sheet of glass and suddenly shove his face into the glass....

Takes about twenty seconds, then, to accomplish a total brainwash of a case.

Now, if you wish to play God, as the whole-track psychiatrist did at that time, all you have to say at this time is, of course, "Go to Earth and be president," or something like that, you know? And a thetan, being properly brainwashed now, will take off, and that's that.

Hubbard also blamed psychiatrists, allied with the tyrant Xenu, for carrying out genocide in the Galactic Confederacy seventy-five million years ago. There are obvious parallels in this legend with the Nazi regime, which used doctors, including psychiatrists, to carry out the extermination of the mentally ill, along with homosexuals, Gypsies, and Jews; and also by the Soviet government, which employed psychiatrists to diagnose political dissidents and lock them away. Hubbard lived through these shameful events, and they no doubt colored his imagination.

After Hubbard's death, Miscavige continued the campaign. In 1995, he told the International Association of Scientologists that the church's goals for the new millennium were to "place Scientology at the absolute center of society" and to "eliminate



psychiatry in all its forms.” The Citizens Commission on Human Rights, a lobby group created by the Church of Scientology that runs the psychiatry museum, maintains that no mental diseases have ever been proven to exist. In this view, psychiatrists have been responsible for the Holocaust, apartheid, and even 9/11. The commission is not above bending the truth to make its point. The president of CCHR, Dave Figueroa, asserts that Osama bin Laden’s chief deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri, was a psychiatrist who took control of bin Laden’s “thought patterns.” “Whatever type of drugs that Zawahiri used to make that change in bin Laden, we don’t know,” Figueroa explained. “We know there was a real change in that guy’s attitude.” This view is reiterated in the terrorism portion of the museum. (In fact, Zawahiri is a general surgeon, not a psychiatrist.)<sup>10</sup>

CCHR’s main effort has been an international campaign against the use of psychiatric drugs, especially for children. The surgeon general of the United States issued a report in 2001 claiming that more than twenty percent of children ages nine to seventeen had a diagnosable mental or addictive disorder, and that four million American children suffered from major mental illness. There is obviously an immense market for medications to treat such disorders. About ten percent of Americans over the age of six are on antidepressants, and antipsychotic drugs are the top-selling category of drugs in the country. They have become a plague on the schoolgrounds of America, with indiscriminate prescriptions creating a new culture of drug dependency—one that the pharmaceutical industry and the medical profession bear some responsibility for.

Haggis has been a substantial supporter of the CCHR. As a boy, he says, he spent most of his days staring out the window, daydreaming—a candidate for an attention deficit disorder diagnosis. “I identified with the oddballs and the misfits,” he said.



“Those who conform have very little chance of making a difference in life.” He was sure that if his parents had medicated him, he might never have become a writer. He hosted fund-raisers for CCHR in his home. “I simply believe that psychiatric drugs are over-prescribed, especially to children,” he said. “I think that is a crime.”

Scientologists have been seeking ways of criminalizing psychiatric remedies. In the same period that Cruise was chastising Brooke Shields for taking antidepressants, Kirstie Alley and Kelly Preston were testifying before state lawmakers in Florida, who passed a bill, written in part by Scientologists, that would hold schoolteachers criminally liable for suggesting to parents that their children might be suffering from a mental health condition, such as attention deficit disorder. Governor Jeb Bush vetoed the bill. Governor Jon Huntsman did the same in Utah. Similar bills have been pushed by the CCHR in other states. In her Florida testimony, Kirstie Alley held up photographs of children who had committed suicide after taking psychotropic drugs. “None of these children were psychotic before they took these drugs,” she asserted, sobbing so hard she could barely speak. “None of these children were suicidal before they took these drugs.”

Some drug makers have covered up studies that indicate an increased danger of suicidal or violent thoughts caused by psychotropic medicines. Eli Lilly, for instance, suppressed data showing that patients who were taking the popular drug Prozac—the only antidepressant certified as safe for children—were twelve times more likely to attempt suicide than patients taking similar medications. Antidepressants have been implicated in a number of schoolyard shootings, such as the 1999 Columbine High School massacre, where two students killed twelve of their classmates and a teacher. One of the killers was taking Luvox at the time. Adderall—one of the drugs cited by Cruise—is an amphetamine often



prescribed for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder; it sometimes causes increased aggression in children and adolescents. Ritalin, the most common drug prescribed for ADHD, is similar to cocaine in its potential for addiction. According to The Primary Care Companion to the Journal of Clinical Psychiatry, a person using Ritalin, Adderall, or other cocaine-like drugs “can experience nervousness, restlessness, agitation, suspiciousness, paranoia, hallucinations and delusions, impaired cognitive functions, delirium, violence, suicide, and homicide.”

But people who are taking antidepressants, antipsychotics, and mood-stabilizing drugs are already at a higher risk for suicide or violent behavior. One of the dangers of prescribing an antidepressant is that it may give the patient the stimulus he or she needs to act on suicidal impulses that are already present. Sudden withdrawal from antidepressants can prompt suicidal thoughts as well. Several studies have found that the risk of suicide was just as great for those who don't receive antidepressants as for those who do; over time, however, patients taking antidepressants are less likely to kill themselves. Such medications now come with warnings about increased suicidal behavior. And yet, one study noted the steady decline of overall suicide rates in the United States since fluoxetine (Prozac) was introduced in the American market. The authors estimated that the drug was responsible for saving 33,600 lives between 1988 and 2002.

There are numerous examples of Scientologists who have considered or actually committed suicide, or engaged in violence, who might have been helped if they had taken psychotropic medicines. In Buffalo, New York, on March 13, 2003 (L. Ron Hubbard's birthday), twenty-eight-year-old Jeremy Perkins stabbed his mother seventy-seven times. He was a schizophrenic with a history of violence and hallucinations, who had rejected psychiatric treatment because he was a Scientologist. Hana Eltringham, who



had been Hubbard's chief deputy, believes that Scientology itself caused her own shattered mental state. For years after attaining OT III, Eltringham had frequent thoughts of suicide. The unremitting migraines and voices in her head made her despair. Several times, she came close to jumping off the top floor of the church's headquarters in Clearwater, but restrained herself because she was worried that it would bring disgrace upon the church and Hubbard's teachings. It was only when she left the church and began taking Prozac that her headaches and her suicidal thoughts went away. "It has changed my life," she claimed. Her friend Mary Florence Barnett, Shelly Miscavige's mother, had similar symptoms—constant headaches and suicidal thoughts. She confided to Eltringham that she wanted to kill herself in order to stop the suppressive body thetans from taking over her mind. Barnett eventually went outside the official church to receive Scientology counseling, a heretical practice known in Scientology as squirreling. (The church denies that Barnett became involved with dissident Scientologists, but if she had, that would have placed David and Shelly Miscavige in a compromised position with the church. They would have been Potential Trouble Sources if they failed to disconnect from her.) On September 8, 1985, Barnett's body was found. She had been shot three times in the chest and once through the temple with a rifle. Both of her wrists were slashed. She left two suicide notes. The Los Angeles County Medical Examiner ruled her death a suicide.

In 2007, Kyle Brennan, twenty years old, who was not a Scientologist, went to stay with his father, a member of the church, in Clearwater. Brennan was taking Lexapro, an antidepressant heavily promoted by its manufacturer, Forest Laboratories. He was also under the care of a psychiatrist. According to court records, Brennan's father, Thomas, was ordered to "handle" his son. Thomas Brennan's auditor was Denise Miscavige Gentile, David Miscavige's



twin sister. She spoke on the phone to Kyle's mother, who was not a Scientologist, and urged her to enroll her son in Narconon, the church's drug-treatment program. His mother refused, pointing out that the program costs approximately \$25,000; moreover, Kyle was not a drug addict. She sued, charging that church officials had ordered Thomas Brennan to lock his son's Lexapro in the trunk of his car. Days after that, Kyle shot himself to death with a .357 Magnum that his father kept in his bedside table. (The suit was dismissed for lack of evidence.)

The long history of humanity's inadequate attempts to deal with depression, and the manifold ways in which insanity expresses itself, have never yielded a clear path. Tragedies such as the suicide of Kyle Brennan demonstrate the danger of dogmatic interpretations of psychiatry, such as those offered by Tom Cruise and other Scientology celebrities on the subject. The American Psychiatric Association felt so threatened by Cruise's statements on the Today show that the president of the organization issued a statement affirming that mental illnesses are real medical conditions. "It is irresponsible for Mr. Cruise to use his movie publicity tour to promote his own ideological views and deter people with mental illness from getting the care they need," said Steven S. Sharfstein, the president of the APA. But at the 2005 annual meeting of the International Association of Scientologists, Mike Rinder, who had been let out of the Hole for the occasion, credited Cruise with persuading the Food and Drug Administration to post suicide warnings on the labels of two psychiatric drugs within days of his interview with Lauer.

"If someone wants to get off drugs, I can help them," Cruise told the German magazine Der Spiegel, in April 2005. "I myself have helped hundreds of people get off drugs."



HAGGIS HAD SENT a rough cut of his movie *Crash* to the Toronto Film Festival, an important venue for independent films that are looking for distribution. In September 2004, the movie met its first audience at the Elgin Theatre, an elegant old vaudeville house downtown, not far from the spot where Paul sold tickets at the soft-porn theater his professor used to run.

As he watched the movie, Haggis was appalled. Everything that was wrong was glaringly apparent on the huge screen. He sat glumly waiting for it to end, calculating what could be salvaged. So when the audience rose to its feet at the end, cheering, Haggis couldn't believe what was happening. Lion's Gate Films bought *Crash* for \$3.5 million and scheduled it for release the following spring.

*Crash* opened quietly in April 2005. There were no billboards or bus signs, which were already touting the arrival of *War of the Worlds* in June. The reviews for *Crash* were passionate but polarized. Roger Ebert gave it four stars, calling it "a movie of intense fascination." A. O. Scott, who reviewed it for *The New York Times*, was less infatuated. It was a "frustrating movie," he wrote, "full of heart and devoid of life; crudely manipulative when it tries hardest to be subtle; and profoundly complacent in spite of its intention to unsettle and disturb." There was no actual premiere, just a screening at the Academy Theater on Wilshire Boulevard, and no grand party afterward. Haggis and his family went out to dinner.

Despite the conflicting reviews and limited distribution, a groundswell was building for the movie, driven entirely by audiences who were caught up in a national conversation over race and class that the movie prompted. It would go on to earn nearly \$100 million in international sales. *Million Dollar Baby* had just won the Academy Award for Best Picture that February. Haggis was writing a James Bond movie, *Casino Royale*, in addition to the



Eastwood picture *Flags of Our Fathers*. He was flying.

Tom Cruise's career was headed in the opposite direction. Haggis had seen him at the Vanity Fair Oscar party. Cruise and Tommy Davis arrived on Ducati motorcycles, wearing black jackets, and were let in the back door of Morton's Steakhouse in Beverly Hills. They said hello to Haggis, but nothing more. Polls showed that Cruise was still ranked as the most powerful actor in Hollywood, and even the most powerful celebrity in the world, but he was also ranked number one as the celebrity that people would least like to have as their best friend.

When Cruise returned to Gold Base, Miscavige showed off his Harley-Davidson V-rod motorcycle, which had been custom-painted a candy-apple red over a brushed nickel surface. Miscavige's brother-in-law, John Brousseau, known for his elegant craftsmanship, had done the work. In addition to overseeing the renovation of the Freewinds, Brousseau had installed bars on the doors of the Hole shortly after Rathbun escaped.

According to Brousseau, "Cruise was drooling" over the motorcycle. "God, could you paint my bike like that?" he asked. Brousseau looked at Miscavige, who nodded. Cruise brought in two motorcycles to be painted, a Triumph Rocket III and a Honda Rune. Spielberg had given him the Honda after the filming of *War of the Worlds*; it had already been custom-painted by the set designer. Brousseau had to take each motorcycle apart completely and nickel-plate all the parts before painting them.<sup>11</sup> Cruise drove the newly painted Rune, with Katie on the back, to the fans' screening of his movie at Grauman's Chinese Theatre in June.





Tom Cruise and David Miscavige at the Church of Scientology opening in central Madrid, 2004

After that, Brousseau was regularly assigned to work on special projects for Cruise. Shelly Miscavige had drafted Brousseau and seven other Sea Org members, along with many of Cruise's employees at Odin Productions, to work for more than two weeks rehabilitating Cruise's leased nine-bedroom mansion on Alpine Drive in Beverly Hills—painting, fixing the roof, doing cabinet



work, stretching the carpet, rewiring, pressure-washing the tennis court, weeding and planting, repairing the irrigation system, and even reorganizing the clothes in the closets. In the last week, Brousseau says, he had at least a hundred contractors under his direction in order to get the house ready for Cruise.

Brousseau and a Sea Org executive, Steve Marlowe, also oversaw the renovations on a Blue Bird bus, like Hubbard's, that Cruise had purchased. Later, Cruise bought another bus, which he called The Silver Screen. Brousseau spent three months commuting to the Marathon Coach factory in Coburg, Oregon, to oversee the retrofitting of the forty-foot vehicle into an elaborate motor home. Brousseau estimates that the redesign cost about \$1.5 million, but that doesn't include his labor or that of Sea Org members in the Golden Era prop department, who manufactured the furniture, countertops, and cabinetry. In 2006, Brousseau also customized a limousine for the star, using the body of a Ford Excursion that he says Cruise acquired using the Scientology fleet discount. Katie was pregnant and wanted a new vehicle with a baby seat. Miscavige had wanted to impress the couple by renovating the Excursion at a local custom shop, but the job was poorly done. Miscavige purchased another Excursion for Cruise to replace the one that had been botched. Meanwhile, Brousseau spent the next six months personally rebuilding the original Excursion. He ripped the vehicle down to its frame and installed handmade reclining seats and wood paneling fashioned from a burl of a eucalyptus tree that had been toppled in a storm. He spent about two thousand hours on the project. The materials were paid for by Cruise's production company, but according to Brousseau, his labor, and that of about ten other Sea Org members, was not compensated. "It was a half-million-dollar beauty all done by me, with other folks from Scientology," Brousseau said.

Brousseau had even carved a matching Montblanc pen out of the



burl, its own hidden storage case in the vehicle. When Cruise showed it to Katie, she was dazzled. She turned to Brousseau and asked, “Oh, J.B., did you make that?”

“Don’t thank me,” Brousseau quickly responded. “I’m just the hammer. This—,” he said, pointing to Miscavige, “is the hand that wields me.”

Cruise, who became a pilot while filming *Top Gun*, keeps a hangar at an airport in Burbank for his airplane collection. Sea Org members completely renovated the hangar, installing a luxurious office that had been fabricated at Golden Era Productions. Brousseau says that the furniture—a dry bar, table and chairs, desks, et cetera—was milled at an RPF base in Los Angeles. Brousseau took dozens of photographs documenting his handiwork on the star’s behalf.

No member of the Sea Org has spent more time in Cruise’s service than Tommy Davis, who was viewed within the church as the star’s special handler and personal assistant. Although Davis maintains that he provided similar services for other celebrities, his assignment to Cruise was his primary duty between 2000 and 2004. However, he asserted, “None of the Church staff involved were coerced in any way to assist Mr. Cruise. Church staff, and indeed Church members, hold Mr. Cruise in very high regard and are honored to assist him.”

IN JUNE 2006, Shelly Miscavige disappeared.

She had spent her whole life conveying orders and gathering intelligence for a powerful, erratic, domineering church leader, first for Hubbard and then for her husband. She and Miscavige were always respectful toward each other in public, if not openly affectionate. As he gained power within the church, she began to see the two of them as reincarnations of Simón Bolívar and



Manuela Sáenz, and the lesson she drew from that previous existence was that she needed to be fiercely protective of her mate, and to keep him from making the kinds of mistakes that his character was destined to commit. In the eyes of some Sea Org members, Shelly was brittle and imperious, but Rathbun noted that she sometimes objected when Miscavige's physical assaults threatened to get out of hand. No one else did.

That spring, Shelly returned from a Freewinds voyage before her husband did, and in his absence she decided to arrange the Org Board herself. There were no settled posts, executives were still churning in the Hole, and the management structure was a mess. Taking matters into her own hands, Shelly made a number of appointments.

Soon after her husband came back, Shelly's mood visibly changed. Her brother-in-law, John Brousseau, observed that she looked cowed: "The bulldog was gone." Shortly before she disappeared, she asked Mike Rinder if Dave still had his wedding ring on. Then she vanished. Although a missing-person report has been filed, the Los Angeles Police Department will not comment on her whereabouts. She was escorted to her father's funeral in August 2007. That's the last time she was seen in public. Former Sea Org members say she is being guarded at a church facility in Running Springs, California, near Lake Arrowhead, one of the several repositories for Hubbard's writings. It gets cold there in the winter. Miscavige sent Shelly a sweater and a pair of gloves for Christmas.

In November 2007, Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes married in a fifteenth-century castle outside of Rome. Among the celebrities attending were Jennifer Lopez and Marc Anthony, Will and Jada Pinkett Smith, Jenna Elfman, and even Brooke Shields. Once again, David Miscavige served as the best man.



- <sup>1</sup> Cruise's attorney says that Sea Org members were not directed to salute him and that he has had many cordial exchanges with them.
- <sup>2</sup> According to Tommy Davis, "From their perspective, it was the least they could do to express their affection."
- <sup>3</sup> According to Tommy Davis, "These incidents are pure fantasy by Tom De Vocht."
- <sup>4</sup> The case against Cartwright was settled out of court.
- <sup>5</sup> Cruise's attorney notes, "Mr. Cruise has never expressed anything but support and respect for the work on Battlefield Earth."
- <sup>6</sup> Cruise's attorney says Cruise did not complain about not having a girlfriend at the opening of the church in Madrid.
- <sup>7</sup> The church has stated, "Scientology ministers maintain and practice a code of conduct known as the Auditor's Code. The Auditor's Code provides standards to ensure that priest-penitent communications remain strictly confidential. All such information is kept strictly confidential by a Scientology minister and the Church."
- <sup>8</sup> Cruise's attorney says that this conversation never took place. According to Tommy Davis: "Katy did not lose her friend because she admitted she was gay, she lost her friend because Katy lied to her about being gay."
- <sup>9</sup> Several sources independently told me of Boniadi's experiences with Tom Cruise. All their recollections were consistent. Cruise's attorney says that no Scientology executives set him up with girlfriends, and that no female Scientologist that Cruise dated moved into his home.
- <sup>10</sup> Also in the exhibit is a photograph of Imad Eddin Barakat Yarkas, known as Abu Dadah, who is described as a psychiatrist and the mastermind of the Madrid train bombings in 2004. Yarkas, an al-Qaeda fund-raiser, was a used-car salesman who had little or nothing to do with the Madrid bombings. In a list of 218 international known Islamist militants, the only one who ever studied psychology was Ali Mohammed, an Egyptian operative who helped plan the American Embassy bombings in 1998. "Psychologists are conspicuous by their absence," Steffen Hertog, a lecturer in comparative politics at the London School of Economics, wrote me in a private communication. "The pattern is similar for other types of extremist groups: Among 215



leading German Nazis with known higher education, there are only 2 psychologists, compared to 71 lawyers.” In another Citizens Commission on Human Rights report, titled “Chaos and Terror: Manufactured by Psychiatry” ([www.cchrstl.org/documents/terror.pdf](http://www.cchrstl.org/documents/terror.pdf)), the supposed mastermind of the Madrid bombings is now said to be “Moroccan psychiatrist Abu Hafizah.” No such person exists on the list of known Islamist terrorists, nor is anyone by that name attached to the Madrid bombings.

<sup>11</sup> The church denies Brousseau’s account. Cruise’s attorney denies that his client ever saw Miscavige’s motorcycle and claims, “We have photographic evidence showing the actual painter doing the job. It’s not Mr. Brousseau.” However, the attorney did not provide the photos. Brousseau did provide photos of the work he says he did on each of Cruise’s vehicles he claimed to have worked on.



Part III

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## THE PRISON OF BELIEF

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## The Investigation

Proposition 8, the California initiative to ban marriage between same-sex couples, appeared on the ballot in 2008. Paul Haggis was deeply involved in fighting the initiative, marching in demonstrations and contributing financially. His advocacy placed a strain on his relationship with Scientology. For several years, he had been concerned about the bigotry he found inside the church, especially when it was directed at his two gay daughters. Katy, in particular, had expressed her discomfort with the way she was treated at the Celebrity Centre, where she had been taking some courses. She had decided to go to another Scientology mission where she wouldn't feel so judged.

One evening, Paul and Deborah went to a small fund-raising dinner at John Travolta and Kelly Preston's house. Deborah and Kelly were on the parents' committee to raise funds for a new Delphi school in Santa Monica. Several other couples were there, all of them Operating Thetans. One of the guests referred to the waiter as a faggot.

It is difficult to imagine such open bigotry in Hollywood, a liberal stronghold, but especially in the home of John Travolta, who has dodged rumors of his sexual orientation since he first became a star. Despite the onslaught of publicity and sexual harassment suits that have been lodged against the star over the years, many Scientologists, including Haggis, believed that Travolta was not gay. Haggis had been impressed by his apparently loving relationship with his wife and children; but it is also common to



assume that homosexuality is handled at the OT III level, where the body thetans that cause such problems can be audited away. The other diners may have been so convinced of Travolta's sexual orientation that they felt free to display their prejudice. In any case, Travolta reprimanded his guest, saying that such remarks were not tolerated in their home.

Haggis was flooded with admiration for the firm but graceful way that the star had handled the situation. After the other guests had departed, Haggis and Travolta had a conversation in his small study. They talked about the bigotry they had observed in the church. Haggis confided that Katy had been made to feel unwanted at the Celebrity Centre. Travolta said that Hubbard's writings had been misinterpreted, and he later provided some references that Katy could use to defend herself.

When Hubbard wrote *Dianetics*, in 1950, he reflected the prevailing social prejudices, including the psychiatric community, which considered homosexuality a mental illness. (It was not removed from the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* until 1973.) "The sexual pervert"—by which Hubbard meant the homosexual—"is actually quite ill physically," he writes. The following year, he published the *Tone Scale* in *Science of Survival*. Near the bottom, at 1.1 on the scale, is the *Covertly Hostile* personality. People in this state engage in casual sex, sadism—and homosexual activity. Hubbard describes this as "the most dangerous and wicked level.... Here is the person who smiles when he inserts a knife blade between your vertebrae." "This is the level of the pervert, the hypocrite, the turncoat. This is the level of the subversive.... A 1.1 is the most dangerously insane person in society and is likely to cause the most damage.... Such people should be taken from the society as rapidly as possible and uniformly institutionalized." Another way of dealing with them, he writes, is "to dispose of them quietly and



without sorrow.” He went on: “The sudden and abrupt deletion of all individuals occupying the lower bands of the Tone Scale from the social order would result in an almost instant rise in the cultural tone and would interrupt the dwindling spiral into which any society may have entered.”

Hubbard occasionally moderated his stance, although he never entirely repudiated or discarded his prejudice. In 1952, he said, “Homosexuality is about as serious as sneezes.” In 1965, he refers in an executive letter to a “squirrel” who, he says, “was sacked for homosexuality and theft.” Another disaffected Scientologist, Hubbard notes in the same letter, “is a set-up for an arrest as a homosexual.” Two years later, when social attitudes toward gays were slowly changing, he declared, “It has never been any part of my plans to regulate or attempt to regulate the private lives of individuals.” However, because everything Hubbard wrote is sacrosanct in the church, these early views are indelibly fixed in the minds of many Scientologists. Long after the founder’s death it was still generally believed that auditing would “sort out” homosexuality. Gays in the church were frequently pressed to buy courses or take additional auditing in order to handle their condition.

The ambivalence in the church over the question of sexual orientation is evident in its treatment of Travolta. Over the years, the church has acted to protect his reputation. Marty Rathbun has said there were many allegations that he helped “to make go away.” He sometimes worked in concert with Travolta’s attorneys, attempting to keep stories out of the press. In 2003, a gay artist, Michael Pattinson, sued the church, Travolta, and more than twenty other individuals, claiming that the star had been held up as an example of how Scientology can cure homosexuality. Pattinson said that he spent twenty-five years in the church, and half a million dollars, trying to change his sexual orientation, without



success. (That case was voluntarily withdrawn following an avalanche of countersuits. Both Pattinson and his attorney say they were driven into bankruptcy.)

Haggis identified with homosexuals because they were a minority. They were the underdogs. They were also two of his daughters. The backers of Proposition 8 were using scare tactics to drive their campaign, claiming that homosexuals were going to take over the schools and teach people to be gay. Lauren Haggis actually heard people saying that. Then someone pointed her to a website that listed the proposition's backers. The Church of Scientology of San Diego was on the list. "I was just floored," she said. "And so I sent an e-mail to my sisters and my dad saying, um, what's going on?"

Haggis began peppering Tommy Davis with e-mails, demanding that the church support efforts to reverse the marriage ban. "I am going to an anti Prop 8 rally in a couple of hours," he wrote on November 11, 2008, a week after the initiative passed with 52 percent of the state's voters. "When can we expect the public statement?" Davis responded with a proposed letter that would go to the San Diego media, saying that the church had been "erroneously listed among the supporters of Proposition 8." " 'Erroneous' doesn't cut it," Haggis fired back. "The church may have had the luxury of not taking a position on this issue before, but after taking a position, even erroneously, it can no longer stand neutral." He demanded that the church openly declare itself in favor of gay rights. "Anything less won't do."

Davis stopped responding. When Haggis prodded him again, Davis admitted that the correction to the San Diego media was never actually sent. "To be honest I was dismayed when our emails (which I thought were communications between us) were being cc'd to your daughters," he wrote. Davis was frustrated because, as he explained to Haggis, the church avoids taking political stances.<sup>1</sup>



Davis insisted that it wasn't the "church" in San Diego that adopted a position against Prop 8. "It was one guy who somehow got it in his head it would be a neat idea and put Church of Scientology San Diego on the list," Davis insisted. "When I found out, I had it removed from the list."

As far as Davis was concerned, that should have been the end of the matter. Any further actions on the part of the church would only call attention to a mistaken position on an issue that the church wanted to go away. "Paul, I've received no press inquiries," he said. "If I were to make a statement on this it would actually bring more attention to the subject than if we leave it be."

But Haggis refused to let the matter drop. "This is not a PR issue, it is a moral issue," he wrote in February 2009. "Standing neutral is not an option."

In the final note of this exchange, Haggis conceded, "You were right: nothing happened—it didn't flap—at least not very much. But I feel we shamed ourselves."

Since Haggis's children had been copied on the correspondence with Davis, it helped clarify Lauren's stance with the church. At first, Davis's responses gave her hope, but then she realized, "They're just trying to minimize it as much as possible." After that, "I was totally done with the church."

The experience also helped her to see her father in a different light. "It's like night and day from when I first moved in with him," she said. "I didn't know that my dad loved me."

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BECAUSE HAGGIS STOPPED COMPLAINING, Davis felt that the issue had been laid to rest. But, far from putting the matter behind him, Haggis began an investigation into the church. His inquiry, much of it conducted online, echoed the actions of the lead character he was writing for Russell Crowe in *The Next Three Days*, who goes on the



Internet to research a way to break his wife out of jail.

What is so striking about Haggis's investigation is that few prominent figures attached to the Church of Scientology have actually looked into the charges that have surrounded their institution for many years. The church discourages such examination, telling its members that negative articles are "entheta" and will only cause spiritual upset. In 1996, the church sent CDs to members to help them build their own websites, which would then link them to the Scientology site; included in the software was a filter that would block any sites containing material that vilified the church or revealed esoteric doctrines. Keywords that triggered the censorship were Xenu, OT III, and the names of prominent Scientology critics.

Although Haggis never used such a filter, one already existed in his mind. During his thirty-four years in the church he had purposely avoided asking too many questions or reading materials that he knew would disparage his faith. But now, frustrated by his exchange with Davis, he began "poking around." He came upon an interview on YouTube with Tommy Davis that had been broadcast by CNN in May 2008. "The worldwide interest in Scientology has never been higher," Davis boasts on the show. "Scientology has grown more in the last five years than the last five decades combined." The anchor, John Roberts, asks Davis about the church's policy of disconnection, in which followers are urged to separate themselves from friends or family members who might be critical of the organization. "This is a perfect example of how the Internet turns things and twists things," Davis responds. "There's no such thing as disconnection as you're characterizing it. And certainly, we have to understand—"

"Well, what is disconnection?" Roberts tries to interject.

"Scientology is a new religion," Davis continues, talking over the host. "The majority of Scientologists in the world, they're first



generation. So their family members aren't going to be Scientologists.... So, certainly, someone who is a Scientologist is going to respect their family members' beliefs—"

"Well, what is disconnection?" Roberts asks again.

"And we consider family to be a building block of any society, so anything that's characterized as disconnection, or this kind of thing, it's just not true. There isn't any such policy."

Haggis knew this was a lie. His wife, Deborah, had disconnected from her parents twice. When she was in her twenties and acting in Dallas, her mother and stepfather broke away from the church. They were close friends of Hana Eltringham, who had stood up for them at their wedding, so when they had doubts about their faith, they went to see her. Eltringham was then counseling people who were considering getting out of Scientology or other new religions. She helped Scientologists confront the contradictions that were implicit in their faith, such as Hubbard speaking of events that had taken place trillions or quadrillions of years in the past, although scientists estimate the age of the universe to be less than 14 billion years, or the fact that it has never been shown that anyone has ever obtained any enhanced OT abilities. Eltringham also talked about the abuses she observed and experienced. "Hana told us how Sea Org members were treated," Mary Benjamin, Deborah's mother, recalled, "how they were kept in a basement in Los Angeles and fed rice and beans if they didn't keep their stats up. How, in the desert, in terrible heat, they would march in a circle for hours."

Like many active members of the church, the Benjamins kept money on account—in their case, \$2,500—for future courses they intended to take. Deborah's mother insisted on getting the money back. Deborah knew what a big deal that was for the church. She didn't speak to her parents for more than three years, automatically assuming that they must have been declared



Suppressive Persons. But when her sister was about to get married, Deborah wrote to the International Justice Chief, the Scientology official in charge of such matters, who said that she was allowed to see her parents as long as they didn't say anything against Scientology. The Benjamins readily agreed.

A decade later, however, Deborah went to Clearwater, intending to take some upper-level courses, and learned that the previous ruling no longer applied. If she wanted to do more training, she would have to confront her parents' mistakes. The church recommended that she take the Potential Trouble Source/Suppressive Persons course.

Many Scientologists have taken the same course. Deborah's friend Kelly Preston had taken it as well. "I was PTS, but I didn't realize it, and so I was told, 'You need to be on PTS/SP,' " Preston later recalled in her interview for *Celebrity* magazine. She discovered that her life was full of Suppressive Persons. "Being an artist and having a lot of theta, you really attract those type of people," Preston said. ("Theta" is a Scientology term for life force.) "I ended up having to handle or disconnect from quite a few different people."

It took Deborah a year to complete the course, but it didn't change her parents' status. She petitioned officials at the Celebrity Centre in Los Angeles for help. They put her on another program that took two more years to finish. Still, nothing changed. If she failed to "handle" her parents—by persuading them to make amends to the church—she would have to disconnect not only from them but also from everyone who spoke to them, including her siblings. She realized, "It was that, or else I had to give up being a Scientologist." The fact that Paul refused to disconnect from her parents posed yet another conflict.

According to the church, Deborah's parents had been part of a class-action lawsuit against Scientology by disaffected members in



1987, which was dismissed the following year.<sup>2</sup> The church required them to denounce the anti-Scientology group and offer a “token” restitution. That meant performing community service and following a rehabilitation course, called A to E, for penitents seeking to get back into the church’s good graces; it includes repaying debts, taking additional courses, and making public declarations of error. Deborah told her parents that if they wanted to remain in contact with her they had to follow the church’s procedures. Her parents, worried that they would also be cut off from their grandson, agreed to perform community service. For three months they delivered food in a Meals on Wheels program in Los Angeles. But the church wasn’t satisfied. Deborah was told that if she maintained contact with her parents she would be labeled a Potential Trouble Source—a designation that would alienate her from the entire Scientology community and render her ineligible for further training. A senior official counseled her to agree to disconnect from her parents and have them formally branded SPs. “Until then, they won’t turn around and recognize their responsibilities,” he said.

“Okay, fine,” Deborah responded. “Go ahead and declare them. Maybe it’ll get better.”

The official then granted Deborah permission to begin upper-level coursework in Clearwater.

In August 2006, a formal notice on yellow parchment, called a “goldenrod,” was posted at the Celebrity Centre declaring Deborah’s parents Suppressive Persons, explaining that they had withdrawn the money they had placed on deposit for future coursework and that they had associated with “squirrels”—that is, they received unauthorized Scientology counseling. A month later, Mary Benjamin sent her daughter a letter. “We tried to do what you asked, Deborah. We worked the whole months of July & Aug. on A-E.” They gave the church back the \$2,500 for the courses that



they never intended to take. After all that, she continued, a church adjudicator had told them to hand out three hundred copies of L. Ron Hubbard's booklet "The Way to Happiness" to libraries and to document each exchange with photographs. Her parents had had enough. "If this can't be resolved, we will have to say Good-Bye to you & James will lose his Grand-Parents," her mother wrote. "This is ridiculous."

In April 2007, Deborah received a letter from the lawyer who represented her parents, threatening a lawsuit for the right to visit their grandson. Deborah had to hire an attorney. Eventually, the church relented. Deborah was summoned to the Celebrity Centre and shown a statement rescinding the decision, although she wasn't allowed to have a copy of it.

WHILE HE WAS RESEARCHING on the Internet, Haggis came upon a series of articles that had run in the St. Petersburg Times<sup>3</sup> beginning in June 2009, titled "The Truth Rundown." The paper has maintained a special focus on Scientology, since the church maintains such a commanding presence in Clearwater, which is adjacent to St. Petersburg. Although the paper and the church have frequently been at odds, the only interview that David Miscavige has ever given to a newspaper resulted in a rather flattering profile in the Times in 1998. (Since then, Miscavige has not spoken to the press at all.)

In the series, Haggis learned for the first time that several of the top managers of the church had quietly defected—including Marty Rathbun. For several years, the word in the Scientology community was that Rathbun had died of cancer. Mike Rinder, the chief spokesperson, and Tom De Vocht, the former landlord of all the church properties in Clearwater, were also speaking out about the abuses that were taking place inside the top tier of management—



mainly at the hands of the church leader. Amy Scobee, who had overseen the Celebrity Centre in Los Angeles, pointed out that the reason no one outside of the executive circles knew of the abuse, even other Scientologists like Haggis, was that people were terrified of Miscavige—and not just physically. Their greatest fear was expulsion. “You don’t have any money. You don’t have job experience. You don’t have anything. And he could put you on the streets and ruin you.”

Tommy Davis had produced nine senior church executives who told the Times that the abuse had never taken place. Dan Sherman, the church’s official Hubbard biographer and Miscavige’s speechwriter, recounted a scene in which he observed Miscavige talking to an injured sparrow. “It was immensely tender,” Sherman told the reporters.

Much of the abuse being alleged had taken place at Gold Base. Haggis had visited the place only once, in the early 1980s, when its existence was still a closely held secret. That was when he was preparing to direct the Scientology commercial that was ultimately rejected. At first glance, it seemed like a spa, beautiful and restful; but he had been put off by the uniforms, the security, and the militarized feel of the place.

“At the top of the church, people were whacking folks about like Laurel and Hardy,” Haggis said. He was embarrassed to admit that he had never even asked himself where Rathbun and Rinder had gone. He decided to call Rathbun, who was now living on Galveston Bay in South Texas. Although the two men had never met, they were well known to each other. After being one of the most powerful figures in Scientology, Rathbun was scraping together a living by freelancing stories to local newspapers and selling beer at a ballpark. He figured that South Texas was about as far from Los Angeles and Clearwater as he could hope to get. Haggis was floored when he learned that Rathbun had had to



escape. He was also surprised to learn that other friends, such as Jim Logan, the man who brought him into the church so long ago on the street corner in Ontario, had also fled or been declared Suppressive Persons. One of Haggis's closest friends in the church hierarchy, Bill Dendiu, told Haggis that he had escaped from Gold Base by driving a car—actually, an Alfa Romeo convertible that Haggis had sold him—through the fence. He still had scars on his forehead to show for that.

“What kind of organization are we involved in where people just disappear?” Haggis wondered.

He also came across a number of anti-Scientology websites, including [Exscientologykids.com](http://Exscientologykids.com), which was created by Jenna Miscavige Hill, the leader's niece, who joined the Sea Org when she was twelve. For her and many others, formal education had stopped when they entered the organization, leaving them ill prepared for life outside the church. Jenna says that for much of her early life, she was kept in a camp with other Sea Org children and little adult supervision. They rarely saw their parents. “We ran ourselves completely,” she recalled.

For several years, Haggis had been working with a charity he established to set up schools in Haiti. These stories reminded him of the child slaves he had encountered in that country. “They were ten, twelve years old, signing billion-year contracts—and their parents go along with this!” he said of the Sea Org children. “And they work morning, noon and night.... Scrubbing pots, manual labor—that so deeply touched me. My God, it horrified me!”

AFTER TOM CRUISE'S BEHAVIOR on Oprah and the Today show, Sumner Redstone, the chairman of Viacom, which owns Paramount Studios, chose not to renew Cruise's deal. “He turned off all women,” Redstone explained. “He was embarrassing the studio. And he was



costing us a lot of money.” Cruise and his longtime producing partner, Paula Wagner, worked out a deal with MGM to resurrect the struggling United Artists studio. Soon after that, Wagner approached Haggis, offering him a very generous deal. He wrote one script for them, a big-budget children’s movie, but the studio was so financially pressed that it couldn’t afford to produce it.

In January 2008, just as it seemed that the derision that was directed at Cruise was about to die down, a video was posted on the Internet. It was a taped interview with the star that preceded his acceptance of the Freedom Medal of Valor four years earlier. Wearing a black turtleneck, with the theme music from Mission: Impossible playing in the background, Cruise spoke to Scientologists in language they understood. “Being a Scientologist, you can look at someone and know absolutely that you can help them,” Cruise said. “So for me it really is KSW, and it’s something that I don’t mince words with that—with anything!—but that policy with me has really gone—phist!” He made a vigorous gesture. “Boy! There’s a time I went through when I said, you know what, when I read it I just went pooh! That’s it! That’s exactly it!”

The video was placed on YouTube and viewed by millions who had no idea what he was talking about. Cruise’s urgency came off as the ravings of a wild-eyed fanatic, but to Scientologists it was a sermon they had heard many times. “KSW” refers to a policy letter that Hubbard wrote in 1965 titled “Keeping Scientology Working.” In the letter Hubbard reprimanded his followers for straying from the narrow path he had laid out for them. “When somebody enrolls [sic], consider he or she has joined up for the duration of the universe—never permit an ‘open-minded’ approach,” Hubbard writes. “If they’re aboard, they’re here on the same terms as the rest of us—win or die in the attempt.” Hubbard concludes: “The whole agonized future of this planet, every Man, Woman and Child



on it, and your own destiny for the next endless trillions of years depend on what you do here and now with and in Scientology.”

The church instantly began taking down the video from the Internet, threatening lawsuits because of copyright violations. A loose coalition of Internet hackers who called themselves Anonymous seized on the issue. “We were a bunch of kids who didn’t care about anything,” Gregg Housh, a computer-repair technician in Boston who acts as an unofficial spokesperson for the group, recalled. Until then, they had never protested anything, but they considered the Internet their turf and were offended that the church would attempt to control what they watched. In truth, they knew little about Scientology, but the more they learned, the more aroused they became.

“We shall proceed to expel you from the Internet and systematically dismantle the Church of Scientology in its present form,” Anonymous declared in a creepy video of its own. “We are anonymous. We are legion. We do not forgive. We do not forget. Expect us.” Some members of the Anonymous coalition waged denial-of-service attacks on church computers, shutting down their websites for an extended period. On February 10, 2008, Anonymous organized protests in front of Scientology churches and missions in a hundred cities across the world. Many of the demonstrators were wearing what has now become the signature of the Anonymous movement—the Guy Fawkes mask, taken from the film *V for Vendetta*.

At the center of the controversy was the beleaguered Tom Cruise. An unflattering, unauthorized biography by the British writer Andrew Morton was published days after the YouTube video of Cruise appeared, creating a new round of headlines—“Cruise Out of Control,” “Explosive Claims on Cruise Baby,” “German Historian Likens Cruise Speech to Goebbels”—that were intensely personal and insulting. Questions of his religion, his sexual



orientation, his relationship with his wife, even the paternity of his daughter were laid out like a banquet for public consumption. Several top executives at United Artists, including Cruise's partner, Paula Wagner, decided to leave.

Haggis was in his office in Santa Monica when he got a call from Cruise. He hadn't heard a word from him since writing the apology for his wisecrack to Spielberg. Haggis still had his deal at United Artists, which Cruise was running. Now the star had a favor to ask. He wanted to gather a group of top Scientologists in Hollywood—Kirstie Alley, Anne Archer, and Haggis—to go on Oprah or Larry King Live to denounce the attacks on Cruise as religious persecution. Haggis told Cruise that was a terrible idea. He said that Cruise should stop trying to be a mouthpiece for the church and go back to doing what he does best—being a movie star. People love him for that, not for having the answers to all of life's problems. He also advised the star to have a sense of humor about himself—something that is often lacking in Scientology. Instead of constantly going on the attack, he might simply say, "Yeah, I get that it sounds crazy, but it works for me."<sup>4</sup>

Cruise didn't want to hear what Haggis had to say at the time, but soon after this conversation, he took a wildly comic turn in the Ben Stiller film *Tropic Thunder*, playing a profane studio executive who reminded a number of Hollywood insiders of Sumner Redstone. He also went back on the *Today* show for another interview with Matt Lauer. This time, he was chastened and introspective. "I came across as arrogant," he admitted, when reflecting on their previous interview three years earlier. "That's not who I am. That's not the person I am.... I'm here to entertain people. That's who I am and what I want to do." Outside the windows of the studio, a crowd of people in the plaza of Rockefeller Center waved and blew kisses.



HAGGIS WAS CASTING *The Next Three Days* in the summer of 2009, and he asked Jason Beghe to read for the part of a detective. Beghe's best-known film role was as the love interest for Demi Moore in *G.I. Jane*. In the late nineties, when Haggis had worked with the gravel-voiced actor on a CBS series, *Family Law*, Beghe had been an occasional front man for Scientology. He had come to the church, like so many others, through the Beverly Hills Playhouse. In old promotional materials for the church, Beghe is quoted as saying that Scientology is "a rocket ride to spiritual freedom." He says that Miscavige once called him "the poster boy for Scientology."





Paul Haggis on the set of *The Next Three Days*, in a Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, train yard

“I just want you to know I’m no longer in Scientology,” Beghe told Haggis when he called. “Actually, I’m one of its most outspoken critics. The church would be very unhappy if you hire me.”

“Nobody tells me who I cast,” Haggis responded, but he decided to look at the lengthy video Beghe had posted on the Internet, in which he denounces the church as “destructive and a rip-off.” Haggis thought the actor had gone over the edge, but he asked if



they could talk.

The two men met at Patrick's Roadhouse, a pleasantly shabby coffee shop on the Pacific Coast Highway. Beghe was calmer than he had been in the video, which he now called "a snapshot of me having been out only three months." He could see that Haggis was troubled. Even though Beghe had renounced the church, he continued to use Scientology when dealing with former members. In his several meetings with Haggis, he employed techniques based on Hubbard's Ethics Conditions. These range from Confusion at the bottom and ascend through Treason, Enemy, Doubt, Liability, Emergency, and so on, up to Power. Each of the conditions has a specific set of steps to follow in order to advance to a higher state. Assuming that Haggis was in the condition of Doubt, Beghe knew that the proper formula required him to provide information.

He told Haggis that in the late nineties he began having emotional problems. The church prescribed more auditing and coursework. In retrospect, Beghe felt that it had done no good. "I was paying money for them to fuck me up," he said, estimating that he had spent as much as \$600,000 in the process, and nearly \$1 million in his thirteen-year Scientology career. When he finally decided to leave the church, he told Tommy Davis that the church was in a condition of Liability to him. Ordinarily, when a Scientologist does something wrong, especially something that might damage the image of the organization, he has to make amends, often in the form of a substantial contribution. But now the situation was reversed, Beghe maintained. He proposed that the church buy some property and lease it to him at a negligible rate. "You guys don't have any policies to make up the damage, so I'm doing this for your own good—and for mine," he explained to Davis and others. "Because I don't have a policy of taking it in the ass."<sup>5</sup>

While talking to Haggis, Beghe was reluctant to use the word



“brainwashing”—“whatever the fuck that is”—but he did say that somehow his mind had been taken over. “You have all these thoughts, all these ways of looking at things, that are L. Ron Hubbard’s,” he explained. “You think you’re becoming more you, but within that is an implanted thing, which is You the Scientologist.”

Haggis was disturbed by Beghe’s account of what had happened after he left the church. He claimed that none of his Scientology friends would talk to him, his son had been kicked out of school, he was being followed by private investigators and threatened with lawsuits. Perhaps because Haggis had never been as much of a true believer as some members, he didn’t nurse the same sense of betrayal. “I didn’t feel that some worm had buried itself in my ear, and if you plucked it out you would find L. Ron Hubbard and his thought,” he said. But he did feel that he had been cautioned.

“TOMMY,” HAGGIS’S LETTER of August 19, 2009, abruptly begins. “As you know, for ten months now I have been writing to ask you to make a public statement denouncing the actions of the Church of Scientology of San Diego. Their public sponsorship of Proposition 8, which succeeded in taking away the civil rights of gay and lesbian citizens of California—rights that were granted them by the Supreme Court of our state—is a stain on the integrity of our organization and a stain on us personally. Our public association with that hate-filled legislation shames us.”

The tone of the letter is both aggrieved and outraged, mixing Haggis’s personal experiences with the results of his one-man investigation into the church. He mentions how Katy Haggis’s friends had turned against her when she came out to them as a lesbian. Katy had told him that another friend of hers had applied to be the assistant for Jenna and Bodhi Elfman, the Scientology



acting couple. Lauren Haigney, Tom Cruise's niece in the Sea Org, had been assigned to vet the applicants. Katy says that Lauren wrote up a report saying that Katy's friend was known to hang out with lesbians. The friend did not get the job, Katy said.<sup>6</sup>

Haggis also recounted the scene at John Travolta and Kelly Preston's house, when another Scientologist made the slur about the gay waiter. "I admire John and Kelly for many reasons; one of them is the way they handled that," Haggis stated. "You and I both know there has been a hidden anti-gay sentiment in the church for a long time. I have been shocked on too many occasions to hear Scientologists make derogatory remarks about gay people, and then quote LRH in their defense." He said that the church's decision not to denounce the bigots who supported Proposition 8 was cowardly. "Silence is consent, Tommy. I refuse to consent."

He referenced Davis's interview on CNN. "I saw you deny the church's policy of disconnection. You said straight-out there was no such policy, that it did not exist," he wrote. "I was shocked. We all know this policy exists. I didn't have to search for verification. I didn't have to look any further than my own home." He reminded Davis of Deborah's experience with her parents. "Although it caused her terrible personal pain, my wife broke off all contact with them.... That's not ancient history, Tommy. It was a year ago." He added: "To see you lie so easily, I am afraid to ask myself: what else are you lying about?"

Then, he said, he had read the series of articles in the St. Petersburg Times. "They left me dumbstruck and horrified. These were not the claims made by 'outsiders' looking to dig up dirt against us. These accusations were made by top international executives who had devoted most of their lives to the church. Say what you will about them now, these were staunch defenders of the church, including Mike Rinder, the church's official spokesman for 20 years!



“Tommy, if only a fraction of these accusations are true, we are talking about serious, indefensible human and civil rights violations.”

He continued:

And when I pictured you assuring me that it is all lies, that this is nothing but an unfounded and vicious attack by a group of disgruntled employees, I am afraid that I saw the same face that looked in the camera and denied the policy of disconnection. I heard the same voice that professed outrage at our support of Proposition 8, who promised to correct it, and did nothing.

I was left feeling outraged, and frankly, more than a little stupid.

Haggis was especially disturbed by the way the church’s Freedom magazine had responded to the newspaper’s revelations. It included a lengthy annotated transcript of conversations that had taken place prior to the publication of the series between the Times reporters, Joe Childs and Thomas C. Tobin, and representatives of the church, including Tommy Davis and Jessica Feshbach, the two international spokespersons for the church. In the Freedom account, the names of the defectors were never actually stated, perhaps to shield Scientologists from the shock of seeing familiar figures such as Marty Rathbun and Amy Scobee publicly denouncing the organization and its leader. Rathbun was called “Kingpin” and Amy Scobee “The Adulteress.” At one point in the conversation, Davis had told reporters that Scobee had been expelled from the church because she had had an affair. The reporters responded that she had denied any sexual contact outside her marriage. “That’s a lie,” Davis told them. Feshbach, who carried a stack of documents, then said, “She has a written admission [of] each one of her instances of extramarital indiscretions.... I believe there were five.”

When Haggis read this, he immediately assumed that the church



had gotten its information from auditing sessions.<sup>7</sup> He was inflamed. “A priest would go to jail before revealing secrets from the confessional, no matter what the cost to himself or his church,” he wrote. “You took Amy Scobee’s most intimate admissions about her sexual life and passed them on to the press and then smeared them all over the pages of your newsletter!...This is the woman who joined the Sea Org at 16! She ran the entire celebrity center network, and was a loyal senior executive of the church for what, 20 years?” He added that he was aware that the church might do the same to him. “Well, luckily, I have never held myself up to be anyone’s role model.”

Haggis concluded:

The great majority of Scientologists I know are good people who are genuinely interested in improving conditions on this planet and helping others. I have to believe that if they knew what I now know, they too would be horrified. But I know how easy it was for me to defend our organization and dismiss our critics, without ever truly looking at what was being said; I did it for thirty-five years.... I am only ashamed that I waited this many months to act. I hereby resign my membership in the Church of Scientology.

AT THE TIME Haggis was doing his investigation, the FBI was also looking into Scientology. In December 2009, Tricia Whitehill, a special agent from the Los Angeles office, flew to Florida to interview former members of the church at the bureau’s office in downtown Clearwater, which happens to be directly across the street from Scientology’s spiritual headquarters. Tom De Vocht, who spoke to Whitehill then, got the impression that the investigation had been going on for quite a while. He says that Whitehill confided that she hadn’t told the local agents what the investigation was about, in case the office had been infiltrated. Amy Scobee also spoke to Whitehill for two full days, mainly about



the abuse she had witnessed.

Whitehill and Valerie Venegas, the lead agent on the case, also interviewed former Sea Org members in California. One was Gary Morehead, who had developed the blow drill. He explained how his security team would use emotional and psychological pressure to bring escapees back; but failing that, physical force has been used.<sup>8</sup>

Whitehill and Venegas worked on a special task force devoted to human trafficking. The laws regarding trafficking were built largely around forced prostitution, but they also pertain to slave labor. Under federal law, slavery is defined, in part, by the use of coercion, torture, starvation, imprisonment, threats, and psychological abuse. The California Penal Code lists several indicators that someone may be a victim of human trafficking: signs of trauma or fatigue; being afraid or unable to talk because of censorship or security measures that prevent communication with others; working in one place without the freedom to move about; owing a debt to one's employer; and not having control over identification documents. Those conditions resemble the accounts of many former Sea Org members who lived at Gold Base. If proven, those allegations would still be difficult to prosecute given the religious status of Scientology.

Marc Headley escaped from Gold Base in 2005; he says this was after being beaten by Miscavige.<sup>9</sup> His defection was especially painful for the church, because Marc says he was the first person Tom Cruise audited. In Scientology, the auditor bears a significant responsibility for the progress of his subject. "If you audit somebody and that person leaves the organization, there's only one person whose fault that is—the auditor," Headley explained. Later that year, Marc's wife, Claire, also escaped. In 2009, they sued the church, claiming that the working conditions at Gold Base violated labor and human-trafficking laws. The church responded that the



Headleys were ministers who had voluntarily submitted to the rigors of their calling, and that the First Amendment protected Scientology's religious practices. The court agreed with this argument and dismissed the Headleys' complaints, awarding the church forty thousand dollars in litigation costs.

In April 2010, John Brousseau also fled. He, too, represented a dangerous liability to the church. He had been a Sea Org member for decades; he had worked personally for Hubbard; and he knew Miscavige intimately. But what was of most concern to the church was the fact that he had worked on or overseen numerous special projects for Tom Cruise. None of these unique and costly gifts come anywhere close to the millions of dollars that the star has donated to the church over the years, but they do call into question the private benefit afforded a single individual by a tax-exempt religious organization.

Brousseau knew the lengths to which the church would go in order to find him and bring him back. He drove to Carson City, Nevada, and bought a netbook computer at a Walmart, along with an air card, then set up an encrypted e-mail account. He sent a note to Rathbun, saying, "I just left and I'm freaked out, and I've got nowhere to go." Rathbun invited him to South Texas. Expecting that the church would have hired private detectives to stake out key intersections on the interstate highways, Brousseau stuck to county roads. It took him three days to make it to Texas. He was driving a black Ford Excursion, much like the one that he had fashioned into a limousine for Cruise.

Brousseau and Rathbun met at a Chili's restaurant near Corpus Christi. They decided to hide Brousseau's truck at a friend's house. Rathbun then checked Brousseau into a Best Western motel under a different name. Despite the precautions, two days later, at five thirty in the morning, when Brousseau went out on the balcony to smoke, he heard a door open nearby and footsteps walking toward



him. It was Tommy Davis and three other church members.

“Hey, J.B.,” Davis said. “You got yourself in some shit.”

Brousseau turned and walked away.

“Where are you going?” Davis demanded.

Brousseau said he was going to get some coffee. Davis and the Scientology delegation followed behind him. The Circle K across the street wasn’t open yet, so Brousseau went into the motel lobby. He told the receptionist, “Call the police. These guys are stalking me.”

She laughed in disbelief.

“We’ve got a room here, too,” Davis said.

Brousseau said he needed to go to the bathroom. As soon as he got back to his room he bolted the door and called Rathbun. “Marty, they came for me,” he said.

After calling 911, Rathbun jumped in his truck to go to the motel, but four cars filled with Scientologists blocked his way. He says they were led by Michael Doven, Cruise’s former personal assistant.

Brousseau waited in his room until the police officers arrived. Davis and the others left empty-handed.<sup>10</sup>

Brousseau talked to Whitehill and Venegas at the FBI. He was under the impression that the federal agents were considering a raid on Gold Base. Brousseau says he was shown high-resolution photos of the base taken from a drone aircraft. He says he was told that they had even gathered the tail numbers on Tom Cruise’s aircraft, in case Miscavige tried to escape. Brousseau and others claim to have discouraged the idea, saying that such a raid would turn Miscavige into a martyr; and, in any case, no one would testify against him. Rinder told the agents it would be a waste of time, because everyone would tell them their lives are all “seashells and butterflies.” The investigation was reportedly dropped.<sup>11</sup>



AFTER SENDING COPIES of his resignation letter to his closest friends in Scientology, Haggis wasn't surprised when he came home from work a few days later to find nine or ten of them standing in his front yard. "I can't imagine why you're here," he joked, but he invited them to sit on the back porch and talk. Anne Archer and her husband, Terry Jastrow, an Emmy-winning producer for ABC Sports, were there. Mark Isham, a composer who worked with Haggis for years, came with his wife, Donna. Sky Dayton, the founder of EarthLink and Boingo Wireless, joined them, along with several other friends and a representative of the church that Haggis didn't know. His friends could have served as an advertisement for Scientology—they were wealthy high achievers with solid marriages who exuded a sense of spiritual well-being.

Scientologists are trained to believe in their persuasive powers and the need to keep a positive frame of mind. But the mood on Haggis's porch was downbeat and his friends' questions were full of reproach.

"Do you have any idea that this might damage a lot of wonderful Scientologists?" Jastrow asked. "It's such a betrayal of our group."

Haggis responded that he didn't mean to be critical of Scientology. "I love Scientology," he said. Everyone knew about Haggis's financial support of the church and the occasions when he had spoken out in its defense. He reminded his friends that he had been with them at the Portland Crusade, when he had been drafted to write speeches.

Archer had a particular reason to feel aggrieved: Haggis's letter had called her son a liar. She could understand the pain and anger Haggis felt over the treatment of his own gay daughters, but she didn't think that was relevant. In her opinion, homosexuality is not the church's issue. She had personally introduced gay friends to Scientology.

Isham was especially frustrated. He felt that they weren't



breaking through to Haggis. Of all the friends present, Isham was the closest to Haggis. They had a common artistic sensibility that made it easy to work together. Isham had won an Emmy for the theme music he composed for Haggis's 1996 television series, *EZ Streets*. He had scored *Crash* and Haggis's last movie, *The Valley of Elah*. Soon he was supposed to start work on *The Next Three Days*. Now both their friendship and their professional relationship were at risk.

Isham had been analyzing the discussion from a Scientological perspective. In his view, Haggis's emotional state on the Tone Scale at that moment was a 1.1, Covertly Hostile. By adopting a tone just above it—Anger—he hoped to blast Haggis out of the psychic place where he seemed to be lodged. Isham made what he calls an intellectual decision to be angry.

“Paul, I’m pissed off,” he told Haggis. “There are better ways to do this. If you have a complaint, there’s a complaint line.” Anyone who genuinely wanted to change Scientology should stay within the organization, Isham argued, not quit. All of his friends believed that if he wanted to change Scientology, he should do it from within. They wanted him to recant and return to the fold or else withdraw his letter and walk away without making a fuss.

Haggis listened patiently. A fundamental tenet of Scientology is that differing points of view must be fully heard and acknowledged. But when his friends finished, they were still red-faced and angry. Haggis suggested that as good Scientologists, they should at least examine the evidence. He referred them to the *St. Petersburg Times* articles that had so shaken him, and to certain websites written by former members. He explained that his quarrel was with the management and the culture of the church, not with Scientology itself. By copying them on his resignation letter, he had hoped that they would be as horrified as he by the practices that were going on in the name of Scientology. Instead, he realized,



they were mainly appalled by his actions in calling the management of the church to account.

Haggis's friends came away from the meeting with mixed feelings—"no clearer than when we went in," Archer felt. What wasn't said in this meeting was that this would be the last time any of them would ever speak to Haggis. Isham did consider Haggis's plea to look at the websites or the articles in the St. Petersburg Times, but he decided "it was like reading Mein Kampf if you wanted to know something about the Jewish religion."

After that first meeting with friends on his back porch, Haggis had several lengthy encounters with Tommy Davis and other representatives of the church. They showed up at his office in Santa Monica—a low-slung brick building on Broadway, covered in graffiti, like a gang headquarters. The officials brought thick files to discredit people they heard or assumed he had been talking to. This was August 2009; shooting for *The Next Three Days* in Pittsburgh was going to start within days, and the office desperately needed Haggis's attention. His producing partner, Michael Nozik, who is not a Scientologist, was frustrated. Haggis was spending hours, day after day, dealing with Scientology delegations. He resorted to getting members of his staff to walk him out to his car because he knew that Scientology executives would be waiting for him, and he wanted to give the impression he was too busy to speak—which he was. But then he would give up and let them into the office for another lengthy confrontation.

During one of these meetings, Davis showed Haggis a policy letter that Hubbard had written, listing the acts for which one could be declared a Suppressive Person. Haggis had stepped over the line on four of them.

"Tommy, you are absolutely right, I did all those things," Haggis responded. "If you want to call me that, that's what I am."

"We can still put this genie back in the bottle," Tommy assured



him, but it would mean that Haggis would withdraw the letter and then resign quietly.

Although Haggis listened, he didn't change his mind. It seemed to him that the Scientology officials became more "livid and irrational" the longer they talked. For instance, Davis and the other church officials insisted that Miscavige had not beaten his employees; his accusers, they said, had committed the violence. "Whoa, whoa, whoa," Haggis responded, "okay, let's say that's true, Miscavige never touched anyone. I'm sorry, but if someone in my organization were going around beating people, I'd know about it! You think I'd put up with it? And I'm not that good a person." Haggis noted that if the rumors about Miscavige's violent temper were true, it just proved that even the greatest leaders are fallible. "Look at Martin Luther King, Jr.," he said, referring to one of his heroes. "If you look at his personal life, it's been said he has a few problems in that area."

"How dare you compare Dave Miscavige with Martin Luther King!" one of the officials shouted.

Haggis was aghast. "They thought that comparing Miscavige to Martin Luther King was debasing his character," he said. "If they were trying to convince me that Scientology was not a cult, they did a very poor job of it."<sup>12</sup>

Copies of Haggis's e-mail resignation letter were forwarded to various members of the church, although few outside of church circles knew about it. By October, the letter had found its way to Marty Rathbun. He had become an informal spokesperson for Scientology defectors who, like him, believed that the church had broken away from Hubbard's original teachings. He called Haggis, who was shooting in Pittsburgh, and asked if he could publish the letter on his blog. "You're a journalist, you don't need my permission," Haggis said, although he did ask him to excise the portion of the letter that dealt with his dinner with John Travolta



and Kelly Preston and the part about his daughter Katy's homosexuality.

Haggis didn't think about the consequences of his decision. He thought it would show up on a couple of websites. He was a writer, not a movie star. But Rathbun got fifty-five thousand hits on his blog that afternoon.

The next morning, the story was in newspapers around the world. Haggis got a call from Tommy Davis. "Paul, what the hell!"

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<sup>1</sup> Four years before, the church had actively campaigned against Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act, which raised taxes to provide for increased care for the mentally ill; the proposition passed.

<sup>2</sup> Mary Benjamin says they were never parties to the suit.

<sup>3</sup> Now called the Tampa Bay Times.

<sup>4</sup> Cruise's attorney, Bertram Fields, denies this took place: "Mr. Cruise has never asked Mr. Haggis or anyone else to denounce media attacks on Mr. Cruise on the Larry King show or anywhere else or to do anything like that."

<sup>5</sup> The church characterizes this as an attempt at extortion.

<sup>6</sup> The church forwarded a letter to me from Katy Haggis's friend in which she denies losing a job because of their friendship and asserting that the church is welcoming to everyone, regardless of their sexual orientation. The friend, whose parents are both employed by the church, did not respond to a request to talk further.

<sup>7</sup> Tommy Davis gave me an affidavit, signed by Scobee, in which she admits to having liaisons. Scobee told me there were only two incidents, both of which involved a kiss and nothing more. She says she did not write the affidavit; she says she only signed it in the hope of leaving the church on good terms so that she could stay in touch with relatives. The church maintains that it does not use confidential information derived from auditing sessions.

<sup>8</sup> The church denies that blow drills exist.



<sup>9</sup> According to Tommy Davis, “Mr. Miscavige has never physically assaulted Marc Headley or anyone else.”

<sup>10</sup> Davis later said that he had never followed a Sea Org member who had blown and had only gone to see Brousseau because he was “a very good friend of mine” (Deposition of Thomas Davis, Marc Headley vs. Church of Scientology International, and Claire Headley vs. Church of Scientology International, US District Court, Central District of California, July 2, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> Valerie Venegas told one of her sources that higher-up officials had spiked it; later, she blamed me, because I had uncovered the probe and had called to verify it with the agents (Tony Ortega, “FBI Investigation of Scientology: Already Over before We Even Heard of It,” Village Voice Blogs, Mar. 19, 2012).

<sup>12</sup> Tommy Davis says that Martin Luther King, Jr.’s name never came up.



## Tommy

**W**hen I first contacted Davis in April 2010, asking for his cooperation on a profile I was writing about Haggis for The New Yorker, he expressed a reluctance to talk, saying that he had already spent a month responding to similar queries. “It made little difference,” he said. “The last thing I’m interested in is dredging all this up again.” He kept putting me off, saying that he was too busy to get together, although he promised that we would meet when he was more available. “I want our time to be undistracted,” he explained in an e-mail. “We should plan on spending at least a full day together as there is a lot I would want to show you.” We finally arranged to meet on Memorial Day weekend.

I flew to Los Angeles and spent much of that weekend waiting for him to call. On Sunday at three o’clock, Davis appeared at my hotel, with Jessica Feshbach. We sat at a table on the patio. Davis has his mother’s sleepy eyes. His thick black hair was combed forward, with a lock falling boyishly onto his forehead. He wore a wheat-colored suit with a blue shirt that opened onto a chest that seemed, among the sun-worshippers at the pool, strikingly pallid. Feshbach, a slender, attractive woman, anxiously twirled her hair.

Davis now told me that he was “not willing to participate in, or contribute to, an article about Scientology through the lens of Paul Haggis.” I had come to Los Angeles specifically to talk to him, at a time he had chosen. I wondered aloud if he had been told not to talk to me. He said no.



“Maybe Paul shouldn’t have posted the letter on the Internet,” Feshbach interjected. “There are all sorts of shoulda woulda coulda.” She said that she had just spoken to Mark Isham, the composer, whom I had interviewed. “He talked to you about what are supposed to be our confidential scriptures.” That I would ask about the church’s secret doctrines was offensive, she said. “It’s a two-way street happening,” she concluded.<sup>1</sup>

“Everything I have to say about Paul, I’ve already said,” Davis declared. He agreed to respond to fact-checking queries, however.

THE GARDEN BEHIND Anne Archer and Terry Jastrow’s home in the Brentwood neighborhood of Los Angeles is a peaceful retreat, filled with olive trees and hummingbirds. A fountain gurgles beside the swimming pool. Jastrow was recounting his first meeting with Archer, in Milton Katselas’s class. His friend David Ladd, son of the Hollywood legend Alan Ladd, had invited him to visit. “I saw this girl sitting next to Milton,” Jastrow recalled. “I said, ‘Who’s that?’ ”

Archer smiled. There was a cool wind blowing in from the Pacific, and she drew a shawl around her. “We were friends for about a year and a half before we had our first date,” she said. They were married in 1978.

“Our relationship really works,” Jastrow said. “We attribute that essentially a hundred percent to applying Scientology.”

The two spoke of the techniques that had helped them, such as never being critical of the other and never interrupting.

Scientology “isn’t a ‘creed,’ ” Archer said. “These are basic natural laws of life.” She described L. Ron Hubbard as “an engineer, not a faith healer,” who had codified human emotional states, in order to guide the adept to higher levels of existence—“to help a guy rise up the Tone Scale and feel a zest and a love for life.”



Jastrow had been an acolyte in an Episcopal church when he was studying at the University of Houston, but doubts overwhelmed him. “I walked out in the middle of communion,” he said. “I was an atheist for ten years. That was the condition I was in when I started at the Beverly Hills Playhouse.” He had never heard of Scientology at the time.

Archer said that the controversy that continually surrounds the church hadn’t touched her. “It’s not that I’m not aware of it.” She added that Scientology is growing despite the public criticism. “It’s in a hundred and sixty-five countries.”

“Translated into fifty languages!” Jastrow interjected. “It’s the fastest-growing religion.” In his opinion, “Scientologists do more good things for more people in more places around the world than any other organization ever.” He added, “When you study historical perspective of new faiths, they’ve all been—”

“Attacked,” said Archer. “Look at what happened to the—”

“The Christians!” Jastrow said simultaneously. “Think of the Mormons and the Christian Scientists.”

They talked about the church’s focus on celebrities. “Hubbard recognized that if you really want to inspire a culture to have peace and greatness and harmony among men, you need to respect and help the artist to prosper and flourish,” Archer said. “And if he’s particularly well known he needs a place where he can be comfortable. So, Celebrity Centres provide that.” She blamed the press for concentrating too much on Scientology celebrities. Journalists, she said, “don’t write about the hundreds of thousands of other Scientologists.”

“Millions!”

“Millions of other Scientologists. They only write about four friggin’ people!”

Jastrow suggested that Scientology’s critics often had a vested interest. He pointed to psychiatrists, psychologists, doctors, drug



makers, pharmacies—“all those people who make a living and profit and pay their mortgages and pay their college educations and buy their cars, et cetera, et cetera, based on people not being well.”

“Who advertise in the newspapers and on television, more than any other advertisers,” Archer added.

“But this is a collateral issue, darling, in terms of what I’m talking about,” Jastrow continued. “For the first time in America’s experience with war, there are more mental illnesses from Iraq and Afghanistan than physical illnesses,” he said, citing a recent article in USA Today. “So mental illnesses become a big business.” Drugs merely mask mental distress, he said, whereas “Scientology will solve the source of the problem.” The medical and pharmaceutical industries are “prime funders and sponsors of the media,” he said, and therefore might exert “influence on people telling the whole and true story about Scientology just because of the profit motive.” He said that only Scientology could help mankind right itself. “What else is there that we can hang our hopes on?”

“That’s improving civilization,” Archer added.

“Is there some other religion on the horizon that’s going to help mankind?” Jastrow asked. “Just tell me where. If not Scientology, where?”

ANNE ARCHER BEGAN STUDYING with Katselas in 1974, two years after her son Tommy Davis was born. She was the exceptionally beautiful daughter of two successful actors. Her father, John Archer, was best known during the 1930s and 1940s as the voice introducing the radio drama *The Shadow*. (“Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? *The Shadow* knows,” he said at the beginning of the program.) He went on to appear in more than fifty films. Her mother, Marjorie Lord, played Danny Thomas’s wife on



the popular television show *Make Room for Daddy*. With such a bloodline, it might be expected that Archer would be aiming toward stardom, but when she entered the Beverly Hills Playhouse she was coming off a television series (*Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice*) that she didn't respect and that had been canceled after a single season. She was a young mother in a dissolving marriage and an actor with diminishing career prospects.

Katselas had a transformative effect. Like so many others, Archer was magnetized by this ebullient Greek, with his magnificent beard and his badgering, teasing, encouraging, and infuriating personality. He was one of the most inspiring people Archer had ever met. Where had he acquired such wisdom? Some of the other students told her that Katselas was a Scientologist, so she decided to try it out. She began going two or three times a week to the Celebrity Centre to take the Life Repair Program. "I remember walking out of the building and walking down the street toward my car, and I felt like my feet were not touching the ground. I said to myself, 'My God, this is the happiest I've ever been in my entire life. I've finally found something that works!'" She added, "Life didn't seem so hard anymore. I was back in the driver's seat."

When Tommy was old enough, Archer would bring him to the Playhouse while she was taking lessons. He would wander around the theater, venturing into the light booth and watching his mother learning her craft. Jastrow recalled being struck by Tommy's poise even as a five-year-old child. "I am a really good dad, and he taught me how," Jastrow said. He gave the example of a visit from his own parents, who had flown out from Midland, Texas, to meet Terry's new family. After Jastrow had driven them back to the airport, Tommy said, "I notice that your dad was pretty strict with you." Jastrow agreed that his father had been very stern when he was growing up. Then Tommy continued, "I was noticing that you're pretty strict with me." Jastrow pointed to that as a defining



moment in their relationship. “I realized I wanted to be his friend first,” he said. “He was the senior being in that relationship.”

Anne and Terry soon found their way into Scientology, but Tommy was initially raised in his mother’s original faith, Christian Science. His father, William Davis, is a wealthy financier and real-estate developer who was once reported to be among the largest owners of agricultural property in California. He was also a well-known fund-raiser for Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush, and personally contributed an estimated \$350,000 a year to Republican causes. Although Tommy grew up in an environment of money and celebrity, he impressed people with his modesty. He longed to do something to help humanity. Scientology seemed to offer a direction.

Paul Haggis met Tommy at the Celebrity Centre in 1989, when he was seventeen years old—“a sweet and bright boy.” Their meeting came at a critical moment in Tommy’s life. He had just broken up with his girlfriend. Archer had taken him to the Celebrity Centre for counseling, where he took a course called Personal Values and Integrity.

Tommy’s presence immediately caused a stir inside the church. The president of the Celebrity Centre, Karen Hollander, fixed on the idea that Tommy should be her personal assistant. He was young, very rich, and handsome enough to be a movie star himself. He had grown up mixing with famous people. It would be a perfect fit. Whenever celebrities came in, there would be Anne Archer’s son. But that required coaxing Tommy to join the Sea Org. Hollander called in the younger members of her staff to woo him. “You can either go to college and get a wog education, or you can join Sea Org and be doing the best service you could ever do for mankind—and for yourself,” John Peeler, Hollander’s secretary at the time, would tell him.

Although Anne and Terry say they wanted Tommy to get a



college education, they knew of the efforts to recruit him and didn't stand in the way. That fall, Tommy entered Columbia University, but lasted only a single semester. Over Christmas break, he went back into Hollander's office, and when he came out, he excitedly told Peeler he had just signed the billion-year contract.

His job for Hollander was to attend to the celebrities who lounged around the president's office. Lisa Marie Presley was often there, as were Kirstie Alley, and writer-director Floyd Mutrux. John Travolta would drop by occasionally. Also in this crowd was a clique of young actors who had grown up in the church, including Giovanni Ribisi and his sister Marissa, Jenna Elfman, and Juliette Lewis. Davis would arrange for them all to go to movies together. He was charming, attractive, he had a great sense of humor, and eventually, David Miscavige began to notice. "Miscavige liked the fact that he was young and looked trendy and wore Brioni or Armani suits," Mike Rinder observed. "He had a cute BMW. It was an image that Miscavige liked."

Davis moved into Sea Org berthing in a dodgy neighborhood on Wilcox Street in West Hollywood. It was quite a step down from the luxurious life he had enjoyed until then. He was quickly introduced to some of the inner secrets of the organization. In about 1994, he was involved in an embarrassing cover-up when a well-known spokesperson for the church was captured in a video having sex with several other men. Amy Scobee says that church executives were frantic that their spokesperson would be exposed as being gay. Scobee and Karen Hollander set a briefcase with the spokesperson's auditing files in the backseat of the car that Hollander was borrowing at the time—actually, Tommy Davis's BMW—intending to take the files to Gold Base the next day for senior managers to review. Because the car was in a highly secure parking lot, they thought nothing of it. Davis returned late that night, however. He found his car and decided to take it back to the



Sea Org dormitory. When he parked the car on Wilcox Street, he happened to notice the briefcase, so he locked it in the trunk and went to bed.

The next day, Scobee got a call from a sheepish Davis. He said that someone had broken into his car and stolen the briefcase out of the trunk. “When we told Tommy what was in the briefcase, he freaked,” Scobee recalled. “He went around for a week, searching through Dumpsters.” Finally, someone approached Davis about the reward he had offered and led him to the thief, a homeless man who was trying to sell the briefcase; the contents, which were still in it, meant nothing to him. Davis gave the man twenty dollars.<sup>2</sup> Davis was disappointed because the search forced him to miss the ceremony where John Travolta was awarded a Scientology medal.

Davis went through a period of doubt and actually considered dropping out of the Sea Org, according to Scobee, but then he recommitted and became so enthusiastic that he had the Sea Org logo—a laurel wreath with twenty-six leaves representing the stars in the Galactic Confederacy—tattooed on his arm. When Miscavige found out, he berated Davis, saying that he had violated the church’s copyright.

Davis began working with Marty Rathbun during his intensive auditing of Cruise. When Rathbun was thrown in the Hole, Davis became something more than a gofer for the star. He provided a line to Cruise at a time when the actor’s relationship with the church was not yet solidified, and his constant presence beside the superstar boosted the image of Scientology as a hip, insider network. Although Cruise is ten years older, the two men physically resemble each other, with long faces and strong jaws, a likeness that is enhanced by similar spiky haircuts. Their relationship evolved into a friendship, but one that reflected the immense power imbalance between them, as well as Davis’s position as a deputy of the church in the service of its most



precious asset. Until his association with Cruise, Davis had been called Tom, but he became Tommy to distinguish him from the star. In other ways, he became more like him—his clothes, his hair, his intensity.

At the age of nineteen, Davis married a dreamy Belgian woman, Nadine van Hootehem, who was also in the Sea Org. “I made the decision to forward the aims of Scientology,” she told the ABC News program 20/20 in 1998. “I actually compare it a little bit like Mother Teresa.” She added, “It’s a fun activity to set men free.” According to Mike Rinder, Nadine Davis became intensely involved in Tom Cruise’s entourage. “Somehow dealing with Katie Holmes, she did something wrong,” Rinder says. “She became a non-person.” He says that Tommy was forced to divorce her.<sup>3</sup>

Soon after Cruise’s troubles in 2005, Tommy Davis was sent to Clearwater to participate in the Estates Project Force. Normally, the EPF functions as a kind of boot camp for new Sea Org members. Donna Shannon was a veterinarian who had risen to OT VII before signing her billion-year contract. She was surprised to find that about half the people undergoing training were veteran Sea Org members who were being disciplined, including Davis. He seemed like a nice guy, so she was puzzled that he was subjected to the worst hazing. “He complained about being out scrubbing the Dumpster with a toothbrush till late at night,” she recalled, “then he’d be up at six to do our laundry.” Sometimes Davis would be paraded in front of the other Sea Org members as his Ethics Officer shouted, “This guy is not a big shot! He’s lying to you!” Only later did Shannon learn that Davis was Anne Archer’s son. (As it happens, Archer was also at the Clearwater base, taking advanced courses. A teenage Sea Org member—Daniel Montalvo, the same one who guarded Cruise during his auditing sessions—was assigned to keep her in the dark and make sure that she never encountered her son.)



Shannon and Davis worked together, maintaining the grounds. “I was supposedly supervising him,” Shannon said. “I was told to make him work really hard.” That didn’t seem to be a problem for Davis. At one point, Shannon said, he borrowed about a hundred dollars from her because he didn’t have money for food.

One day, Shannon and Davis were taking the bus to a work project. Shannon asked why he was in the EPF.

“I got busted,” Davis told her. “I fucked up on Tom Cruise’s lines”—meaning that he had botched a project Cruise was involved in.

“So what are your plans now?” she asked.

“I just want to do my stuff and get back on post,” Davis replied.

Shannon said that suddenly “it was like a veil went over his eyes, and he goes, ‘I already said too much.’ ”

Several months later, Davis paid her back the money.<sup>4</sup>





When Davis finished the EPF, he replaced Rinder as chief spokesperson for the church, because Rinder was confined to the Hole. One of his first assignments was to deal with John Sweeney, an aggressive reporter for the BBC, who was doing a story on Scientology and had been working with Rinder until then. Davis made the mistake of admitting to Sweeney that he reported to Miscavige every day, spoiling the illusion of the leader as being unavailable and above the fray. Miscavige pulled Rinder out of the Hole and ordered him to help Davis deal with the BBC, although he added, “You’re Tommy Davis’s servant.”

Sweeney immediately sensed that Rinder had been demoted. Rinder was “gaunt, hollow-eyed, strange with a hint of niceness.” Tommy was now “the top dog, gleaming teeth, snappily suited, charming but creepily so.” When Sweeney refused to accede to the church’s restrictions (mainly that he agree not to use the word “cult” in his report) and began independently reporting on the accusations of defectors, he was shadowed by private investigators. A Scientology film crew showed up to document the making of the BBC documentary. Cameras were pointed at cameras. Davis appeared unannounced at Sweeney’s hotel and even traveled across the country to disrupt his interviews with Scientology dissidents. Sweeney had covered wars in Afghanistan, Bosnia, and Chechnya, but he had never had such emotional and psychological pressure placed upon him. During these confrontations, Rinder trailed behind Davis, staring blankly into space as Davis goaded the reporter, inches from his face. When Sweeney suggested that Scientology is a “sadistic cult,” Davis, wearing sunglasses, checked with his cameraman to see that the camcorder was running, then said, “Now listen to me for a second. You have no right to say what is and what isn’t a religion. The Constitution of the United States of America guarantees one’s right to practice and believe freely in this



country. And the definition of religion is very clear. And it's not defined by John Sweeney. For you to repeatedly refer to my faith in those terms is so derogatory and so offensive and so bigoted. And the reason you kept repeating it is 'cause you wanted a reaction like you're getting right now. Well, buddy, you got it! Right here, right now, I'm angry! Real angry!"

Davis turned and walked away, trailed by Sweeney, who protested, "It's your turn to listen to me! I'm a British subject.... "

Another confrontation took place at the "Psychiatry: An Industry of Death" exhibit in Hollywood. Davis once again moved in, nose to nose with Sweeney. "You're accusing members of my religion of brainwashing!" He was referring to an earlier interview Sweeney had conducted with another Scientologist.

"No, Tommy," Sweeney responded, his voice rising, "you were not there—"

"Brainwashing is a crime," Davis said.

"Listen to me! You were not there! At the beginning! Of the interview!" Sweeney shouted in an oddly slow cadence. "You did not hear! Or record! The interview!"

"Do you understand that brainwashing is a crime?" Davis said, unfazed by Sweeney's enraged screams.

Davis's composure and his spirited defense of his church made quite a contrast with the sputtering and eventually deeply chagrined reporter, who apologized to BBC viewers on the air.

In March 2007, John Travolta's new movie, *Wild Hogs*, a comedy about two middle-aged men who decide to become bikers, was scheduled to open in Britain. Concerned that Sweeney would confront Travolta during the publicity for the film, Rinder and Davis planned to travel together to London, but on the day of departure, Davis failed to show up. Someone went to his room, but he was nowhere to be found. Rinder had to travel to London alone. He learned from Miscavige's communicator that Davis had blown.



Sweeney immediately sensed that something was up and kept pestering Rinder about where Davis was. Rinder told him Davis had the flu.

As part of the film promotion, Travolta arrived at the red-carpet London premiere on a motorcycle. Sweeney was standing in the crowd in Leicester Square, well away from the star, crying out, "Are you a member of a sinister, brainwashing cult?" Travolta's fans shouted Sweeney down.

Later, Sweeney asked Rinder if it was true that Miscavige had beaten him, claiming to have an eyewitness.

"Who's the witness?" Rinder asked.

"He wishes to remain confidential because he says he is scared."

"John, that is typical of what you do," Rinder said.

"He says that David Miscavige knocked you to the ground."

"Absolute rubbish, rubbish, rubbish, not true, rubbish."

Rinder threatened to sue if Sweeney aired such allegations. When the BBC program ran, there was no mention of physical abuse. Rinder felt that he had spared the church considerable embarrassment. But, far from being grateful, Miscavige told him that Sweeney's piece should never have run at all. He ordered Rinder to report to an RPF facility in England. Rinder decided he'd had enough. He blew.

Davis called the church and returned voluntarily from Las Vegas, where he had been hiding.<sup>5</sup> He was sent to Clearwater, where he was security-checked by Jessica Feshbach. The aim of the check is to gain a confession using an E-Meter. It can function as a powerful form of thought control.

Davis and Feshbach subsequently married.

ON A RAINY MORNING in late September 2010, I finally got my meeting with Tommy Davis. The profile of Paul Haggis I had been



preparing was nearing publication. Davis and Feshbach, along with four attorneys representing the church, traveled to Manhattan to meet with me; my editor, Daniel Zalewski, and David Remnick, the editor of *The New Yorker*; the two lead fact-checkers on the story, Jennifer Stahl and Tim Farrington, as well as the head of the magazine's fact-checking department, Peter Canby; and our lawyer, Lynn Oberlander. Leading the Scientology legal delegation was Anthony Michael Glassman, a former assistant US attorney who now has a boutique law firm in Beverly Hills, specializing in representing movie stars. On his website, he boasts of a \$10 million judgment against *The New York Times*. The stakes were obvious to everyone.

The Scientology delegation brought with them forty-eight three-ring binders of supporting material, stretching nearly seven linear feet, to respond to the 971 questions the checkers had posed. It was an impressive display. The binders were labeled according to categories, such as "Disappearance of L. Ron Hubbard," "Tom Cruise," "Gold Base," and "Haggis's Involvement in Scientology." Davis emphasized that the church had gone to extraordinary lengths to prepare for this meeting. "Frankly, the only thing I can think that compares would be the presentation that we made in the early 1990s to the IRS."

We sat around a large blond conference table with the kaleidoscopic lights of Times Square garishly whirling in the background. I particularly recall the Dunkin' Donuts sign over Davis's shoulder as he began his presentation. First, he ruled out any discussion of the church's confidential scripture. He compared it to "shoving an image of the Prophet Mohammed in the face of a Muslim" or "insisting that a Jew eat pork." He then attacked the credibility of some of the sources for the piece, whom he called "bitter apostates." "They are unreliable," he said. "They make up stories." He produced a paper by Bryan Wilson, who was an



eminent Oxford sociologist and prominent defender of new religious movements (he died in 2004). Wilson argues that testimony from disaffected members should be treated skeptically, noting, “The apostate is generally in need of self-justification. He seeks to reconstruct his own past to excuse his former affiliations and to blame those who were formerly his closest associates.... He is likely to be suggestible and ready to enlarge or embellish his grievances to satisfy that species of journalist whose interest is more in sensational copy than in an objective statement of the truth.” Davis had highlighted the last part for my benefit.

As an example, Davis singled out Gerald Armstrong, the former Scientology archivist, who received an \$800,000 settlement in a fraud suit against the church in 1986. Davis charged that Armstrong had forged many of the documents that he later disseminated in order to discredit the church’s founder, although he produced no evidence to substantiate that allegation. He passed around a photograph of Armstrong, which, he said, showed Armstrong “sitting naked” with a giant globe in his lap. “This was a photo that was in a newspaper article he did where he said that all people should give up money,” Davis said. “He’s not a very sane person.”<sup>6</sup>

Davis also displayed photographs of what he said were bruises sustained by Mike Rinder’s former wife in 2010, after Rinder physically assaulted her in a Florida parking lot.<sup>7</sup> Davis then showed a mug shot of Marty Rathbun in a jailhouse jumpsuit, after being detained in New Orleans in July 2010 for public drunkenness. “Getting arrested for being drunk on the intersection of Bourbon and Toulouse?” Davis cracked. “That’s like getting arrested for being a leper in a leper colony.” Other defectors, such as Claire and Marc Headley, were “the most despicable people in the world.” Jefferson Hawkins was “an inveterate liar.”

If these people were so reprehensible, I asked, how had they all arrived at such elevated positions in the church?



“They weren’t like that when they were in those positions,” Davis replied.

The defectors we were discussing had not only risen to positions of responsibility within the church; they had also ascended Scientology’s ladder of spiritual accomplishment. I suggested that Scientology didn’t seem to be effective if people at the highest levels of spiritual attainment were actually liars, adulterers, wife beaters, drunks, and embezzlers.

“This is a religion,” Davis responded movingly. “It aspires to greatness, hope, humanity, spiritual freedom. To be greater than we are. To rise above our craven, humanoid instincts.” Scientology doesn’t pretend to be perfect, he said, and it shouldn’t be judged on the misconduct of a few apostates. “I haven’t done things like that,” Davis said. “I haven’t suborned perjury, destroyed evidence, lied—contrary to what Paul Haggis says.” He spoke of his frustration with Haggis after his resignation: “If he was so troubled and shaken on the fundamentals of Scientology ... then why the hell did he stick around for thirty-five years?” He continued: “Did he stay a closet Scientologist for some career-advancement purpose?” Davis shook his head in disgust. “I think he’s the most hypocritical person in the world.” He said he felt that he’d done all he could in dealing with Haggis over the issue of Proposition 8. He added that the individual who had made the mistake of listing the San Diego church as a supporter of the initiative—he didn’t divulge his name—had been “disciplined” for it. I asked what that meant. “He was sat down by a staff member of the local organization,” Davis explained. “He got sorted out.”

Davis thought I was making too much out of the issue of Suppressive Persons in the piece. “Do you know how many people, grand total, there are in the world who have been declared Suppressive?” he asked rhetorically. “A couple of thousand over the years. At most.” He said that in fact many had been restored to



good standing. “Yet again, you’re falling into the trap of defining our religion by the people who’ve left.”

Hubbard had said that only two and a half percent of the human population were suppressive, but one of the problems I faced in writing about Scientology, especially its early days, is that the preponderance of people who had been close to Hubbard had either quietly left the church or been declared Suppressive. Some, like Pat Broeker, had gone underground. Many others, like David Mayo, had signed non-disclosure agreements. Those who remained in the church were off-limits to me.<sup>8</sup>

We discussed the allegations of abuse lodged by many former members against Miscavige. “The only people who will corroborate are their fellow apostates,” Davis said. “They’re a pack of sanctimonious liars.” He produced affidavits from other Scientologists refuting their accusations. He noted that in the tales about Miscavige, the violence always seemed to come out of nowhere. “One would think that if such a thing occurred, which it most certainly did not, there’d have to be a reason,” Davis said.

I had wondered about these outbursts as well. When Rinder and Rathbun were in the church, they claimed that allegations of abuse were baseless. Then, after Rinder defected, he said that Miscavige had beaten him fifty times. Rathbun had told the St. Petersburg Times in 1998 that in the twenty years he had worked closely with Miscavige, he had never seen him hit anyone. “That’s not his temperament,” he had said. “He’s got enough personal horsepower that he doesn’t need to resort to things like that.” Later, he acknowledged to the Times, “That’s the biggest lie I ever told you.” He has also confessed that in 1997 he ordered incriminating documents destroyed in the case of Lisa McPherson, the Scientologist who died of an embolism while under church care. If these men were capable of lying to protect the church, might they not also be capable of lying to destroy it?



However, eleven former Sea Org members told me that Miscavige had assaulted them; twenty-two have told me or testified in court that they have witnessed one or more assaults on other church staff members by their leader.<sup>9</sup> Marc Headley, one of those who say Miscavige beat them on several occasions, said he knows thirty others who were attacked by the church leader. Rinder says he witnessed fourteen other executives who were assaulted, some on multiple occasions, such as the elderly church president, Heber Jentzsch, who has been in the Hole since 2006. Some people were slapped, others punched or kicked or choked. Lana Mitchell, who worked in Miscavige's office, saw him hit his brother, Ronnie, in the stomach, during a meeting. Mariette Lindstein, who also worked in Miscavige's office, witnessed as many as twenty attacks. "You get very hardened," she admitted. She saw Miscavige banging the heads of two of his senior executives, Marc Yager and Guillaume Lesevre, together repeatedly, until blood came from Lesevre's ear. Tom De Vocht says he witnessed Miscavige striking other members of the staff about a hundred times. Others who never saw such violence spoke of their constant fear of the leader's wrath.

The attacks often came out of the blue, "like the snap of a finger," as John Peeler described it. Bruce Hines, who was a senior auditor in 1994, told me that before he was struck, "I heard his voice in the hallway, deep and distinctive, 'Where is that motherfucker?' He looked in my office. 'There he is!' Without another word he came up and hit me with an open hand. I didn't fall down. It was at that point I was put in RPF. I was incarcerated six years."

Davis admitted that the musical chairs episode occurred, even though the church denies the existence of the Hole, where it took place. He explained that Miscavige had been away from Gold Base for some time, and when he returned, he found that many jobs had



been reassigned without his permission. The game was intended to demonstrate how disruptive such wholesale changes could be on an organization. “All the rest of it is a bunch of embellishment and noise and hoo-haw,” Davis told me. “Chairs being ripped apart, and people being threatened that they’re going to be sent to far-flung places in the world, plane tickets being purchased, and they’re going to force their spouses—and on and on and on. I mean, it’s just nuts!”

The Scientology delegation objected to the negative tenor of The New Yorker queries about the church’s leader, including such small details as whether or not he had a tanning bed. “I mean, this is The New Yorker. It sounds like the National Enquirer,” Davis complained. He wouldn’t say what Miscavige’s salary was (the church is not required to publicly disclose that information), but he derided the idea that the church leader enjoyed a luxurious lifestyle. Miscavige, he contended, doesn’t live on the ostentatious scale of many other religious leaders. “There’s no big rings. There’s no fancy silk robes,” he said. “There’s no mansion. There’s no none of that. None, none, none. Zero, zilcho, not.” As for the extravagant birthday presents given to the church leader, Davis said that it was tradition for Sea Org members to give each other gifts for their birthdays. It was “just obnoxious” for me to single out Miscavige.

“It’s not true that he’s gotten for his birthday a motorcycle, fine suits, and leather jackets?” I asked.

“I gave him a leather jacket once,” Davis conceded.

“So it is true?” I asked. “A motorcycle, fine suits?”

“I never heard that,” he responded. “And as far as fine suits, I’ve got some fine suits. The church bought those.” In fact, he was wearing a beautiful custom-made suit, with actual buttonholes on the cuffs. He explained that for IRS purposes it was considered a uniform. When Sea Org members mix with the public, he



explained, they dress appropriately. “It’s called Uniform K.”

Davis declined to let me speak to Miscavige; nor would he or the other members of the group agree to talk about their own experiences with the church leader.

I asked about the leader’s missing wife, Shelly Miscavige. John Brousseau and Claire Headley believe that she was taken to Running Springs, near Big Bear, California, one of several sites where Hubbard’s works are stored in underground vaults. “She’ll be out of sight, out of mind until the day she dies,” Brousseau had predicted, “like Mary Sue Hubbard.”

In the meeting, Tommy Davis told me, “I definitely know where she is,” but he wouldn’t disclose the location.

Davis brought up Jack Parsons’s black magic society, which he asserted Hubbard had infiltrated. “He was sent in there by Robert Heinlein, who was running off-book intelligence operations for naval intelligence at the time.” Davis said that the church had been looking for additional documentation to support its claim. “A biography that just came out three weeks ago on Bob Heinlein actually confirmed it at a level that we’d never been able to before, because of something his biographer had found.”

The book Davis was referring to is the first volume of an authorized Heinlein biography, by William H. Patterson, Jr. There is no mention there of Heinlein sending Hubbard to break up the Parsons ring. I wrote Patterson, asking if his research supported the church’s assertion. He responded that Scientologists had been the source of the claim in the first place, and that they provided him with a set of documents that supposedly backed it up. Patterson said that the material did not support the factual assertions the church was making. “I was unable to make any direct connection of the facts of Heinlein’s life at the time to that narrative or any of its supporting documents,” Patterson wrote. (The book reveals that Heinlein’s second wife, Leslyn, had an affair with Hubbard.



Interestingly, given Hubbard's condemnation of homosexuality, the wife charged that Heinlein had as well.)

"Even those allegations from Sara Northrup," Davis continued, mentioning the woman who had been Parsons's girlfriend before running off with Hubbard. "He was never married to Sara Northrup. She filed for divorce in an effort to try and create a false record that she had been married to him." He said that she had been under a cloud of suspicion, even when she lived with Parsons. "It always had been considered that she had been sent in there by the Russians," he said. "I can never pronounce her name. Her actual true name is a Russian name." Davis was referencing a charge that Hubbard once made when he was portraying his wife as a Communist spy named Sara Komkovadamanov. "That was one of the reasons L. Ron Hubbard never had a relationship with her," Davis continued. "He never had a child with her. He wasn't married to her. But he did save her life and pull her out of that whole black magic ring." Davis described Sara as "a couple beers short of a six-pack, to use a phrase." He included in the binders a letter from her, dated June 11, 1951, a few days before their divorce proceedings:

I, Sara Northrup Hubbard, do hereby state that the things I have said about L. Ron Hubbard in the courts and the public prints have been grossly exaggerated or are entirely false.

I have not at any time believed otherwise than that L. Ron Hubbard was a fine and brilliant man.

She went on to say, "In the future I wish to lead a quiet and orderly existence with my little girl far away from the enturbulating influences which have ruined my marriage." (Sara did live a quiet and orderly existence until her death, of breast cancer, in 1997. She explained why she made the tapes, in her last



months of life. “I’m not interested in revenge,” she said. “I’m interested in the truth.”)

The meeting with the Scientology delegation lasted all day. Sandwiches were brought in. Davis and I discussed an assertion that Marty Rathbun had made to me about the OT III creation story. While Hubbard was in exile, Rathbun said, he wrote a memo suggesting an experiment in which ascending Scientologists might skip the OT III level—a memo Rathbun says that Miscavige had ordered destroyed. “Of every allegation that’s in here,” Davis said, waving the binder containing fact-checking queries, “this one would perhaps be, hands down, the absolutely, without question, most libelous.” He explained that the cornerstone of the faith was the writings of the founder. “Mr. Hubbard’s material must be and is applied precisely as written,” Davis said. “It’s never altered. It’s never changed. And there probably is no more heretical or more horrific transgression that you could have in the Scientology religion than to alter the technology.”

But hadn’t certain derogatory references to homosexuality found in some editions of Hubbard’s books been changed after his death?

Davis agreed that was so, but he maintained that “the current editions are one-hundred-percent, absolutely fully verified as being according to what Mr. Hubbard wrote.” Davis said they were checked against Hubbard’s original dictation.

“The extent to which the references to homosexuality have changed are because of mistaken dictation?” I asked.

“No, because of the insertion, I guess, of somebody who was a bigot,” Davis replied. “The point is, it wasn’t Mr. Hubbard.”

“Somebody put the material in those—”

“I can only imagine,” Davis said, cutting me off.

“Who would have done it?”

“I have no idea.”

“Hmm.”



“I don’t think it really matters,” Davis said. “The point is that neither Mr. Hubbard nor the church has any opinion on the subject of anyone’s sexual orientation....”

“Someone inserted words that were not his into literature that was propagated under his name, and that’s been corrected now?” I asked, trying to be clear.

“Yeah, I can only assume that’s what happened,” Davis said. “And by the way,” he added, referring to Quentin Hubbard, “his son’s not gay.”

During his presentation, Davis showed an impressively produced video that portrayed Scientology’s worldwide efforts for literary programs and drug education, the translation of Hubbard’s work into dozens of languages, and the deluxe production facilities at Gold Base. “The real question is who would produce the kind of material we produce and do the kinds of things we do, set up the kind of organizational structure that we set up?” Davis asked. “Or what kind of man, like L. Ron Hubbard, would spend an entire lifetime researching, putting together the kind of material, suffer all the trials and tribulations and go through all the things he went through in his life ... or even with the things that we, as individuals, have to go through, as part of the new religion? Work seven days a week, three hundred sixty-five days a year, fourteen-, fifteen-, eighteen-hour days sometimes, out of sheer total complete dedication to our faith. And do it all, for what? As some sort of sham? Just to pull the wool over everyone’s eyes?” He concluded, “It’s ridiculous. Nobody works that hard to cheat people. Nobody gets that little sleep to screw over their fellow man.”

We came to the section in the queries dealing with Hubbard’s war record. His voice filling with emotion, Davis said that if it was true that Hubbard had not been injured, then “the injuries that he handled by the use of Dianetics procedures were never handled, because they were injuries that never existed; therefore, Dianetics



is based on a lie; therefore, Scientology is based on a lie.” He concluded: “The fact of the matter is that Mr. Hubbard was a war hero.”

I believe everyone on The New Yorker side of the table was taken aback by this daring equation, one that seemed not only fair but testable. As proof of his claim that Hubbard had been injured, Davis provided a letter from the US Naval Hospital in Oakland, dated December 1, 1945. It states that Hubbard had been hospitalized that year for a duodenal ulcer, but was pronounced “fit for duty.” Davis had highlighted a passage in the letter: “Eyesight very poor, beginning with conjunctivitis actinic in 1942. Lameness in right hip from service connected injury. Infection in bone. Not misconduct, all service connected.” Davis added later that according to Robert Heinlein, Hubbard’s ankles had suffered a “drumhead-type injury”; this can result, Davis explained, “when a ship is torpedoed or bombed.”

Despite subsequent requests to produce additional records, this was the only document Davis provided to prove that the founder of Scientology was not lying about his war injuries. And yet, Hubbard’s medical records show that only five days after receiving the doctor’s note, Hubbard applied for a pension based on his conjunctivitis, an ulcer, a sprained knee, malaria, and arthritis in his right hip and shoulder. His vision was little changed from what it had been before the war. This was the same period during which Hubbard claimed to have been blinded and made a hopeless cripple.

Davis acknowledged that some of Hubbard’s medical records did not corroborate the founder’s version of events. The church itself, Davis confided, had been troubled by the contradiction between Hubbard’s story and the official medical records. But he said there were other records that did confirm Hubbard’s version of events, based on various documents the church had assembled. I asked



where the documents had come from. "From St. Louis," Davis explained, "from the archives of navy and military service. And also, the church got it from various avenues of research. Just meeting people, getting records from people."

The man who examined the records and reconciled the dilemma, he said, was "Mr. X." Davis explained, "Anyone who saw JFK remembers a scene on the Mall where Kevin Costner's character goes and meets a man named Mr. X, who's played by Donald Sutherland." In the film, Mr. X is an embittered intelligence agent who explains that the Kennedy assassination was actually a coup staged by the military-industrial complex. In real life, Davis said, Mr. X was Colonel Leroy Fletcher Prouty, who had worked in the Office of Special Operations at the Pentagon. (Oliver Stone, who directed JFK, says that Mr. X was a composite character, based in part on Prouty.) In the 1980s, Prouty worked as a consultant for Scientology and was a frequent contributor to Freedom magazine. "We finally got so frustrated with this point of conflicting medical records that we took all of Mr. Hubbard's records to Fletcher Prouty," Davis continued. Prouty told the church representatives that because Hubbard had an "intelligence background," his records were subjected to a process known as "sheep-dipping." Davis explained that this was military parlance for "what gets done to a set of records for an intelligence officer. And, essentially, they create two sets." (Prouty died in 2001.)

The sun was setting and the Dunkin' Donuts sign glowed brighter. As the meeting was finally coming to an end, Davis made a plea for understanding. "We're an organization that's new and tough and different and has been through a hell of a lot, and has had its ups and downs," he said. "And the fact of the matter is nobody will take the time and do the story right."

Davis had staked much of his argument on the veracity of Hubbard's military records. The fact-checkers had already filed a



Freedom of Information Act request for all such material with the National Archives in St. Louis, where military records are kept. Such requests can drag on well past deadline, and we were running short on time. An editorial assistant, Yvette Siegert, flew to St. Louis to speed things along.

Meantime, Davis sent me a copy of a document that he said clearly confirmed Hubbard's heroism: a "Notice of Separation from the US Naval Service," dated December 6, 1945. The document specifies medals won by Hubbard, including a Purple Heart with a Palm, implying that he was wounded in action twice. But John E. Bircher, the spokesman for the Military Order of the Purple Heart, wrote me that the Navy uses gold and silver stars, "NOT a palm," to indicate multiple wounds. Davis included a photograph of the actual medals Hubbard supposedly won, but two of them weren't even created until after Hubbard left active service.

There was a fire in the St. Louis archives in 1973, which destroyed a number of documents, but Yvette returned with more than nine hundred pages of what the archivists insisted were Hubbard's complete military records. Nowhere in the file is there mention of Hubbard's being wounded in battle or breaking his feet. X-rays taken of Hubbard's right shoulder and hip showed calcium deposits, but there was no evidence of any bone or joint disease in his ankles.

There is a Notice of Separation in the official records, but it is not the one Davis sent me. The differences in the two documents are telling. The St. Louis document indicates that Hubbard earned four medals for service, but they reflect no distinction or valor. The church document indicates, falsely, that Hubbard completed four years of college, obtaining a degree in civil engineering. The official document correctly notes two years of college and no degree.

The official Notice of Separation was signed by Lieutenant (jg)



J. C. Rhodes, who also signed Hubbard's detachment paperwork. On the church document, the commanding officer who signed off on Hubbard's separation was "Howard D. Thompson, Lt. Cmdr." The file contains a letter, from 2000, to another researcher, who had written for more information about Thompson. An analyst with the National Archives responded that the records of commissioned naval officers at that time had been reviewed and "there was no Howard D. Thompson listed."

The church, after being informed of these discrepancies, asserted, "Our expert on military records has advised us that, in his considered opinion, there is nothing in the Thompson notice that would lead him to question its validity." Eric Voelz and William Seibert, two longtime archivists at the St. Louis facility, examined the church's document and pronounced it a forgery.<sup>10</sup>

Eric Voelz additionally told The New Yorker, "The United States has never handed out Purple Hearts with a palm." He said that ditto marks, which are found on the document provided by the church, do not typically appear on forms of this kind. The font was also suspect, since it was not consistent with the size or style of the times. Voelz had never heard of the "Marine Medal," and he took issue with the "Br. & Dtch. Vict. Meds." found on the church document, saying that medals awarded by foreign countries are not listed on a Notice of Separation, and that they were unlikely to have been awarded to an American in any case.

A few months after this meeting, Davis and Feshbach stopped representing Scientology, even though they continued to be listed as the top spokespeople on the church website. Rumor from former members is that Davis blew but was recovered and once again subjected to sec-checking. Then Feshbach became seriously ill. According to the church, they are on a leave of absence from the Sea Org for medical reasons. They are now living in Texas. When I last spoke to Davis, he said, "I think you should know my



allegiances haven't changed—at all.” He added: “I don't have to answer your questions anymore.”

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<sup>1</sup> In my meeting with Isham, he had asserted that Scientology is not a “faith-based religion.” Leaving aside the question of what religion is without faith, I pointed out that in Scientology's upper levels, there was a cosmology that would have to be accepted on faith. Isham responded that he wasn't going to discuss the details of OT III, nor had I asked him to. “You understand the only reason it's confidential is because in the wrong hands it can hurt people,” he told me, evidently referring to Hubbard's warning that those who are not spiritually prepared to receive the information would die, of pneumonia.

<sup>2</sup> The church denies that this ever happened. Davis admits that the briefcase was lost but claims that there were no sex-related videos inside.

<sup>3</sup> Davis says he and his wife divorced because of irreconcilable differences, and that “it had nothing to do with the organization.”

<sup>4</sup> Davis says that he does not recall meeting Shannon, has never scrubbed a Dumpster, and has no need to borrow money.

<sup>5</sup> Davis denies that he blew or was in Las Vegas. Noriyuki Matsumaru, who was a finance officer in the Religious Technology Center at the time, told me he was in charge of handling Davis's punishment when he returned.

<sup>6</sup> Armstrong told me that he was actually wearing running shorts in the photo, which were obscured by the globe. His settlement with the church prohibited him from talking about Scientology, a prohibition he has ignored, and the church has won two breach-of-contract suits against him, including a \$500,000 judgment in 2004, which Armstrong didn't pay. He gave away most of his money and continues to speak openly about the church.

<sup>7</sup> Rinder denies committing violence against his wife. A sheriff's report supports this.

<sup>8</sup> At this point Paul Haggis had not been declared Suppressive. He later was.

<sup>9</sup> The list of those who told me they had been physically assaulted by David Miscavige:



Mike Rinder, Gale Irwin, Marty Rathbun, Jefferson Hawkins, Tom De Vocht, Mark Fisher, Bruce Hines, Bill Dendiu, Guy White, Marc Headley, and Stefan Castle. Those who said they had witnessed such abuse: John Axel, Marty Rathbun, Janela Webster, Tom De Vocht, Marc Headley, Eric Knutson, Amy Scobee, Dan Koon, Steve Hall, Claire Headley, Mariette Lindstein, John Peeler, Andre Tabayoyan, Vicki Aznaran, Jesse Prince, Mark Fisher, Bill Dendiu, Mike Rinder, David Lingerfelter, Denise (Larry) Brennan, Debbie Cook, and Lana Mitchell. One witness refused to have his name printed. Other witnesses have been reported in the press.

<sup>10</sup> The reader can compare the two Notices of Separation by going to The New Yorker's posting on DocumentCloud: <http://documents.newyorker.com/2011/02/notice-of-separation-l-ron-hubbard/>. Gerald Armstrong testified that he had seen a document, "either a fitness report or something similar around the time of the end of the war," that bore the signature of "a Commander Thompson," which he believed that Hubbard had actually forged (Church of Scientology California vs. Gerald Armstrong, May 15, 1984).



## Epilogue

**I**f Scientology is based on a lie, as Tommy Davis's formulation at the New Yorker meeting suggests, what does it say about the many people who believe in its doctrine or—like Davis and Feshbach—publicly defend and promote the organization and its practices?

Of course, no religion can prove that it is “true.” There are myths and miracles at the core of every great belief system that, if held up to the harsh light of a scholar or an investigative reporter, could easily be passed off as lies. Did Mohammed really ride into Heaven on the back of his legendary transport, the steed Buraq? Did Jesus' disciples actually encounter their crucified leader after his burial? Were these miracles or visions or lies? Would the religions survive without them?

There is no question that a belief system can have positive, transformative effects on people's lives. Many current and former Scientologists have attested to the value of their training and the insight they derived from their study of the religion. They have the right to believe whatever they choose. But it is a different matter to use the protections afforded a religion by the First Amendment to falsify history, to propagate forgeries, and to cover up human-rights abuses.

Hubbard once wrote that “the old religion”—by which he meant Christianity—was based on “a very painful lie,” which was the idea of Heaven. “Yes, I've been to Heaven. And so have you,” he writes. “It was complete with gates, angels and plaster saints—and electronic implantation equipment.” Heaven, he says, was built as an implant station 43 trillion years ago. “So there was a Heaven after all—which is why you are on this planet and were condemned



never to be free again—until Scientology.” He went on: “What does this do to any religious nature of Scientology? It strengthens it. New religions always overthrow the false gods of the old, they do something to better man. We can improve man. We can show the old gods false. And we can open up the universe as a happier place in which a spirit may dwell.”

One might compare Scientology with the Church of Latter Day Saints, a new religion of the previous century. The founder of the movement, Joseph Smith, claimed to have received a pair of golden plates from the angel Moroni in upstate New York in 1827, along with a pair of magical “seeing stones,” which allowed him to read the contents. Three years later, he published The Book of Mormon, founding a movement that would provoke the worst outbreak of religious persecution in American history. Mormons were chased all across the country because of their practice of polygamy and their presumed heresy. Smith himself was murdered by a mob in Carthage, Illinois. His beleaguered followers sought to escape the United States and establish a religious theocracy in the territory of Utah, which they called Zion. Mormons were so despised that there was a bill in Congress to exterminate them. And yet Mormonism would evolve and go on to become one of the fastest-growing denominations in the twentieth, and now the twenty-first, centuries. Members of the faith now openly run for president of the United States. In much of the world, this religion, which was once tormented because of its perceived anti-American values, is now thought of as being the most American of religions; indeed, that’s how many Mormons think of it as well. It is a measure not only of the religion’s success but also of the ability of a faith to adapt and change.

And yet Joseph Smith was plainly a liar. In answer to the charge of polygamy, he claimed he had only one wife, when he had already accumulated a harem. A strange but revealing episode



occurred in 1835, when Smith purchased several Egyptian mummies from an itinerant merchant selling such curiosities. Inside the mummy cases were scrolls of papyrus, reduced to fragments, which Smith declared were the actual writings of the Old Testament patriarchs Abraham and Joseph. Smith produced what he called a translation of the papyri, titled *The Book of Abraham*. It still forms a portion of Mormon doctrine. In America at the time, Egyptian was still thought to be indecipherable, but the Rosetta Stone had already been discovered, and Jean-François Champollion had successfully rendered the hieroglyphic language into French. In 1966, the Joseph Smith papyri were discovered in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It was soon shown that the passages that Smith “translated” were common funerary documents with no reference to Abraham or Joseph whatsoever. This fraud has been known for decades, but it has made little difference in the growth of the religion or the devotion of its adherents. Belief in the irrational is one definition of faith, but it is also true that clinging to absurd or disputed doctrines binds a community of faith together and defines a barrier to the outside world.

The evolution of Scientology into a religion also resembles the progression of Christian Science, the faith Tommy Davis was born into. Like Hubbard, Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, experimented with alternative ways of healing. Like Hubbard, she claimed to have been an invalid who cured herself; she, too, wrote a book based on her experience, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, which became the basis for the founding of the Church of Christ, Scientist, in 1879. Far more than is the case with Scientology, Christian Science stands against mainstream medical practices, even though both organizations lay claim to being more “scientific” than religious. Many religions, including Christian Science, Jehovah’s Witnesses, even Christianity—have known scorn and persecution. Some, like the Shakers and



the Millerites, died out, but others, including Mormons and Pentecostals, have elbowed their way into the crowded religious landscape of American society.

The practice of disconnection, or shunning, is not unique to Scientology, nor is the longing for religious sanctuary. America itself was founded by true believers who separated themselves from their non-Puritan kinfolk by placing an ocean between them. New religious leaders continually appear, giving expression to unmet spiritual needs. There is a constant churning of spiritual movements and denominations all over the world, one that advances with freedom of expression. One must look at L. Ron Hubbard and the odyssey of his movement against this historical backdrop and the natural human yearning for transcendence and submission.

In the late 1970s, I lived for several months in an Amish and Mennonite community in central Pennsylvania, researching my first book.<sup>1</sup> Their movement had been nearly annihilated in Europe, but in the 1720s they began taking refuge in William Penn's colony, the "holy experiment" of Pennsylvania. Amish life has remained essentially unchanged since then, a kind of museum of eighteenth-century farm life. The adherents live sequestered lives, out of the drift of popular culture, on a kind of religious atoll. I was moved by the beauty and simplicity of their lives. The Amish see the Earth as God's garden, and their duty is to tend it. The environment they surround themselves with is filled with a sense of peace and a purposeful orderliness. Individuality is sanded down to the point that one's opinions are as similar to another's as the approved shape of a bonnet or the regulation beard. Because fashion and novelty are outlawed, one feels comfortably encased in a timeless, unchanging vacuum. The enforced conformity dims the noise of diversity and the anxiety of uncertainty; one feels closer to eternity. One is also aware of the electrified fence of orthodoxy



that surrounds and protects this Edenic paradise, and the expulsion that awaits those who doubt or question. Still, there is a kind of quiet majesty in the Amish culture—not because of their rejection of modernity, but because of their principled non-violence and their adherence to a way of living that tempers their fanaticism. The Amish suffer none of the social opprobrium that Scientologists must endure; indeed, they are generally treated like beloved endangered animals, coddled by their neighbors and smiled upon by society. And yet they are highly schismatic, willing to break off all relations with their dearest relatives on what would seem to an outsider to be an inane point of doctrine or even the question of whether one can allow eaves on a house or pictures on a wall.

As adorable as the Amish appear to strangers, such isolated and intellectually deprived religious communities can become self-destructive, especially when they revolve around the whims of a single tyrannical leader. David Koresh created such a community in the Branch Davidian compound that he established near Waco and aptly called Ranch Apocalypse. In 1993, I was asked to write about the siege that was then under way. I decided not to, because there were more reporters on the scene than Branch Davidians; however, I had been unsettled by the sight of the twenty-one children that Koresh sent out of the compound shortly before the fatal inferno. Those children left behind their parents and the only life they had known. They were ripped out of the community of faith, placed in government vans, and ushered through a curtain of federal agents and reporters onto the stage of an alien world and who knows what future. I thought there must be other children who had experienced similar traumas; what had become of them?

There is a strangely contorted mound in a cemetery in Oakland, California, close by the naval hospital where Hubbard spent his last months in uniform. Under an undistinguished headstone rest four hundred bodies out of the more than nine hundred followers of Jim



Jones who perished in Jonestown in 1978. The caskets had been stacked on top of each other on the side of a bulldozed hillside, then the earth was filled in, grass was planted, and the tragedy of Jonestown was buried in the national memory as one more inexplicable religious calamity. The members of the Peoples Temple, as Jones called his movement, had been drawn to his Pentecostal healing services, his social activism, and his racial egalitarianism. Charisma and madness were inextricably woven into the fabric of his personality, along with an insatiable sexual appetite that accompanied Jones's terror of abandonment. In his search for a secure religious community, Jones had repeatedly uprooted his congregation. Finally, in May 1977, the entire movement disappeared, virtually overnight. Without warning, leaving jobs and homes and family members who were not a part of the Peoples Temple, they were spirited away to a jungle encampment in Guyana, South America, which Jones billed as a socialist paradise. There he began to school them in suicide.

I learned that not everyone had died in Jonestown. Among the survivors were Jones's three sons: Stephan, Tim, and Jim Junior. They had been away from the camp playing basketball against the Guyanese national team in the capital city of Georgetown. These haunted young men had never before told their stories. One of the privileges of being a journalist is to be trusted to hear such memories in all their emotional complexity. One night I went to dinner with Tim Jones and his wife, Lorna. Tim was physically powerful, able to press a hundred pounds with either arm, but he couldn't fly on an airplane because of his panic attacks. He wanted his wife to come along because he had never given her a full account, and he wanted to be in a public place so he wouldn't cry. It was Tim who had to return to Jonestown to identify the bodies of everyone he knew, including his parents, his siblings, and his own wife and children, his whole world. He was convinced that, if



he had been there, he could have prevented the suicides. He told this story, bawling, pounding the table, as the waiter steered away and the other diners stared at their plates. Never have I felt so keenly the danger of new religious movements and the damage that is done to people who are lured into such groups, not out of weakness in character but through their desire to do good and live meaningful lives.

SCIENTOLOGY WANTS TO BE understood as a scientific approach to spiritual enlightenment. It has, really, no grounding in science at all. It would be better understood as a philosophy of human nature; seen in that light, Hubbard's thought could be compared with that of other moral philosophers, such as Immanuel Kant and Søren Kierkegaard, although no one has ever approached the sweep of Hubbard's work. His often ingenious and minutely observed categories of behavior have been shadowed by the bogus elements of his personality and the absurdity that is interwoven with his bouts of brilliance, making it difficult for non-Scientologists to know what to make of it. Serious academic study of his writing has also been constrained by the vindictive reputation of the church.

The field of psychotherapy is Scientology's more respectable cousin, although it cannot honestly claim to be a science, either. Freud's legacy is that of a free and open inquiry into the motivations of behavior. He also created postulates—such as the ego, the superego, and the id—that might not endure strict scientific testing, but do offer an approach to understanding the inner workings of the personality. Hubbard's concept of the reactive and analytical minds attempts to do something similar. Jung's exploration of archetypes, based on his psychological explorations, anticipates the evolution of Dianetics into Scientology—in other words, the drift from therapy to spiritualism.



There is no point in questioning Scientology's standing as a religion; in the United States, the only opinion that really counts is that of the IRS; moreover, people do believe in the principles of Scientology and live within a community of faith—what else is required to accept it as such? The stories that invite ridicule or disbelief, such as Xenu and the Galactic Confederacy, may be fanciful—or pure “space opera,” to use Hubbard's term—but every religion features bizarre and uncanny elements. Just consider some of the obvious sources of Hubbard's unique concoction—Buddhism, Hinduism, magic, General Semantics, and shamanism—that also provide esoteric categories to explain the ineffable mysteries of life and consciousness. One can find parallels in many faiths with the occult beliefs and practices of Scientology. The concept of expelling body thetans, for instance, is akin to casting out demons in the Christian tradition. But like every new religion, Scientology is handicapped by the frailties of its founder and the absence of venerable traditions that enshrine it in the culture.

To an outsider who has struggled to understand the deep appeal of Scientology to its adherents, despite the flaws and contradictions of the religion that many of them reluctantly admit, perhaps the missing element is art. Older faiths have a body of literature, music, ceremony, and iconography that infuses the doctrinal aspects of the religion with mystery and importance. The sensual experience of being in a great cathedral or mosque may have nothing to do with “belief,” but it does draw people to the religion and rewards them emotionally. Scientology has built many impressive churches, but they are not redolent palaces of art. The aesthetic element in Scientology is Hubbard's arresting voice as a writer. His authoritative but folksy tone and his impressionistic grasp of human nature have cast a spell over millions of readers. More important, however, is the nature of his project: the self-portrait of the inside of his mind. It is perhaps impossible to reduce



his mentality to a psychiatric diagnosis, in part because his own rendering of it is so complex, intricate, and comprehensive that one can only stand back and appreciate the qualities that drove him, hour after hour, year after year, to try to get it all on the page—his insight, his daring, his narcissism, his defiance, his relentlessness, his imagination—these are the traits of an artist. It is one reason that Hubbard identified with the creative community and many of them with him.

Scientology orients itself toward celebrity, and by doing so, the church awards famousness a spiritual value. People who seek fame—especially in the entertainment industry—naturally gravitate to Hollywood, where Scientology is waiting for them, validating their ambition and promising recruits a way in. The church has pursued a marketing strategy that relies heavily on endorsements by celebrities, who actively promote the religion. They speak of the positive role that Scientology has played in their lives. When David Miscavige awarded Tom Cruise the Freedom Medal of Valor in 2004, he praised his effectiveness as a spokesperson, saying, “Across ninety nations, five thousand people hear his word of Scientology every hour.” It is difficult to know how such a figure was derived, but according to Miscavige, “Every minute of every hour someone reaches for LRH technology, simply because they know Tom Cruise is a Scientologist.” Probably no other member of the church derives as much material benefit from his religion as Cruise does, and consequently none bears a greater moral responsibility for the indignities inflicted on members of the Sea Org, sometimes directly because of his membership. Excepting Paul Haggis, no prominent Hollywood Scientologist has spoken out publicly against the widespread allegations of physical abuse, involuntary confinement, and forced servitude within the church’s clergy, although many such figures have quietly walked away.

Since leaving Scientology, Haggis has been in therapy, which he



has found helpful. He's learned how much he blames others for his problems, especially those closest to him. "I really wish I had found a good therapist when I was twenty-one," he said. In Scientology, he always felt a subtle pressure to impress his auditor and then write up a glowing success story. Now, he said, "I'm not fooling myself that I'm a better man than I am."

The same month that Haggis's resignation from the church had become public, United Artists, Tom Cruise's studio, terminated Haggis's development deal. I asked if the break had anything to do with his resignation. Haggis thought for a moment, then said, "You don't do something that obvious—it'd be a bad PR move." He added, "They'd run out of money, so we all knew we were being kicked out."

Recently, he and Deborah decided to divorce. They have moved to the same neighborhood in New York, so that they can share custody of their son. Deborah has also left the church. Both say that the decision to end their marriage has nothing to do with their renunciation of Scientology.

On November 9, 2010, *The Next Three Days* premiered at the Ziegfeld Theatre, in Manhattan. Movie stars lined the red carpet as photographers fired away. Jason Beghe was there, and he told me that he had taken in Daniel Montalvo, the young man who lost his finger in the church book-publishing plant. Montalvo had recently blown from the Sea Org. He was nineteen years old. "He's never seen television," the actor marveled. "He doesn't even know who Robert Redford is." Nazanin Boniadi, who has a small part in the movie, was also there; Haggis had given her the role after learning what had happened to her after the church had engineered her match with Tom Cruise. "Naz's story was one of those that made me realize I had been lied to for a long time, that I had to leave and do so loudly," Haggis later confided.

After the screening, everyone drifted over to the Oak Room of



the Plaza Hotel. Haggis was in a corner receiving accolades from his friends when I found him. I asked if he felt that he had finally left Scientology. “I feel much more myself, but there’s a sadness,” he admitted. “If you identify yourself with something for so long, and suddenly you think of yourself as not that thing, it leaves a bit of space.” He went on, “It’s not really the sense of a loss of community. Those people who walked away from me were never really my friends.” He understood how they felt about him, and why. “In Scientology, in the Ethics Conditions, as you go down from Normal through Doubt, you get to Enemy, and finally, near the bottom, there is Treason. What I did was a treasonous act.”

The film did poorly at the box office. It had the misfortune of opening to mixed reviews on the same night that the last installment of the Harry Potter series premiered. Haggis had to close his office. It looked like another bleak period in his career, but he followed it by writing a screenplay for a video game, *Modern Warfare 3*, which would go on to set a sales record, earning \$1 billion in the first sixteen days after its release.

I once asked Haggis about the future of his relationship with Scientology. “These people have long memories,” he told me. “My bet is that, within two years, you’re going to read something about me in a scandal that looks like it has nothing to do with the church.” He thought for a moment, then said, “I was in a cult for thirty-four years. Everyone else could see it. I don’t know why I couldn’t.”

MARTY RATHBUN DIVIDES the people who leave Scientology into three camps. There are those who reject the teachings of L. Ron Hubbard entirely, such as Paul Haggis; and those who still believe entirely, but think that the church under David Miscavige has taken Scientology away from the original, true teachings of the founder.



There is a third category, which he has been struggling to define, that includes those people who are willing neither to swallow all the dogma nor to throw away the insights they gained from their experience. Hubbard's life and teachings are still the guideposts of their lives. "It wouldn't stick if there wasn't a tremendous amount of good it did for them," Rathbun says. He's been studying the history of other religions for parallels, and he quotes an old Zen proverb: "When the master points at the Moon, many people never see it at all, they only look at the master."

Rathbun has been counseling Scientologists who leave the church, and because of that he's been subject to continual monitoring and harassment from the church. His computers have been hacked and phone records have been stolen. A group of "Squirrel Busters" moved into his little community of Ingleside on the Bay, near Corpus Christi, in order to spy on him and drive him away through constant harassment. They wore video cameras on their hats and patrolled the neighborhood in a golf cart or occasionally a paddleboat. This lasted for 199 days. That tactic didn't work, because his neighbors rallied to his support. Many other defectors have been harassed and followed by private investigators.

On a sweltering Fourth of July weekend, 2011, a group of about a hundred "independent" Scientologists gathered at a lake cabin in East Texas. Rathbun and Mike Rinder had organized it. A few courageous swimmers were leaping off the dock, but rumors of alligators kept most people on the shore. A brief, powerful storm rolled through, driving everyone to shelter.

One of the attendees was Stephen Pfauth, known as Sarge, a Vietnam veteran who had gotten into Scientology in 1975. He is a slender man with haunted eyes. "It was one of those sudden things that happened," he explained. "I was looking for something, especially spiritually." He had run across an advertisement on the



back of a magazine for Hubbard's book *Fundamentals of Thought*. Soon after reading it, he flew to Washington, DC, and took a three-day workshop called Life Repair Auditing. "I was blown away." He immediately quit his job. "I sold my house and bought the Bridge." Soon, a church official began cultivating him, saying, "LRH needs your help." Pfauth joined the Sea Org that November.

He became head of Hubbard's security detail, and was with the founder on his Creston ranch in his final days, with Pat and Annie Broeker. In early 1985, Hubbard became extremely ill and spent a week in a hospital. Pfauth was told it was for pancreatitis. "I didn't find out about the strokes until later," he said. After that, Hubbard stayed mostly in his Blue Bird bus, except when he came out to do his own laundry. Pfauth might be shoveling out the stables and they'd talk.





Six weeks before the leader died, Pfauth hesitantly related, Hubbard called him into the bus. He was sitting in his little breakfast nook. “He told me he was dropping his body. He named a specific star he was going to circle. That rehabs a being. He told me he’d failed, he’s leaving,” Pfauth said. “He said he’s not coming back here to Earth. He didn’t know where he’d wind up.”

“How’d you react?” I asked.

“I got good and pissy-ass drunk,” Pfauth said. “Annie found me at five in the morning in my old truck, Kris Kringle, and I had beer cans all around me. I did not take it well.”

I mentioned the legend in Scientology that Hubbard will return.

“That’s bull crap,” Pfauth said. “He wanted to drop the body and leave. And he told me basically that he’d failed. All the work and everything, he’d failed.”

I had heard a story that Pfauth had built some kind of electroshock mechanism for Hubbard in the last month of his life. I didn’t know what to make of it, given Hubbard’s horror of electroshock therapy. Pfauth’s eyes searched the ceiling as if he were looking for divine help. He explained that Hubbard was having trouble getting rid of a body thetan. “He wanted me to build a machine that would up the voltage and basically blow the thetan away. You can’t kill a thetan but just get him out of there. And also kill the body.”

“So it was a suicide machine?”

“Basically.”

Pfauth was staggered by Hubbard’s request, but the challenge interested him. “I figured that building a Tesla coil was the best way to go.” The Tesla coil is a transformer that increases the voltage without upping the current. Pfauth powered it with a 12-volt automobile battery, and then hooked the entire apparatus to an E-Meter. “So, if you’re on the cans, you can flip a button and it



does its thing,” Pfauth explained. “I didn’t want to kill him, just to scare him.”

“Did he try it?”

“He blew up my E-Meter. Annie brought it back to me, all burnt up.”

This was just before Christmas, 1985. Hubbard died a few weeks later of an unrelated stroke.

The believers are still waiting for his return.

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<sup>1</sup> City Children, Country Summer (Scribner’s, 1979).



## Acknowledgments and a Note on Sources

Compared with other religions I have written about, the published literature on Scientology is impoverished and clouded by bogus assertions. Some crucial details one would want to know about the church have been withheld—for instance, the number of people who are members of the International Association of Scientologists, which would be the best guide to knowing the true dimensions of the church's membership. The church promised to provide an organizational chart, but never did so; in any case, it would have been more notional than actual in terms of the flow of authority and responsibility, since many of the church's executive hierarchy have been quarantined for years in the Hole at the direction of the only individual who controls the institution.

L. Ron Hubbard's extensive—indeed, record-breaking—published works form the core of the documentary material that this book draws upon. Hubbard expressed himself variously in books, articles, bulletins, letters, lectures, and journals; one cannot understand the man or the organization he created without examining his work in each of these media. The church has published a useful compendium of Hubbard's thought in *What Is Scientology?* Although the church employs a full-time Hubbard biographer and has commissioned several comprehensive works in the past, there is still no authorized account of Hubbard's life. One of the previous Hubbard biographers, Omar Garrison, did write a full-scale account of Hubbard's life, which was suppressed. The church has published a series of Ron magazines, which have been compiled as a highly selective encyclopedia. For years, the church has been mopping up other documents—journals, letters, photographs—and withholding them from public view, which



makes it difficult for independent researchers to fill in blanks in the historical record.

There are several important repositories of information that I have used in this book, however: the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress; the Heinlein Prize Trust and the UC Santa Cruz Archives; the Kenneth Spencer Research Library of the University of Kansas; and the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri. The Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, houses an important collection of Scientology material, and Professor Kent graciously allowed my assistant, Lauren Wolf, to work in his archive. In addition to being an endless source of memories on the history of the church, Karen de la Carriere made her extensive photographic archive available. Many thanks to these valuable resources for their cooperation.

There are three major unauthorized biographies of L. Ron Hubbard: Russell Miller's excellent *Bare-Faced Messiah* (1987) was the first in-depth look at the man. Scientology unsuccessfully sued Miller, a British journalist, who says that while researching his book he was spied upon, his phone was tapped, and efforts were made to frame him for a murder he did not commit. Soon thereafter, Bent Corydon's *L. Ron Hubbard: Messiah or Madman?* (1987) appeared, followed by Jon Atack's *A Piece of Blue Sky* (1990). The church attempts to discredit both of these authors because they are former Scientologists who the church says were expelled from the organization. It is notable that no comprehensive biography of Hubbard has been attempted since the church's campaign against these books.

The scarcity of academic work on the church and its leaders testifies to the caution with which scholars regard the subject, as well as the reluctance of the organization to divulge information about its members, beliefs, and inner workings to qualified social



scientists. In 1976, Roy Wallis published *The Road to Total Freedom: A Sociological Analysis of Scientology*, the first significant academic study of the church. While he was researching his book, Wallis was spied upon, and forged letters were sent to his colleagues and employers implicating him in a homosexual relationship. *Renunciation and Reformulation: A Study of Conversion in an American Sect*, an insightful book by Harriet Whitehead, an anthropologist, appeared in 1987. Since then, contributions from the academy have been meager. At this point, I should also acknowledge the work of Hugh Urban, at Ohio State University, David S. Touretzky at Carnegie Mellon University, and Stephen Kent, at the University of Alberta. Each of these scholars has produced important contributions to the understanding of Scientology, despite the obstacles and threats posed by the church.

Court documents contain a valuable record of the history and culture of the church and its founder; this is especially true of the landmark 1991 suit *Church of Scientology California vs. Gerald Armstrong*. David Miscavige has been shy about giving interviews, but he has provided testimony and declarations in several lawsuits, most extensively in 1990, in *Bent Corydon v. Church of Scientology*.

A handful of courageous journalists have provided much of the essential information available about the culture of Scientology. Paulette Cooper opened the door with her 1971 exposé, *The Scandal of Scientology*. I have outlined in this book some of the harassment that she endured. Joel Sappell and Robert W. Welkos of the *Los Angeles Times* did a remarkable six-part series in 1990. Richard Leiby has been writing about Scientology since the early 1980s, first for the *Clearwater Sun* and subsequently for the *Washington Post*. Richard Behar covered the subject in *Barron's* and most notably in his 1991 exposé for *Time*, "The Thriving Cult of Greed and Power." Janet Reitman had unparalleled access to the



church for her 2006 Rolling Stone article, “Inside Scientology,” which became a book of the same title in 2011. Chris Owen, an independent researcher, has written extensively about the church online, and has revealed much of the information available about Hubbard’s wartime experiences. Tom Smith has conducted a number of knowledgeable interviews on his radio show, The Edge, broadcast by Hillsborough Community College in Tampa, Florida. Joe Childs and Thomas C. Tobin of the Tampa Bay Times (formerly the St. Petersburg Times) have written groundbreaking stories, especially about the abuse inside the church hierarchy. Tony Ortega has been writing about Scientology since 1995, for the Phoenix New Times, and he continued as a valuable resource in the pages and the blog of the Village Voice until his recent resignation. Several of these journalists have been harassed, investigated, sued, or threatened in various ways. I am the beneficiary of their skill and persistence.

In the last decade, defectors from the Sea Org have provided a rich trove of personal accounts. These have taken the form of memoirs and blog postings, and they have accumulated into an immense indictment of the inner workings of the church. Among the memoirs I should single out are Marc Headley’s *Blown for Good: Behind the Iron Curtain of Scientology* (2009); Nancy Many’s *My Billion Year Contract* (2009); Amy Scobee’s *Abuse at the Top* (2010); and Jefferson Hawkins’s *Counterfeit Dreams* (2010). Kate Bornstein’s *A Queer and Pleasant Danger* (2012) provides an especially interesting account of the Apollo days.

Websites devoted to challenging the church have proliferated, beginning with alt.religion.scientology in 1991. Some of the most active are Andreas Heldal-Lund’s Operation Clambake at [xenu.net](http://xenu.net); Steve Hall’s [scientology-cult.com](http://scientology-cult.com); Arnaldo Lerma’s [lermanet.com](http://lermanet.com), and the Ex Scientology Message Board, which is an online community for former members of the church, founded by “Emma”



and now run by “Mick Wenlock and Ethercat.” [Exscientologykids.org](http://Exscientologykids.org), started by Jenna Miscavige Hill, David Miscavige’s niece, among others, played an important role in Paul Haggis’s decision to leave the church. Although many of the postings on these websites are anonymous, they provide rich texture to a subculture that few outsiders can appreciate.

One blog has become a rallying point for “independent” Scientologists who have renounced the official church: Marty Rathbun’s *Moving on Up a Little Higher*, which began in 2009. It has been the source of many telling personal stories, as well as documents leaked by church insiders. Rathbun and his wife, Monique Carle, have suffered constant harassment, along with surveillance by private investigators, because of his open challenge to Miscavige’s authority.

In researching this book, I conducted hundreds of interviews, the preponderance of them on the record. I have always been sparing in relying on anonymous sources, but writing about Scientology poses a challenge for a reporter. A number of my sources were fearful of retribution by the church—in particular, legal harassment and the loss of contact with family members. Many key individuals have signed confidentiality agreements that enforce their silence. I owe all my sources a great debt of gratitude for their willingness to speak to me despite the risk to their own well-being.

Paul Haggis plays a unique role in this book. He never intended to talk publicly about his experience in the church. That he opened up to me, knowing the church’s reputation for retribution, is a measure of his courage and his forthrightness.

This book is dedicated to my colleagues at The New Yorker, and so my list of debts includes the many people there who assisted me in writing the profile of Paul Haggis (“The Apostate,” Feb. 14 and 21, 2011) that became the starting point for my research into Scientology. I had talked previously with David Remnick, the



editor of the magazine, about an article on the Church of Scientology. David appreciated the legal hazards, but I don't think either of us realized the amount of time and resources the piece would ultimately require. His commitment was all the more meaningful coming during a period when the magazine was under the same financial stress that other print media were experiencing. My editor at The New Yorker, Daniel Zalewski, has shepherded me through many articles, and his steadiness and advocacy are always deeply appreciated. Daniel's assistant at the time, Yvette Siegert, cheerfully flew to St. Louis as our deadline approached to fetch L. Ron Hubbard's military records from the archives there. Lynn Oberlander, the magazine's lawyer, was a stalwart ally, undaunted by the legal team arrayed by the church and by certain celebrities who were mentioned in the article. Ann Goldstein, the magazine's copy chief, did her usual careful and respectful job. Nick Traverse and Kelly Bare labored to put the thousands of pages of documents on the Cloud—a highly experimental procedure at this old-school magazine—so that we could all have access to the same material simultaneously. I want to pay particular tribute to the New Yorker fact-checking department, headed by Peter Canby. Jennifer Stahl was the lead checker, spending six months full-time on the piece; her scrupulousness was inspiring, and she commanded the respect of everyone who dealt with her. Tim Farrington also worked intensely on the article. Eventually, a good portion of the department pitched in, including Nandi Rodrigo, Mike Spies, Katia Bachko, and even Peter himself. To be supported by such truly professional colleagues means so much.

Although the Church of Scientology was not a willing partner in the effort to write this book, I want to thank the spokespeople I worked with—Tommy Davis, Jessica Feshbach, and Karin Pouw—for responding to what must have seemed an endless stream of queries from me and the fact-checkers. I have no doubt that they



will quarrel with the results, but the book is more accurate because of their participation, however reluctant that might have been. Initially, Davis permitted me to speak with several active members of the church, but the door closed on that opportunity. I was never allowed to talk to David Miscavige or any of the upper-tier executives I requested. (As I would learn, many of them were sequestered and not available in any case.) A reporter can only talk to people who are willing to talk to him; whatever complaints the church may have about my reporting, many limitations can be attributed to its decision to restrict my interactions with people who might have provided more favorable testimony.

Robert Jay Lifton did me the honor of reading this book in manuscript and providing his insights, especially on the issue of thought reform. R. Scott Appleby helped me place Scientology in the context of other world religions. My friend Stephen Harrigan also commented on an early draft, as he has done on many occasions. A writer depends on such willing friends.

My editor at Knopf, Ann Close, has been through five books with me—a marvelous relationship that has now spanned a quarter of a century. For this book, the Knopf team labored under a stressful deadline, and I would like to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of Anke Steinecke, legal counsel; Katherine Hourigan, the managing editor; Paul Bogaards, the director of publicity; Kim Thornton, the publicist for this book; Kevin Bourke, the production editor; Claire Bradley Ong, the production manager; and Cassandra Pappas, the designer. I also thank my agent, Andrew Wylie, for his sage counsel.

When I began writing the book, I hired two young and talented fact-checkers, Axel Gerda and Lauren Wolf. They were both interested in long-form journalism, and I thought I might be able to teach them something about that; so, one evening a week, I held a class for them, in which the text was the unwritten book we were



working on. Axel and Lauren were immediately plunged into the recondite world of Scientology, but they adroitly managed to negotiate the language and the thinking. After Axel went on to other pursuits, Lauren remained as my research assistant. The book has gained immeasurably from her curiosity and doggedness, as well as her natural human sympathy—qualities that will certainly ensure her future career and reward those who have the good fortune to enjoy her company.

As usual, I owe special thanks to my wife, Roberta, who has once again set aside many anxieties to support my work.



# Notes

## INTRODUCTION

- 1 8 million members: Interview with Tommy Davis, the former chief spokesperson for the Church of Scientology International. He explains the difficulty in getting exact numbers: “There’s no process of conversion, there is no baptism.” Becoming a Scientologist is a simple decision: “Either you are or you aren’t.”
- 2 welcomes 4.4 million: “What Is Scientology?” YouTube video, posted by Church of Scientology, January 2, 2012, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vcb\\_4L8T8gg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vcb_4L8T8gg).
- 3 about 30,000 members: Interview with Mike Rinder. Rinder is the former head of Scientology’s Office of Special Affairs and functioned as the church’s chief spokesperson from 1991 through 2007.
- 4 \$1 billion in liquid assets: Interview with Mark “Marty” Rathbun. Rathbun is the former Inspector General for Ethics for the church. Tony Ortega, “Scientology in Turmoil: Debbie Cook’s E-mail, Annotated,” Runnin’ Scared (blog), The Village Voice, Jan. 6, 2012. According to the distinguished religious historian R. Scott Appleby at the University of Notre Dame, even the Roman Catholic Church is unlikely to have \$1 billion in cash on hand. R. Scott Appleby, personal communication.
- 5 12 million square feet of property: Church of Scientology International, “Scientology: Unparalleled Growth Since 2004,” [www.scientologynews.org/stats.html](http://www.scientologynews.org/stats.html).
- 6 The most recent addition: Kevin Roderick, “Scientology



Reveals Plans for Sunset Boulevard Studio,” LA Observed, July 12, 2012.

- 7 apartment buildings, hotels: Pinellas County Property Appraiser, 2012 tax roll.
- 8 5,000, 6,000, or 10,000 members: Church of Scientology International, *What Is Scientology?*, p. 324; interview with Tommy Davis; personal communication from Karin Pouw.
- 9 between 3,000 and 5,000: Claire Headley and Mike Rinder, personal communication. Rinder, who offers the higher number, places about 2,000 Sea Org members at Flag, 1,500 in LA, 500 at Gold Base and Int Base, 200 in the UK, 300 in Denmark, 150 in Australia, 200 on the Freewinds, and the rest scattered around Africa, Italy, Canada, and Mexico.

#### 1. THE CONVERT

- 1 “You have a mind”: Interview with Jim Logan.
- 2 “What is true”: According to Haggis, the passage came from the Hubbard Qualified Scientologist course. It was later published in Hubbard’s book *The Way to Happiness*. Hubbard, *The Way to Happiness*, p. 48.
- 3 “find the ruin”: Peter F. Gillham, *Tell It Like It Is: A Course in Scientology Dissemination* (Los Angeles: Red Baron Publishing, 1972), p. 37.
- 4 “Once the person”: Hubbard, “Dissemination Drill,” Hubbard Communications Office Policy Letter, Oct. 23, 1965.
- 5 “Speed City”: Interview with Herman Goodden.
- 6 “You walked in one day”: Hubbard, “Clearing Congress Lectures,” Shoreham Hotel, Washington, DC, July 4, 1958.
- 7 “A civilization without insanity”: *What Is Scientology?*, p. xiii.



- 8 “Scientology works 100 percent”: Ibid., p. 215.
- 9 Most of them were white: Harriet Whitehead, “Reasonably Fantastic: Some Perspectives on Scientology, Science Fiction, and Occultism,” in Zaretsky and Leone, *Religious Movements in Contemporary America*, p. 549.
- 10 “After drugs”: Interview with Jim Dincalci.
- 11 superhuman powers: Interview with Skip Press.
- 12 The device measures: Hubbard, *Electropsychometric Auditing Operators Manual*, 1952.
- 13 “It gives Man his”: *What Is Scientology?*, p. 175.
- 14 “Our most spectacular feat”: James Phelan, “Have You Ever Been a Boo-Hoo?,” *Saturday Evening Post*, March 21, 1964, pp. 81–85.
- 15 The E-Meter is presumed: Response of the Church of Scientology to queries.
- 16 “The needle just idles”: Hubbard, *E Meter Essentials 1961—Clearing Series*, vol. 1, p. 18.
- 17 “Be three feet back”: Hubbard, *Philadelphia Doctorate Course Transcripts*.
- 18 Free of the limitations: Ibid.
- 19 The ultimate goal: Whitehead, *Renunciation and Reformulation*, p. 176.
- 20 The goal of Scientology: Vosper, *The Mind Benders*, p. 31.
- 21 Among other qualities: Hubbard, *Dianetics*, pp. 170–73.
- 22 “The dianetic clear is”: Ibid., p. xv.
- 23 “Operating Thetan”: *What Is Scientology?*, p. 167.
- 24 “neither Buddha nor Jesus”: Ability, unsigned, undated (probably 1958), issue 81, reprint of an editorial from



Certainty, vol. 5, no. 10.

- 25 “Note several large”: WikiLeaks, “Church of Scientology Collected Operating Thetan Documents,” March 24, 2008, [wikileaks.org/wiki/Church\\_of\\_Scientology\\_collected\\_Operating\\_Thetan\\_documents](http://wikileaks.org/wiki/Church_of_Scientology_collected_Operating_Thetan_documents); Revised Declaration of Hana Whitfield, Church of Scientology vs. Steven Fishman and Uwe Geertz, US District Court, Central District of California, April 4, 1994.
- 26 “Laughter comes from the rear”: WikiLeaks, “Church of Scientology Collected Operating Thetan Documents,” March 24, 2008, [wikileaks.org/wiki/Church\\_of\\_Scientology\\_collected\\_Operating\\_Thetan\\_documents](http://wikileaks.org/wiki/Church_of_Scientology_collected_Operating_Thetan_documents).
- 27 “The material involved”: Hubbard, “Ron’s Journal ’67,” taped lecture.
- 28 “parlor tricks”: Interview with Jefferson Hawkins.
- 29 “OT Phenomena”: Advance!, no. 33, p. 8.
- 30 “A theta being is”: Hubbard, Scientology: A History of Man, pp. 71–72.
- 31 “How do you answer”: Hubbard, “State of OT,” lecture, May 23, 1963.
- 32 “Telephone rings, it springs”: Hubbard, “An OT’s Basic Problem,” adapted from a lecture of Dec. 2, 1952, quoted in Advance!, no. 38, p. 14.

## 2. SOURCE

- 1 two bordellos:  
[www.helenahistory.org/family\\_theatre\\_reeves.htm](http://www.helenahistory.org/family_theatre_reeves.htm).
- 2 Lafayette Waterbury: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, pp. 8–15.
- 3 “I was riding broncs”: Hubbard, handwritten memo dated “10



Mar 74.”

- 4 “devouring shelves of classics”: The Humanitarian: Education, The Ron magazines, 1996, p. 9.
- 5 Hubbard’s family was Methodist: Karin Pouw, personal communication.
- 6 “Many members of my”: Hubbard, “Case Analysis: Rock Hunting” question and answer period, Aug. 4, 1958.
- 7 “I learned long ago”: The Old Tom Madfeathers story is related by Hubbard’s official biographer, Dan Sherman, at the L. Ron Hubbard Centennial Celebration, March 13, 2011; Hubbard’s quote was a voice-over. A spokesperson for the Blackfoot Nation says that blood-brotherhood is not a part of their tradition.
- 8 “Snake” Thompson: Thompson’s existence has been called into question. Russell Miller says, “He cannot be identified from US Navy records, nor can his relationships with Freud be established” (Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 25). Since Miller’s book, however, there have been a number of new Snake Thompson discoveries, which add substance to this extraordinary man. Among other enterprises, he helped found the Zoological Society of San Diego, served as the vice president of the Washington Psychoanalytic Association, and was director of the Siamese Cat Society. Thompson’s activities as a spy are chronicled in an eccentric memoir by Rhoda Low Seoane, Uttermost East and the Longest War (New York: Vantage Press, 1968).

The Church of Scientology provided a passenger manifest for the transport ship, USS Grant, in November 1923, which lists Commander J. C. Thompson, along with the Hubbard family.



- 9 “a very careless man”: Hubbard, “The Story of Dianetics and Scientology,” lecture, Oct. 18, 1958.
- 10 “I was just a kid”: Hubbard, “Dianetics: The Modern Miracle,” lecture, Feb. 6, 1952.
- 11 “Man has two fundamental”: Commander J. C. Thompson, “Psychoanalytic Literature,” United States Naval Medical Bulletin 19, no. 3 (Sept. 1923): 281–85.
- 12 “I never knew what to believe”: “Barbara Kaye,” quoted in Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, pp. 168–69.
- 13 “He braved typhoons”: Adventurer/Explorer: Daring Deeds and Unknown Realms, The Ron magazines, 1996, p. 6.
- 14 “for weeks on end”: What Is Scientology?, p. 31.
- 15 “ ‘Why?’ Why so much”: Ibid., p. 32.
- 16 “The very nature of the Chinaman”: Details of Hubbard’s trip to China are to be found in the testimony of Gerald Armstrong in Church of Scientology, California vs. Armstrong, 1984, and in his handwritten journals of the period, which were provided as exhibits in the trial. Some points were confirmed by the Church of Scientology responses to queries. A redacted account from Hubbard’s diary is in Letters and Journals: Early Years of Adventure, The Ron magazines, 1997, pp. 46–50.

The church maintains that there were other travels during this period, saying that Hubbard roamed through Asia for fourteen months, without his parents, returning to China and stopping in India and Singapore, among other places. There is no evidence of those trips in his journals, although he makes references to such experiences in later lectures.

The church provided a 1929 news article from the Helena (MT) Independent, to substantiate Hubbard’s extensive travel



claims, but the article speaks only of a “trip to the orient last summer with his parents” on their way to Guam. Other records of Hubbard’s Asian travels, Tommy Davis told me, had been destroyed because until the Second World War they were being held in Hiroshima.

- 17 gliding license was #385: *Adventurer/Explorer: Daring Deeds and Unknown Realms*, The Ron magazines, 1996, p. 53. Hubbard listed his age on the license as twenty-six, although he was nineteen at the time.
- 18 “We carefully wrapped”: Hubbard, “Tailwind Willies,” republished in *Adventurer/Explorer: Daring Deeds and Unknown Realms*, The Ron magazines, 1996, pp. 44–50.
- 19 “Restless young men”: *Adventurer/Explorer: Daring Deeds and Unknown Realms*, The Ron magazines, 1996, p. 10.
- 20 “collect whatever one collects”: Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, p. 52.
- 21 That was almost the end: “Seekers of Pirate Haunts Finally Go,” *Baltimore Morning Sun*, June 25, 1932.
- 22 It soon became evident: James Free letter to Robert H. Burgess, June 21, 1986; James Stillman Free oral history, National Press Club, Mar. 25, 1992.
- 23 seven or eight hundred dollars: James Stillman Free oral history, National Press Club, Mar. 25, 1992.
- 24 “I tied a hangman’s noose”: Doris Hamlin “Daily Record,” 1932, in Library of Congress collection.
- 25 “the worst and most unpleasant”: “Doris Hamlin, Jinx Ship, Reaches Port,” *Baltimore Evening Sun*, Sept. 7, 1932.
- 26 “glorious adventure”: Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, p. 56.
- 27 To fill the usual: Gruber, *The Pulp Jungle*, pp. 20–24.



- 28 a hundred thousand words: What Is Scientology?, p. 581. Hubbard's eldest son, L. Ron Hubbard, Jr., claimed that his father exaggerated his output. "Through the early fifties, he used to tell everybody that he had written seven million words of fiction. But, in fact, it probably never exceeded a million words." Testimony of L. Ron Hubbard, Jr., City of Clearwater Commission Hearings Re: The Church of Scientology. May 5, 1982. Of course, that's still an extraordinary output.
- 29 a roll of butcher paper: Harlan Ellison: Dreams with Sharp Teeth, DVD, directed by Erik Nelson, 1982.
- 30 It was a physical act: Russell Hays tape with Barbara Hays Duke, June 30, 1984.
- 31 "First draft, last draft": Interview with anonymous former Sea Org member.
- 32 Ron fashioned an incubator: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, pp. 64–65.
- 33 "the prettiest place": Hubbard letter to Russell Hays, Sept. 14, 1936.
- 34 "vague offers": Ibid. Aug. 18, 1936.
- 35 "I have discarded Hollywood": Ibid., Sept. 14, 1936.
- 36 But in the spring: Ibid., Mar. 7, 1936.
- 37 He later claimed: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 69.
- 38 "dumb Jew producers": Hubbard letter to Russell Hays, July 21, 1937.
- 39 "Never write about": Ibid., Dec. 4, 1937, quoted in Letters and Journals: Literary Correspondence, The Ron magazines, 1997, pp. 55–58.
- 40 "While under the influence": Hubbard letter, Jan. 1, 1938,



quoted in *The Philosopher: The Rediscovery of the Human Soul*, The Ron magazines, 1996, p. 9.

- 41 The nurse looked startled: Forrest Ackerman interview, “Secret Lives—L. Ron Hubbard,” Channel 4, UK, 1997; Arthur J. Cox, “Deus Ex Machina: A Study of A. E. van Vogt,” *Science-Fiction Advertiser*, July 1952. Cox’s account varies in that he reports Hubbard as saying that the incident took place “during an operation being performed upon him for certain injuries received in the service.”
- 42 “Don’t let him know!”: Church of Scientology International, “Port Orchard Washington, January 1, 1938,” 2012, [www.ronthephilosopher.org/phlspher/page08.htm](http://www.ronthephilosopher.org/phlspher/page08.htm).
- 43 “Once upon a time”: *The Philosopher: The Rediscovery of the Human Soul*, The Ron magazines, 1996, pp. 11–12.
- 44 “I have high hopes”: Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, p. 81.
- 45 Hubbard explained to his agent: *Ibid.*, p. 79. Gerald Armstrong testified that Hubbard “stated that seven people originally read it and a couple of them jumped out of windows and another two went insane.” *Church of Scientology California vs. Gerald Armstrong*.
- 46 The last time he showed *Excalibur*: Forrest Ackerman interview, “Secret Lives—L. Ron Hubbard,” Channel 4, UK, 1997.
- 47 “worthless”: Hubbard letter to Russell Hays, Oct. 20, 1938. (Also quoted and mistakenly dated as Dec. 31, 1937, in *Letters and Journals: Literary Correspondence*, The Ron magazines, 1997, pp. 59–61.)
- 48 “a tall, large man”: Asimov, I. Asimov, p. 72.
- 49 “A deviant figure of”: Amis, *New Maps of Hell*, p. 84.



- 50 Fanzines and sci-fi clubs: I was aided in this insight by Steven Weinberg, who recalled for me the science-fiction club at Bronx High, which he attended in the 1940s; he and his classmate Sheldon Glashow, who was also in the club, went on to share the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1979.
- 51 “Science fiction, particularly”: Hubbard, introduction to *Battlefield Earth*, p. xix.
- 52 “I had, myself, somewhat”: Ibid., p. xvi.
- 53 “In his late twenties”: L. Sprague de Camp, “El-Ron of the City of Brass,” from “Literary Swordsmen and Sorcerers,” *Fantastic*, August 1975.
- 54 “Because of her coldness”: “The Admissions of L. Ron Hubbard,”  
[www.gerryarmstrong.org/50grand/writings/ars/ars-2000-03-11.html](http://www.gerryarmstrong.org/50grand/writings/ars/ars-2000-03-11.html). The church disputes the authenticity of this document, claiming that it is a forgery.
- 55 “I loved her and she me”: Ibid.
- 56 Polly had discovered: Russell Miller interview with Robert MacDonald Ford, “The Bare-Faced Messiah Interviews,” Sept. 1, 1986, [www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/miller/interviews/robford.htm](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/miller/interviews/robford.htm).
- 57 “two-fold, one to win”: Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, p. 89.
- 58 While he was stranded: Ibid., pp. 90–91.
- 59 “Throughout all this”: Church of Scientology International, “1939–1944, Explorer and Master Mariner,” 2005, [www.hubbard.org/pg007.html](http://www.hubbard.org/pg007.html).
- 60 he failed the entrance examination: Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, pp. 45–46.
- 61 “I do not have the time”: Hubbard request to US Marine



Corps, July 18, 1931.

- 62 “a well-known writer”: Warren G. Magnuson letter to “The President,” April 8, 1941; L. Ron Hubbard military records, National Personnel Records Center.
- 63 “one of the most brilliant men”: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 93.
- 64 Hubbard said that he: Thomas Moulton testimony, Church of Scientology California vs. Gerald Armstrong. “I never saw the scars,” Moulton admitted. For a comprehensive list of the contradictions in Hubbard’s various war accounts, see Chris Owen, “Ron the ‘War Hero,’ ” July 1999, [www.spaink.net/cos/warher/battle.htm#doc-a](http://www.spaink.net/cos/warher/battle.htm#doc-a).
- 65 “first U.S. returned casualty”: Hubbard, “A Brief Biography of L. Ron Hubbard,” brochure for the First Australian Congress of the Hubbard Association of Scientologists International, Nov. 7–8, 1959.
- 66 By assuming unauthorized authority: L. D. Causey to Commandant, Twelfth Naval District, Feb. 14, 1942.
- 67 USS YP-422: Chris Owen, “Ron the ‘War Hero,’ ” July 1999, [www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Cowen/warhero/battle.htm](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Cowen/warhero/battle.htm). Owen notes that this vessel is often referred to as the USS Mist, but that no such ship existed.
- 68 “Upon entering the Boston”: The Humanitarian: The Road to Self-Respect, The Ron magazines, p. 12. 1996. Chris Owen, “Ron the ‘War Hero,’ ” July 1999, [www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Cowen/warhero/yp-422.htm](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Cowen/warhero/yp-422.htm).
- 69 “with some seventy depth charge runs”: Chris Owen, “Ron the ‘War Hero,’ ” July 1999, [www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Cowen/warhero/battle.htm](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Cowen/warhero/battle.htm).



- 70 “not temperamentally fitted”: Lieutenant (jg) F. A. Del Marinal cable, Sept. 25, 1942.
- 71 He arrived wearing dark: Thomas Moulton testimony, Church of Scientology California vs. Gerald Armstrong.
- 72 “a very loose person”: “The Admissions of L. Ron Hubbard,” [www.gerryarmstrong.org/50grand/writings/ars/ars-2000-03-11.html](http://www.gerryarmstrong.org/50grand/writings/ars/ars-2000-03-11.html).
- 73 Hubbard was finally given: Chris Owen, “Ron the ‘War Hero,’ ” July 1999, [www.spaink.net/cos/warher/battle.htm#doc-a](http://www.spaink.net/cos/warher/battle.htm#doc-a).
- 74 “These little sweethearts”: “Ex-Portlander Hunts U-Boats,” Oregon Journal, April 22, 1943.
- 75 bottom of his class: Chris Owen, “Ron the ‘War Hero,’ ” July 1999, [www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Cowen/warhero/battle.htm](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Cowen/warhero/battle.htm).
- 76 “It made noises like”: Thomas Moulton testimony, Church of Scientology California vs. Gerald Armstrong.
- 77 “The target was moving”: Hubbard, “An Account of the Action Off Cape Lookout,” undated report.
- 78 with dawn breaking: Ibid.
- 79 “There was no submarine”: Commander Frank Jack Fletcher to Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet, June 6, 1943.
- 80 Japanese records after: Chris Owen, “Ron the ‘War Hero,’ ” July 1999, [www.spaink.net/cos/warher/battle.htm#doc-a](http://www.spaink.net/cos/warher/battle.htm#doc-a).
- 81 “This on top of”: “The Admissions of L. Ron Hubbard,” [www.gerryarmstrong.org/50grand/writings/ars/ars-2000-03-11.html](http://www.gerryarmstrong.org/50grand/writings/ars/ars-2000-03-11.html).
- 82 He spent the next: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 107.
- 83 “Once conversant with the”: Hubbard request to School of



Military Government, Sept. 9, 1944.

- 84 none proved useful: Patterson, Robert A. Heinlein, Vol. 1: In Dialogue with His Century, p. 350.
- 85 “Ron had had a busy war”: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 109.
- 86 Hubbard had an affair with Heinlein’s wife: Patterson, Robert A. Heinlein, pp. 369–70.
- 87 “He almost forced me”: “The Admissions of L. Ron Hubbard,” [www.gerryarmstrong.org/50grand/writings/ars/ars-2000-03-11.html](http://www.gerryarmstrong.org/50grand/writings/ars/ars-2000-03-11.html).
- 88 Vida Jameson...“Quiet, shy little greymouse”: Samme Buck, personal correspondence; Frederik Pohl, “The Worlds of L. Ron Hubbard, Part 2,” The Way of the Future Blogs.
- 89 “Blinded with injured optic”: Hubbard, “My Philosophy,” The Philosopher: The Rediscovery of the Human Soul, The Ron magazines, p. 85.
- 90 “I had no one”: Ibid.
- 91 Doctors at Oak Knoll: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 112.
- 92 nor do his military records: Hubbard said in 1950 that he was treated for “ulcers, conjunctivitis, deteriorating eyesight, bursitis and something wrong with my feet.” Albert Q. Maisel, “Dianetics: Science or Hoax?” Look, Dec. 5, 1950.
- 93 “And I was watching this”: Hubbard, “The Story of Dianetics and Scientology,” lecture, Oct. 18, 1958.
- 94 “My wife left me”: “The Admissions of L. Ron Hubbard,” [www.gerryarmstrong.org/50grand/writings/ars/ars-2000-03-11.html](http://www.gerryarmstrong.org/50grand/writings/ars/ars-2000-03-11.html).
- 95 Hubbard towed a house trailer: Alva Rogers, quoted in Carter, Sex and Rockets, p. 103.



- 96 “James Dean of the occult”: Hugh B. Urban, “The Occult Roots of Scientology? L. Ron Hubbard, Aleister Crowley, and the Origins of a Controversial New Religion,” *Novo Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* (February 2012): 94.
- 97 He acquired a three-story: Kansa, *Wormwood Star*, p. 28.
- 98 twelve-car garage: Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions.
- 99 The house had once belonged: Letter from Arthur Fleming to John Muir, Feb. 8, 1911; Pendle, *Strange Angel*, p. 208.
- 100 “Must not believe in God”: Russell Miller interview with Nieson Himmel, “The Bare-Faced Messiah Interviews,” [www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/miller/interviews/himmel.htm](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/miller/interviews/himmel.htm).
- 101 Among those passing: Carter, *Sex and Rockets*, pp. 84–86; Pendle, *Strange Angel*, pp. 244–45.
- 102 “women in diaphanous gowns”: Carter, *Sex and Rockets*, p. 84.
- 103 captured in a portrait: Pendle, *Strange Angel*, p. 209.
- 104 “The breakup of the home”: Parsons, *Freedom Is a Two-Edged Sword*, p. 69.
- 105 Sara Elizabeth “Betty” Northrup: Pendle, *Strange Angel*, p. 255. Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, p. 116.
- 106 lost her virginity: Pendle, *Strange Angel*, p. 203.
- 107 “Her chief interest”: *Ibid.*
- 108 when she was fifteen: Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions.



- 109 “He was not only a writer”: Ibid.
- 110 “He dominated the scene”: Alva Rogers, quoted in Carter, *Sex and Rockets*, p. 103.
- 111 “the most gorgeous”: Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, p. 117.
- 112 “a gentleman, red hair”: Ibid., p. 118.
- 113 angry debate: The Church of Scientology forced the authors of a 1952 Crowley biography, *The Great Beast*, to remove any suggestion that there was a connection between Scientology and black magic. Church of Scientology of California and John Symonds, MacDonald & Co. (Publishers) Limited, Hazell Watson & Viney. High Court of Justice, Queen’s Bench Division, 1971. The church also provided me with its correspondence with the London Sunday Times in 1969 and 1970, in which the newspaper agreed to retract similar statements and not make such references in the future.
- 114 envious of his talent: Grant and Symonds, *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*, p. 18.
- 115 He may have served: Spence, *Secret Agent 666*.
- 116 “Do what thou wilt”: Grant and Symonds, *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*, p. 18.
- 117 Nibs—Hubbard’s estranged: Allan Sonnenschein, “Inside the Church of Scientology: An Exclusive Interview with L. Ron Hubbard, Jr.,” *Penthouse*, June 1983.
- 118 “What a lot of people”: Ibid. The church fiercely disputes any of the derogatory remarks made by Hubbard’s son, especially in the *Penthouse* interview. In 1984, L. Ron Hubbard, Jr.—who had changed his name to Ronald DeWolf—stated, “The interview of me in the June 1983 issue of *Penthouse* is true



and accurate, period.” Transcript of Tape #1 of June 28, 1984—Ron DeWolf. [www.lermanet.com/scientology-and-occult/tape-by-L-Ron-Hubbard-jr.htm](http://www.lermanet.com/scientology-and-occult/tape-by-L-Ron-Hubbard-jr.htm). However, in 1987, DeWolf signed an affidavit recanting his statements against his father, saying they were “no more than wild flights of fantasy based on my own unlimited imagination.” Affidavit of Ronald Edward DeWolf, May 20, 1987, Carson City, Nevada. But five years later, DeWolf testified that he had signed the recantation “in order to protect my wife and children” from threats made by the church. City of Clearwater Commission Hearings Re: The Church of Scientology. May 6, 1982, Morning Session.

- 119 “spiritual progress did not depend”: Grant and Symonds, *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley*, pp. 582–83.
- 120 “The Abyss”: Ibid., p. 929 n. 57.
- 121 “my very good friend”: Hubbard, “Conditions of Space/Time/Energy,” Philadelphia Doctorate Course Transcripts, Dec. 5, 1952.
- 122 “That’s when Dad decided”: City of Clearwater Commission Hearings Re: The Church of Scientology. May 6, 1982, Morning Session.
- 123 “a savage and beautiful woman”: Hugh B. Urban, “The Occult Roots of Scientology? L. Ron Hubbard, Aleister Crowley, and the Origins of a Controversial New Religion,” *Novo Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* (February 2012): 98.
- 124 “invocation of wand”: Carter, *Sex and Rockets*, pp. 122–23. Interview with Anthony Torchia.
- 125 “We observed a brownish”: Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, pp. 120–21.



- 126 “I don’t know where I am”: Kansa, Wormwood Star, p. 41.
- 127 Cameron’s version is that: Ibid., p. 28.
- 128 “I have my elemental!”: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 121.
- 129 “Display thyself”: Ibid., pp. 122–23.
- 130 “Instructions were received”: Ibid., p. 124.
- 131 “Apparently Parsons or Hubbard”: Ibid., p. 124.
- 132 aborted another pregnancy: Carter, Sex and Rockets, p. 151.
- 133 “Babalon is incarnate upon”: Quoted in Pendle, Strange Angel, p. 266.
- 134 more than twenty thousand dollars: Ibid., p. 267.
- 135 “I cannot tolerate”: Hubbard, Appeal to Administration of Veterans Affairs, July 4, 1946.
- 136 “I have know”: S. E. Northrup letter to Veterans Administration, Los Angeles, July 1, 1946.
- 137 “Banishing Ritual”: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah: p. 127.
- 138 ship was too damaged: Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions.
- 139 Parsons gained a judgment: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 127.
- 140 “keep him at arm’s”: Robert Heinlein letter to John Arwine, May 10, 1946.
- 141 “a very sad case”: Virginia Heinlein to Catherine and Sprague de Camp, Aug. 7, 1946.
- 142 “All right, I’ll marry you”: Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions. Both the church and Hubbard himself denied that he was ever married to Northrup, although there



is a marriage certificate on file in the Kent County Courthouse in Chestertown, Maryland, recording the marriage of Lafayette Hubbard and Sara Elizabeth Northrup on Aug. 10, 1946. Northrup also cites that date in her divorce pleading.

- 143 “I suppose Polly was”: L. Sprague de Camp letter to Heinleins, Aug. 13, 1946.
- 144 In fact, Polly didn’t learn: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 189.
- 145 “Mr. Hubbard accomplished”: Church of Scientology response to queries. Parsons lost his security clearance in 1948 because he was suspected of leaking state secrets to a foreign power. In 1952, while his wife was at the grocery store, he blew himself up in his garage, apparently accidentally. According to Anthony Torchia, a former member of the OTO, the order dissolved in the 1960s but re-formed in the 1970s and continues to this day. Moreover, the OTO does not consider itself “black” magic.
- 146 “No work since discharge”: Veterans Administration Report of Physical Examination, Sept. 19, 1946.
- 147 “I got up and left”: Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions.
- 148 churning out plots: Ibid. Among the stories Sara Northrup claimed to have written were the Ole Doc Methuselah series in Amazing Science Fiction.
- 149 “I kept thinking”: Ibid.
- 150 Nibs told her: Ibid.
- 151 Ron was arrested: Ibid.
- 152 I am utterly unable”: Hubbard letter to Veterans



Administration, Oct. 15, 1947.

- 153 “a manic depressive”: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 175.
- 154 “He said he always wanted”:  
[www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/miller/  
interviews/barbkaye.htm](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/miller/interviews/barbkaye.htm).
- 155 “Paranoid personality”: Jim Dincalci, personal communication.
- 156 “malignant narcissism”: Stephen Wiseman, personal communication.
- 157 “a kind of self-therapy”: Church of Scientology, California, v. Gerald Armstrong. Information that has become available since the Armstrong trial, such as the Heinlein and Hays letters, confirms much of the material in the Affirmations, adding to its credibility.
- 158 “the Empress”: Atack, A Piece of Blue Sky, p. 100, says that Hubbard may also have called his Guardian Hathor, an Egyptian goddess usually depicted with cow horns. In the Affirmations, Hubbard explicitly names his Guardian Flavia Julia. He may have been referring to Flavia Julia Titi, daughter of the Roman Emperor Titus; or, perhaps more likely, to the Empress Flavia Julia Helena Augustus, also known as Saint Helen, mother of Constantine the Great, who is credited with finding the “True Cross.” Jim Dincalci told me that L. Ron Hubbard, Jr., referred to his father’s Guardian as the source of his automatic writing; also, that Aiwass, Crowley’s Guardian, was in charge of this sector of the universe.
- 159 miniature kangaroos: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 140.
- 160 hypnotize Sara’s mother: Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent Collection on



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- 161 “The organization is clearly schizophrenic”: Judge Paul G. Breckenridge, Church of Scientology, California, v. Gerald Armstrong.
- 162 “I went right down”: Hubbard, “The Story of Dianetics and Scientology,” lecture, Oct. 18, 1958.
- 163 “I used to sit”: Sue Lindsay, “Book Pulls Hubbard into Public,” Rocky Mountain News, Feb. 20, 1983.
- 164 “I cannot imagine how”: Hubbard letter to Veterans Administration, Jan. 27, 1948.
- 165 “Been amusing myself making”: Hubbard letter to Russell Hays, July 15, 1948.
- 166 he floats the idea of a book: Ibid.
- 167 “I got to revolutionize”: Ibid., Aug. 16, 1948.
- 168 “I was hiding behind”: Hubbard, “The Story of Dianetics and Scientology,” lecture, Oct. 18, 1958.
- 169 “I will soon, I hope”: Hubbard letter to Robert Heinlein, Nov. 24, 1948.
- 170 a Guggenheim grant: Ibid., Sept. 25, 1948.
- 171 a loan of fifty dollars: Ibid., Feb. 17, 1949.
- 172 “Golly, I never was”: Ibid., Mar. 3, 1949.
- 173 “getting case histories”: Ibid.
- 174 “My hip and stomach”: Ibid., Mar. 8, 1949.
- 175 It ain’t agin religion”: Ibid., Mar. 31, 1949.
- 176 “Dammit, the man’s got”: John Campbell letter to Robert Heinlein, July 26, 1949.
- 177 “deep hypnosis”: Ibid.



- 178 “I was born”: Ibid., Sept. 15, 1949.
- 179 lost twenty pounds: Ibid.
- 180 “The key to world sanity”: Ibid.
- 181 “a little old shack”: Hubbard letter to Robert Heinlein, Dec. 30, 1949.
- 182 Announcing a New Hubbard Edition: Undated correspondence from Hubbard to Robert and Virginia Heinlein.
- 183 “Ron is going at”: Sara Hubbard letter to Robert and Virginia Heinlein, May 2, 1950.
- 184 “begun Jan. 12, ’50”: Hubbard letter to Robert and Virginia Heinlein, Mar. 28, 1950.
- 185 the Empress, had dictated: Atack, *A Piece of Blue Sky*, p. 101.
- 186 Sara read Korzybski: Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions.
- 187 “Bob Heinlein sat down”: Hubbard, “Study of the Particle,” lecture, Oct. 29, 1953.
- 188 “This article is not a hoax”: Quoted in Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, p. 153.
- 189 “I know dianetics is”: Ibid, pp. 152–53.
- 190 Nobel Peace Prize: Alfred Bester, “Part 6 of Alfred Bester and Frederik Pohl—The Conversation,” recorded at The Tyneside, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, June 26, 1978.
- 191 “fifty thousand years”: *What Is Scientology?*, p. 106.
- 192 “with 18 million copies sold”: Ibid.
- 193 “Cells are evidently sentient”: Hubbard, *Dianetics*, p. 70.
- 194 “The operator then touches”: Ibid., pp. 55–56.



- 195 “handled like a marionette”: Ibid., p. xiii.
- 196 “many years of exact research”: Ibid., p. xxv.
- 197 “She is rendered”: Ibid., p. 60.
- 198 “This is not theory”: Ibid., p. 75.
- 199 “exact science”: Ibid., p. xviii.
- 200 “Dianetics deletes”: Ibid., p. xiii
- 201 “You will find many”: Ibid., p. xxv.
- 202 outnumbering those being treated: “Care of Mental Patients Remains Major Problem,” Associated Press, Apr. 29, 1949. Reitman, *Inside Scientology*, p. 26.
- 203 “in less than twenty hours”: Hubbard, *Dianetics*, p. ix.
- 204 “It was sweepingly”: Hubbard, “The Story of Dianetics and Scientology,” lecture, Oct. 10, 1958.
- 205 “This volume probably”: Isidor Isaac Rabi, “Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health, by L. Ron Hubbard (review),” *Scientific American*, January 1951, pp. 57–58
- 206 “expressive of a spirit”: Erich Fromm, “ ‘Dianetics’—For Seekers of Prefabricated Happiness,” *The New York Herald Tribune Book Review*, September 3, 1950, p. 7.
- 207 “The art consists”: S. I. Hayakawa, “From Science-fiction to Fiction-science,” *Etc.* 8, no. 4 (Summer 1951).
- 208 “While listening to Hubbard”: Winter, *A Doctor’s Report on Dianetics*, p. 11.
- 209 “When I count”: Hubbard, *Dianetics*, p. 201.
- 210 “He would hold hands”: Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions.
- 211 “He has on a long”: Winter, *A Doctor’s Report on Dianetics*,



pp. 15–16.

212 “Everything goes back”: Freud letter to Wilhelm Fliess, May 2, 1897.

213 “It seems to me”: Ibid., p. 461.

214 “The extreme achievement on these lines”: Freud, “The Paths to the Formations of Symptoms,” Lecture 23 in *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, trans. Jas. Strachey, p. 460. Whitehead comments on this passage: “To generalize from the experience of Freud and his colleagues and from later experiments in hypnotic age-regression, the further one pushes the subject back into the past, the more apt one is to provoke confabulation.” Whitehead, *Renunciation and Reformulation*, p. 80.

215 “had passed for ‘normal’ ”: Hubbard, *Dianetics*, pp. 299–300.

216 “It is a scientific”: Ibid., p. 132.

217 “Twenty or thirty abortion attempts”: Ibid., p. 158.

218 “However many billions”: Ibid., pp. 132–33.

219 “One I observed when”: L. Ron Hubbard, Jr., testimony. City of Clearwater Commission Hearings Re: The Church of Scientology, May 5, 1982.

220 “I was born at six”: Allan Sonnenschein, “Inside the Church of Scientology: An Exclusive Interview with L. Ron Hubbard, Jr.,” *Penthouse*, June 1983. The church’s objections to Hubbard Jr.’s statements, based on his signed retraction, and his disavowal of the retraction, are noted above.

221 “but conceived despite all precautions”: “The Admissions of L. Ron Hubbard,”

[www.gerryarmstrong.org/50grand/writings/ars/ars-2000-03-11.html](http://www.gerryarmstrong.org/50grand/writings/ars/ars-2000-03-11.html)



- 222 Hubbard kicked her: Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions.
- 223 Hubbard told one of his lovers: “Barbara Kaye,” quoted in Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 168.
- 224 “Migraine headache”: Church of Scientology International, letter from L. Ron Hubbard to the American Psychological Association, Apr. 13, 1949,  
[www.ronthephilosopher.org/phlspher/page16.htm](http://www.ronthephilosopher.org/phlspher/page16.htm).
- 225 In a similar letter: Letters and Journals: The Dianetics Letters, The Ron magazines, pp. 14–15.
- 226 When scientists tested: Ibid., p. 74.
- 227 “The psychiatrist and his front groups”: Hubbard, “Today’s Terrorists,” [psychfraud.freedommag.org/page44.htm](http://psychfraud.freedommag.org/page44.htm).
- 228 “had the power to torture”: Hubbard, Introduction to Scientology Ethics, p. 264.
- 229 “the sole cause of decline”: Hubbard, “Pain and Sex,” HCO Bulletin, Aug. 26, 1982.
- 230 “The money was just”: Corydon, L. Ron Hubbard, p. 307.
- 231 The people who were drawn: Wallis, The Road to Total Freedom, p. 56.
- 232 Through Dianetics, they hoped: Ibid., pp. 62–63.
- 233 “has complete recall”: Hubbard, Dianetics, p. 171.
- 234 “World’s First Clear”: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 165.
- 235 “there were never any clears”: O’Brien, Dianetics in Limbo, p. xi.
- 236 “With or without an argument”: Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent



## Collection on Alternative Religions.

- 237 “I do not want to be an American husband”: Sara Northrup Hubbard vs. L. Ron Hubbard, Complaint for Divorce. Los Angeles, Apr. 23, 1951.
- 238 Sara and Miles were plotting: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 176.
- 239 “He didn’t want her”: Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions.
- 240 “dianetic baby”: W. A. Sprague and Roland Wild, “Can We Doctor Our Minds at Home?” Oakland Tribune, Oct. 29, 1950.
- 241 “Don’t sleep.”: Corydon, L. Ron Hubbard, p. 306.
- 242 “We have Alexis”: “Dianetics Chief’s Conduct Lashed,” Los Angeles Times, Apr. 25, 1951.
- 243 a young couple had just left: “Hiding of Baby Charged to Dianetics Author,” Los Angeles Times, Apr. 11, 1951.
- 244 clean bill of health: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 179.
- 245 “cut her into little pieces”: Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions.
- 246 “He believed that as long”: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 179.
- 247 “systematic torture”: Sara Northrup Hubbard vs. L. Ron Hubbard et al. Superior Court, State of California, April 23, 1951.
- 248 “If I can help”: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 189.
- 249 a monkey in a cage: Ibid. Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly



Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions.

- 250 Hubbard wrote all night: Russell Miller interview with Richard de Mille, “The Bare-Faced Messiah Interviews,” July 25, 1986,  
[www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/miller/interviews/demille.htm](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/miller/interviews/demille.htm).
- 251 “People below the 2.0 level”: Hubbard, *Science of Survival*, p. 28.
- 252 “Sex,” he wrote: Ibid., pp. 114–15.
- 253 “Here is the harlot”: Ibid., p. 116.
- 254 “we get general neglect”: Ibid., p. 118.
- 255 To Alexis Valerie Hubbard: Ibid. The dedication was removed from subsequent editions.
- 256 “as a classified scientist”: “Dianetics Man Reports He’s in Cuban Hospital,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 2, 1951.
- 257 “a Cadillac so damn long”: Russell Hays tape with Barbara Hays Duke, June 30, 1984.
- 258 “I am, basically, a scientist”: Hubbard letter to the Attorney General, Department of Justice, May 14, 1951.
- 259 “He told me that I was under the influence”: Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions.
- 260 The foundation he had: “Science Group in Bankruptcy,” *Wichita Beacon*, February 25, 1952.
- 261 “That didn’t please him”: Russell Hays tape with Barbara Hays Duke, June 30, 1984.
- 262 “It sees all, knows all”: Hubbard, *Electropsychometric*



### 3. GOING OVERBOARD

- 1 constructing the intricate bureaucracy: When Hubbard was alive, he oversaw the church bureaucracy. Directly under him were the Executive Director International, who handled administration, and a Senior Case Supervisor International, who oversaw the tech. Hubbard appointed both officials. To one side of the EDI on the organizational chart was the Watchdog Committee, which consisted of executives in charge of each division of the international orgs. Under Miscavige, the EDI was essentially eliminated. Interview with Roy Selby.
- 2 “sperm dreams”: Hubbard, Dianetics, p. 294.
- 3 “as early as shortly before”: Hubbard, Dianetics: The Evolution of a Science, p. 93.
- 4 “The subject of past deaths”: Hubbard, Science of Survival, p. 61.
- 5 “There is a different feel to”: O’Brien, Dianetics in Limbo, p. 14.
- 6 “I literally shuddered”: Ibid., p. 20.
- 7 about twenty percent of the population: Hubbard, Scientology: A New Slant on Life, p. 192.
- 8 “A Suppressive Person will”: Hubbard, Introduction to Scientology Ethics, p. 171.
- 9 “The artist in particular”: Hubbard, Scientology: A New Slant on Life, p. 195.
- 10 Imitators and competitors came: Cf. Wallis, The Road to Total Freedom, pp. 80 ff.



- 11 “I’d like to start a religion”: Eshbach, *Over My Shoulder*, p. 125. Hubbard allegedly made this remark in 1948 or 1949. Arnie Lerma, a former Scientologist who maintains an anti-Scientology website, compiled a list of nine witnesses who said that they heard Hubbard make similar claims; [www.bermanet.com/reference/hubbard-start-a-religion.htm](http://www.bermanet.com/reference/hubbard-start-a-religion.htm). Hubbard’s son, L. Ron Hubbard, Jr., said, “He told me and a lot of other people that the way to make a million was to start a religion.” Allan Sonnenschein, “Inside the Church of Scientology: An Exclusive Interview with L. Ron Hubbard, Jr.,” *Penthouse*, June 1983. Sara Northrup recalled that Hubbard “kept saying ‘If you want to make any money the only way to do it is to make a religion so the government wouldn’t take it all.’ So he thought he could make a religion out of Dianetics.” Sara Elizabeth Hollister (formerly Sara Northrup Hubbard) tapes, Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions.
- 12 “To keep a person on”: Revised Declaration of Hana Whitfield, *Church of Scientology vs. Steven Fishman and Uwe Geertz*, US District Court, Central District of California, Apr. 4, 1994.
- 13 “Perhaps we could call”: Hubbard letter to Helen O’Brien, “RE CLINIC, HAS,” Apr. 10, 1953.
- 14 Hubbard incorporated three different churches: Wallis, *The Road to Total Freedom*, p. 128.
- 15 *The Church of Scientology of California*: Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, pp. 220–21.
- 16 “many, many reasons”: Jas. Phelan, “Have You Ever Been a Boo-Hoo?” *Saturday Evening Post*, Mar. 21, 1964.
- 17 “The goal of Dianetics”: Hubbard, *Science of Survival*, p.



- 18 “injected entities”: Hubbard, *Scientology: A History of Man*, p. 20.
- 19 “In the bivalve state”: Ibid., pp. 40–42.
- 20 “pragmatic, cold, cunning”: Hal Holmes, personal communication.
- 21 She had flinty blue eyes: Ken Urquhart, “Friendly Recollections of Mary Sue Hubbard,” [marysuehubbard.com/ken.shtml](http://marysuehubbard.com/ken.shtml).
- 22 Hubbard was prospering once again: Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, pp. 226–27.
- 23 “so knock off the idolizing.”: Interview with Philip Spickler.
- 24 “It should be taken daily”: Hubbard, *All About Radiation*, p. 113.
- 25 much of their time unsupervised: Interview with anonymous former Sea Org member.
- 26 extensive household staff: Anderson, *Report of the Board of Inquiry into Scientology*, p. 42.
- 27 The headline in *Garden News*: Quoted in Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, p. 235.
- 28 “mapping out the bank”: Interview with anonymous former Sea Org member.
- 29 School was, as usual: Ibid.
- 30 “What is this ‘Scientology’?”: Ibid.
- 31 “little old English lady”: Ken Urquhart, “My Friend, the Titan,” *IVy* 60, Jan. 2003.
- 32 “Your friends”: Ibid.
- 33 It was rumored that: Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, pp. 215–16.



- 34 “My attention wandered”: Ken Urquhart, “My Friend, the Titan,” *Ivy* 60 (Jan. 2003).
- 35 “all mental and nervous disorders”: Malko, *Scientology*, p. 76. Miriam Ottenberg, *The Evening Star*, January 1963.
- 36 The IRS began an audit: The IRS audit began in 1965. The Church of Scientology of California was informed by the IRS that it no longer was recognized as a tax-exempt religious organization in July 1967. That status remained in effect for twenty-six years.
- 37 “There are some features”: Report of the Board of Inquiry into Scientology, p. 1.
- 38 “a man of restless energy”: *Ibid.*, p. 42.
- 39 “Some of his claims”: *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- 40 “an insensate hostility”: *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- 41 The report led to: Rev. Kenneth J. Whitman, President of the Church of Scientology of California and National Spokesman, undated “Press Statement” (although stamped “Top Secret”). Documents that the church obtained through Freedom of Information requests do show widespread cooperation among various international investigative agencies.
- 42 another “first Clear”: Lamont, *Religion, Inc.*, p. 53. Hana Eltringham says it was in August 1966, but Hubbard and McMaster were already in Rhodesia by then. Affidavit of Hana Eltringham Whitfield, Mar. 8, 1994.
- 43 McMaster adopted a clerical: Lamont, *Religion, Inc.*, p. 57.
- 44 Scientology’s first “pope”: *Ibid.* Kenneth Urquhart remembers the post as being merely a “cardinal.” Kenneth Urquhart, personal communication.
- 45 “He was very pronounced”: Interview with Jim Dincalci.



- 46 “curb the growth”: Wallis, *The Road to Total Freedom*, p. 195.
- 47 “I had been ill”: “Further Information on L. Ron HUBBARD and Laurence L. HAUTZ,” CIA dispatch, Aug. 22, 1966.
- 48 He resigned as Executive: Reitman, *Inside Scientology*, p. 80; and Malko, *Scientology*, p. 82.
- 49 Rhodes was homosexual: Rotberg, *The Founder*, p. 408.
- 50 Hubbard had a fantasy: Interview with Hana Eltringham Whitfield.
- 51 issuing passports: Hana Eltringham (Whitfield), interview, “Secret Lives—L. Ron Hubbard,” Channel 4, UK, 1997.
- 52 However, the current prime minister: Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, p. 258.
- 53 “He told me Ian Smith”: Lamont, *Religion, Inc.*, p. 54.
- 54 “drinking lots of rum”: Corydon, *L. Ron Hubbard*, p. 59. The church says an apostate fabricated this letter.
- 55 “Your Sugie”: Interview with Dan Koon. Neville Chamberlin told me he saw Hubbard’s “pharmaceutical cabinet,” which was amply supplied with drugs, and he says he witnessed Hubbard injecting himself in the thigh on one occasion, but he doesn’t know what substance Hubbard was using. “He used drugs almost as a shaman,” Chamberlin speculates.
- 56 “I want to die”: Virginia Downsborough, quoted in Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, p. 266.
- 57 “All this recent career”: Hubbard, “Ron’s Journal ’67.” Taped lecture.
- 58 Blavatsky had prophesied: Interview with Hana Eltringham Whitfield. This was her impression, although there doesn’t seem to be a reference to such a redheaded leader in



Blavatsky. It seems to have been an impression that Whitfield carried with her when she first met Hubbard.

- 59 “There’s a course starting”: Interview with Hana Eltringham Whitfield.
- 60 “That is where the Fifth Invaders”: Ibid.
- 61 “The rollers! The rollers!”: Ibid.
- 62 “Eyes tire easily”: Veterans Administration, Report of Medical Examination for Disability Evaluation, July 27, 1951.
- 63 Hubbard had written: Hubbard, Dianetics, pp. 10–11.
- 64 a habit of squinting: Interview with Dr. Catherine Kennedy. Hana Eltringham, for instance, told me that although she never saw Hubbard wearing glasses, “I often saw him squint when he picked up a paper to read.... He did the same when he looked at people he was talking to.”
- 65 “astigmatism, a distortion”: Hubbard, Professional Auditor’s Bulletin No. 11, “Eyesight and Glasses,” compiled from ACC tape material, May 1, 1957.
- 66 “You’re doing yourself”: Tracy Ekstrand, personal communication.
- 67 All of Hubbard’s senses: Interviews with Dan Koon, Tracy Ekstrand, Hana Eltringham Whitfield, and Sinar Parman.
- 68 Yvonne Gillham: Interviews with Hana Eltringham Whitfield and anonymous former Sea Org members.
- 69 There were three ships: According to Karin Pouw, there were ten ships in the Scientology fleet, but she includes recreational sailboats. There were two “station ships” in Long Beach and Los Angeles, the Excalibur and the Bolivar, but Hubbard was never on either of them. Mike Rinder, personal communication.



- 70 The smokestack: Hawkins, Counterfeit Dreams, p. 60.
- 71 Hubbard spent most of his time: Ken Urquhart, “What Was Ron Really Like?” address to 2012 Class VIII Reunion, Los Angeles, July 14–15, 2012.
- 72 His restless leg: Interviews with Daniel Holeman and anonymous former Sea Org member.
- 73 “I think he was doing”: Interview with Jim Dincalci.
- 74 Hubbard and Mary Sue would dine: Interviews with Tracy Ekstrand, Bel Ferradj, and Jim Dincalci.
- 75 Anyone who registered: Monica Pignotti, “My Nine Lives in Scientology,” 1989.  
[www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/pignotti/](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/pignotti/).
- 76 “We Come Back”: Hubbard, Mission into Time, p. 27.
- 77 “The end justifies the means”: Interview with Jim Dincalci. Actually, Machiavelli never made that statement, although it is frequently attributed to him. It is a mistranslation of a key passage from The Prince: “e nelle azioni di tutti li uomini, e massime de’ principi, dove non e iudizio da reclamare, si guarda al fine.” “The much quoted fragment—si guarda al fine—can be translated as ‘one must consider the outcome’ but in context, it really refers to consequences of his acts for the stature of the prince, that is, to the blame or praise he earns and not to the relationship between means and ends generally.” Philip Bobbitt, personal communication.
- 78 a marshal to Joan of Arc: Joel Sappel and Robert W. Welkos, “The Scientology Story,” Los Angeles Times, June 24–26, 1990.
- 79 Tamburlaine’s wife: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 362.
- 80 driving a race car: Reitman, Inside Scientology, p. 103.



- 81 “liaisons in the moonlight”: Interview with Hana Eltringham Whitfield.
- 82 We had a lot of good-looking girls”: Hubbard, Mission into Time, p. 34.
- 83 None was found: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 284.
- 84 “Recall a time”: Interview with Hana Eltringham Whitfield.
- 85 “If there’s time”:” Ibid.
- 86 “The girl would say”: Hubbard, Mission into Time, p. 34.
- 87 “We did find the tunnel”: Ibid., p. 40.
- 88 “The world we live in now”: Hubbard’s lecture, “Assists,” Class VIII, Tape 10, Oct. 3, 1968.
- 89 “three-D, super colossal”: Hubbard’s handwritten note, “Incident 2,” part of the OT III materials, Oct. 28, 1968.
- 90 “He is not likely”: Hubbard’s lecture, “Assists,” Class VIII, Tape 10, Oct. 3, 1968.
- 91 “the planet of ill repute”: This story is drawn largely from Hubbard’s lecture, “Assists,” Ibid. It does not come from the actual OT III materials, which the Church of Scientology insists are secret and a trade secret, although they are easily available on the Internet. They do not differ substantively from the material Hubbard discussed in this lecture and wrote about elsewhere.
- 92 “We won’t go into that”: Interview with Hana Eltringham Whitfield.
- 93 threw up violently: Interview with anonymous former Sea Org member.
- 94 “a fucking asshole”: Gerald Armstrong interview, “Secret Lives—L. Ron Hubbard,” Channel 4, UK, 1997.



- 95 “They held the power”: Interview with Hana Eltringham Whitfield.
- 96 intimate but not overtly sexual: Affidavit of Tonja Burden, Jan. 25, 1980.
- 97 When the girls became: Sue Lindsay, “Genius in a Yellow Straw Hat,” Rocky Mountain News, Feb. 16, 1986.
- 98 “putting ethics in”: Hubbard, Introduction to Scientology Ethics, p. 20.
- 99 Good and evil actions: Ibid., pp. 13–14.
- 100 “the greatest good”: Ibid., p. 101.
- 101 “You have to establish”: Hubbard’s lecture, “Ethics and Case Supervision,” Oct. 9, 1968.
- 102 his cigarette smoking: “With respect to our parishioners, smoking is a personal choice”; Karin Pouw, personal correspondence.
- 103 It had begun with Gibraltar: Miller, Bare-Faced Messiah, p. 275.
- 104 England banned foreign Scientologists: Ibid., p. 289.
- 105 “She was like Cinderella”: Interview with “Catherine Harrington.”
- 106 Mary Sue used to have parties: Interview with Candy Swanson.
- 107 “gorgeous”: Interview with Belkacem Ferradj.
- 108 “I hit the bulkhead”: Ibid.
- 109 “Never question LRH”: Hana Eltringham Whitfield lecture, Hamburg Symposium, Mar. 26, 2010.
- 110 even in rough seas: “The degree of swell or wave has no bearing on whether they go overboard or not.” Hubbard, Flag



Order 1499, Oct. 21, 1968.

- 111 John McMaster ... was tossed: Lamont, Religion, Inc., pp. 53–54.
- 112 He left the church: The church says of McMaster: “He was in his day a ‘squirrel’ who sought to profit from his off-beat alterations of Mr. Hubbard’s discoveries.... He died in 1990, an alcoholic, and virtually no one in Scientology today has heard of him.” Karin Pouw, personal communication.
- 113 “She screamed all the way”: Hana Eltringham Whitfield lecture, Hamburg Symposium, Mar. 26, 2010.
- 114 “raw, bleeding noses”: Russell Miller interview with David Mayo, “The Bare-Faced Messiah Interviews,” Aug. 28, 1986, [www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/bfm/interviews/mayo.htm](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/bfm/interviews/mayo.htm).
- 115 Children who committed minor: Sharone Stainforth, [theapolloseries.blogspot.com/2012/07/my-transcript-for-dublin-conference.html](http://theapolloseries.blogspot.com/2012/07/my-transcript-for-dublin-conference.html).
- 116 Derek Greene: Interview with Hana Eltringham Whitfield. Elsewhere, Whitfield has said the child was confined for four days and nights. Hana Eltringham Whitfield lecture, Hamburg Symposium, Mar. 26, 2010.
- 117 Other young children were: Russell Miller interview with David Mayo, “The Bare-Faced Messiah Interviews,” Aug. 28, 1986, [www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/bfm/interviews/mayo.htm](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/bfm/interviews/mayo.htm). Tonja Burden recalls “one boy held in there for 30 nights, crying and begging to be released.” Affidavit of Tonja Burden, Jan. 25, 1980. Monica Pignotti also writes about the chain locker: Monica Pignotti, “My Nine Lives in Scientology,” [www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/pignotti/](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/pignotti/). Sharone Stainforth recalls seeing a four- or five-year-old girl



with her top half sticking out of a ship chain locker, and that she was filthy and red-faced from crying. Sharone Stainforth, [theapolloseries.blogspot.com/2012/07/my-transcript-for-dublin-conference.html](http://theapolloseries.blogspot.com/2012/07/my-transcript-for-dublin-conference.html). According to another former Sea Org member, the little girl's name was Angela, "a cute little blond girl that LRH thought was an SP and assigned her to the chain locker. She was so small I believe she crawled out of the locker up the chain to the poop deck as I remember seeing her coming out of that hole. I don't remember what she did but it certainly made me swear to myself to never let that happen to me. I believe Lonnie Garrapie (not sure of the spelling), young boy from Canada, was assigned to the chain locker for stealing and throwing people's belongings, that he stole, over the side—he did that with Kenny Campelman's silver flute, David Ziff's jewelry, and other items. Divers were sent over the side to try and retrieve the items, as they were all of great value." Anonymous former Sea Org member, communication with Lauren Wolf.

- 118 Hubbard ruled that they: Interview with anonymous former Sea Org member.
- 119 One little girl, a deaf: Corydon, L. Ron Hubbard, pp. 29–30; Attack, A Piece of Blue Sky, p. 180.
- 120 "did not have the confront": Interview with Hana Eltringham Whitfield.
- 121 "You would say to yourself": [infinitecomplacency.blogspot.com/2010/03/17-tracing-it-back-to-source\\_29.html](http://infinitecomplacency.blogspot.com/2010/03/17-tracing-it-back-to-source_29.html).
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- 124 “I like how you Americans work!”: Interview with “Catherine Harrington.”
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- 130 Mary Sue was thrilled: Interview with Jim Dincalci.
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pp. 79–80. Gillette, “Scientology Flagship Shrouded in Mystery,” Los Angeles Times, Aug. 29, 1978.

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- 138 “Your mother was with me”: Church of Scientology California v. Gerald Armstrong.
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## 8. BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY

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Debbie Cook testimony, Church of Scientology Flag Service Organization, Inc., vs. Debra J. Baumgarten, AKA Debbie Cook Baumgarten, AKA Debbie Cook, and Wayne Baumgarten. Joe Childs and Thomas C. Tobin, “Ex-Clearwater Scientology Officer Debbie Cook Testifies She Was Put in ‘The Hole,’ Abused for Weeks,” Tampa Bay Times, Feb. 10, 2012. When Cook later complained to other Scientologists about the relentless fund-raising of the church, despite what she said was a \$1 billion cash reserve, the church sued her for at least \$300,000 in damages. Like many former Sea Org executives, Debbie Cook and her husband, Wayne Baumgarten, signed nondisclosure agreements with the church when they left the staff. They were paid \$50,000 each to remain silent in perpetuity. In return, they waived their First Amendment rights to free speech, agreeing to pay a minimum of \$50,000 for any such remark made in private and \$100,000 for every disparaging statement they might make in any medium. If such a statement happens to be published in a newspaper, or a magazine, they are required to pay \$20 for each copy printed—i.e., more than \$20 million each if they spoke to *The New Yorker*. They also relinquished



any claim to ownership of their preclear folders. “Agreement and General Release,” signed by Debbie Cook and Wayne Baumgarten, Oct. 19, 2007. Cook was in the Sea Org for twenty-nine years. In her seventeen years as Scientology’s top executive at the Clearwater base, she oversaw an operation that brought in more than \$1.7 billion. Joe Childs and Thomas C. Tobin, “Church of Scientology Sues Longtime Clearwater Leader over New Year’s Eve Email,” Tampa Bay Times, Jan. 31, 2012. Cook and Baumgarten settled with the church, agreeing not to speak about it in the future, and moved to the Caribbean island of Guadaloupe. Joe Childs and Thomas C. Tobin, “Ex-Scientology Leader Debbie Cook Moving to Caribbean Island,” Tampa Bay Times, June 20, 2012.

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## A Note About the Author

Lawrence Wright is a graduate of Tulane University and the American University in Cairo, where he spent two years teaching. He is a staff writer for *The New Yorker*, and the author of six previous books of nonfiction—*City Children*, *Country Summer*; *In the New World*; *Saints and Sinners*; *Remembering Satan*; *Twins*; and *The Looming Tower*—and a novel, *God's Favorite*. He received many honors for *The Looming Tower*, including the Pulitzer Prize, the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, and the New York Public Library's Helen Bernstein Book Award for Excellence in Journalism, among others. He is also a screenwriter and a playwright. He and his wife are longtime residents of Austin, Texas.



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