

Scientology

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Entertainment

Midnight Facts for Insomniacs

Podcast Transcript

(Note: transcript consists of
episode outline)

I don't know what's going on right now, I don't know if mercury is in retrograde or if this house was built on an Indian burial ground or if this month is some kind of karmic retribution, but my life is officially off the rails. And I don't wanna talk about it, this is my happy place, but just trust me when I say there is a reason I'm going to be selfish this week. We will definitely get around to the topic all of you voted on in discord, I promise, and I'm looking forward to that one, but this week i'm hijacking the show, I'm going rogue and picking my own subject. Because this one is my comfort food, I've wanted to do it for a long time and we've talked about this in the past, this is one that I know a lot about, and I have a feeling this might be our longest episode ever. It's going to be very in-depth.

I remember as a kid seeing these ads on tv for a book called

dianetics, do you remember those? They always seemed mysterious to me. There was a volcano erupting vigorously, One had a giant wall of spikes raising up in front of this guy and then being exploded by the volcano, and it was all very dramatic and suggestive and nonspecific. Some of the ads would just be a list of questions along with page numbers that apparently held the answers. They were questions like, "How Can you reach your full potential?" And one of the tag lines of the ad was "the owners manual for the human mind." That book, it turns out, is the foundation of a hugely successful worldwide profit-making business-slash-cult known as Scientology, and the book was written by one of history's most prolific authors and successful cult leaders who would become known to his followers as LRH.

Here's a sample from the first section of the book: **"...the skills offered in this handbook will produce the dianetic clear, an optimum individual with intelligence considerably greater than the current normal, or the dianetic release, an individual who has been freed from his major anxieties or illnesses. The release can be done in less than twenty hours of work and is a state superior to any produced by several years of psycho- analysis,**

since the release will not release." Sure. From the body of the text: "The clear [referring to a person who has achieved that state] has full color-visio, tone-sonic, tactile, olfactory, rhythmic, kinesthetic, thermal and organic imagination in kind." Some of those aren't even words, let alone realistic concepts, but regardless, going clear is the stated goal of Scientology. And if that sounds a little bit ridiculous and far fetched, you might be surprised to learn how many prominent celebrities have been ensnared by what is often often described as the world's youngest major religion. And I use the word ensnared deliberately...to be clear (so to speak) I'm not going to pretend to be impartial in this one...we can discuss whether Scientology is ultimately worse than any other religion, but the bottom line is that this organization is a horribly exploitive, money-grubbing cult, and I'm confident that I'll convincingly make that case by the end of this episode. And if not, hey, they ARE actively recruiting. The church claims to have some 4 million members but more realistic estimates put the membership between 20,000 and 50,000 and dropping rapidly, so they're desperate to recruit. Your color-visio, tone-sonic, kinesthetic thermal organic imagination awaits! They do have a pretty sweet

website, you can type in your location and it will show you all of the churches nearby. I did it, and there's a Church of Scientology on Mission street, about five minutes from your house. There are six of them in the San Jose area, just over the hill from here, not far from the Bay Area. This is not just some obscure Hollywood celebrity-networking club. Although it is that as well. obviously Tom Cruise and John Travolta are the two biggest poster boys, but they share poster space with Giovanni Ribisi, Juliet Lewis, Kirstie Alley from Cheers, the musician Beck and the late jazz musician Chick Corea, Elisabeth Moss from the handmaid's tale and Get him to the Greek and Us, Michael Pena (The super talented and funny comedic actor from Ant-man and fantasy Island and chips etc.), Jenna Elfman from Dharma and Greg. Actor and accused rapist Danny Masterson, Jason Lee, skateboarder and frequent collaborator of Kevin smith in mall rats and chasing amy. Now that I think about it he was in vanilla sky with Tom Cruise, I'm betting that's how he got sucked in. Nancy Cartwright, the voice of Bart Simpson, is a devout Scientologist and has donated over \$10 million to the church. Singer/songwriter Isaac Hayes, the voice of Chef in South Park, he actually quit after the famous South Park episode making

fun of Scientology. rapper Doug E Fresh, not familiar with his work, Nicole Kidman-slash-Katie Holmes-slash-any woman who has dated or married Tom Cruise's toxic ass, they all become temporary

Scientologists and then ditch the church immediately after escaping from Tom. It's a dual escape.

Breaking up with Tom Cruise is like an obstacle course. That man is a tremendously talented actor and a tremendously destructive, intense, damaged human being. Do not date Tom Cruise. Just throwing that out there for any MFFI folk who were considering hooking up with Tom. Actually a hookup is probably fine, if you wanna to bang Tom Cruise that's cool, just make sure you ghost him before he recruits you.

The brainwashing happens fast.

Also, Leah Remini from king of queens and who I had a huge crush on as a teenager, she was a Scientologist for years and now is a vocal opponent of the church, she has produced documentaries and a TV series with the goal of exposing and undermining Scientology. Her content: not great in my opinion, the best possible source if you're interested in learning more is "going clear" both the HBO documentary and the book. I've immersed myself in a ton of this stuff and I can confidently say that if you're looking for one in-depth source, all you really need is the book, it's full

title is *Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood, and the Prison of Belief*.

So let's start not at—but near—the beginning. People think the beginning is always the best place to start... Tarantino and Christopher Nolan would like a word. Whenever possible I prefer to Momento or Benjamin button a narrative. So let's start with the most important fact: to say that Scientology-founder Lafayette Ronald Hubbard was a prolific author would be an understatement. He is actually the Guinness record holder for most number of books published, at 1,084. And that means exactly what you think it means: 90% of this guy's writing was trash. Like, there's a difference between prolific writing and just literary sluthood. We do not slutshame unless it's a metaphor for being a giant sellout, which I guess is more like whore-shaming, but I wouldn't compare LRH to a prostitute, because I actually respect prostitutes. Sex work is perfectly noble as opposed to, you know, brainwashing. No sex worker has ever negotiated a handjob by convincing a client to sign away their soul for a billion years. We'll get there. But the point is that Hubbard was inspired by money rather than a muse. There are some writers who are prolific because they feel COMPELLED to write...

Stephen King seems to be one of those, he doesn't need the money, he's just a compulsive writer. Though he should still slow down... maybe a little quality control is in order. But he can't seem to stop; apparently some muses are more insistent than others. Some muses whisper suggestions in your ear, and some of them have a whip. So Hubbard got his start back when writers were paid a penny a word to churn out content for pulp magazines. The famous rumor is that Hubbard typed so quickly and intently that he would sweat all over his typewriter. I think it probably had more to do with the fact that he was a slovenly out-of-shape unwashed pigman, but sure. I don't have anything against fluffy dudes, just this particular fluffy dude. Check out some pictures of this guy; he looks like he smelled bad. And he had terrible teeth and these big thick rubbery lips. It's funny to me how people who claim to be divine and superior are always severely uncute. Marshall Applewhite, Charles Manson, Jim Jones, Koresh, etc. So if you listened to our science-fiction episode, number 99, we talked about the magazine "amazing stories" and all of the golden-era science-fiction pulps that nurtured some of the great sci-fi authors of all time. Well, those magazines also nurtured hacks like L Ron Hubbard.

And incidentally, when we get to the foundation of Scientology, it's going to sound a lot like something out of a science-fiction novel, because that's exactly what it is. I made fun of this in a previous episode, but L Ron Hubbard basically wrote a bunch of ridiculous pulp science fiction novels and then grabbed one at random out of a sack and was, "Jk, this one's real."

So Lafayette Ronald Hubbard was born in Nebraska in 1911. His father was in the Navy, which would afford opportunities for Hubbard to travel extensively as a younger man. He kept journals of his travels, as any young aspiring writer would, jotting down all of his philosophical musings. When he went to China for instance he wrote, "The trouble with China is, there are too many chinks here." Cool. It was also around this time that Hubbard gave himself the nickname "flash." So it seems like he was never not awful. Some terrible people start out mostly good and become terrible over time, due to circumstances, others are just naturals.

When he was 22, Hubbard married a woman named Margaret Louise Grubb, nicknamed Polly. Can you have a last-name nickname? It wasn't her first name that was the problem. So the Hubbards settled in Maryland and had two children, a

boy and a girl. Hubbard's prolific writing resulted in some minor success, and even a short-lived TV serial based on one of his works called "the secret of treasure Island," but his Hollywood career never took off, so he instead attempted to follow in his father's footsteps and serve in the Navy, but his poor eyesight and other health problems proved a barrier to entry. He failed his physical numerous times but after the attack on Pearl Harbor, suddenly the standards for the Navy dropped to "breath and a pulse." Hubbard's short career in the Navy is extensively documented, so we know exactly what happened and what didn't, and it is also extensively mythologized by the church of Scientology. Hubbard claimed to have sunk two Japanese submarines, but the truth was that he was discharged after the submarine he was commanding opened fire on a log, and then accidentally attacked a Mexican island. That island started it. Islands, very rude and inconvenient. You're out in the open ocean and suddenly there's just a chunk of land in your way. What is an island after all but an impediment to submarines.

Hubbard was in fact a serial liar throughout his life. He would inflate the tales of his military service; for instance he claimed to have been

severely injured in combat and he would later swear that Scientology had cured him, but the fact is that the only ailments he experienced during his years of service were mild arthritis and pink eye. Hubbard was also a serial womanizer and cheater, so you can add gonorrhea to his list of ailments, which he picked up from a prostitute in Miami. "She was a very loose person," he confides in his secret memoir. That prostitute, not very monogamous. I suspect she may be seeing other customers. Hubbard wrote "I was terrified by it, the consequences of being discovered by my wife, the navy, my friends.... I took to dosing myself with sulfa in such quantities that I was afraid I had affected my brain." "I'm no doctor, but...it did. If we're giving him the benefit of the doubt.

After his discharge from the military, Hubbard abandoned his wife and two children to move to Los Angeles where he dabbled in some weird mystical sex magic, that's not a joke, he fell in with noted rocket scientist, mystic, and science fiction enthusiast Jack Parsons, who was a follower of the OTO —Ordo Templi Orienti—these are adherents of Thelema (thuh-leema), the black magic religion founded by Aleister Crowley. So this gets pretty bonkers, but is absolutely true. The group resided

in a giant mansion that Parsons had divided up and was renting as individual rooms, it was basically a black-magic sex commune. Parsons was in contact with Crowley, and would write to Alistair that although Hubbard had “no formal training in Magick he has an extraordinary amount of experience and understanding in the field. From some of his experiences I deduce he is in direct touch with some higher intelligence, possibly his [Guardian Angel](#). ... He is the most Thelemic person I have ever met and is in complete accord with our own principles.” Those principles included banging Parson’s gf, as we shall see. So Parsons and Hubbard devised a number of so-called “sex Magik” rituals, one of which was explicitly intended to produce the moon child, a boy who would grow up to become the antichrist. It took a while to find a willing, um, host, but that didn’t stop them from practicing. “The ceremony, likely aided by narcotics and hallucinogens, required Hubbard to channel the female deity of Babalon as Parsons performed the ‘Invocation of wand with material basis on talisman’—in other words, masturbating on a piece of parchment. He typically invoked twice a night.” You don’t do this with your buddies? That’s just bonding. Quick game of wet cookie before bed? Wet parchment?

Eventually a woman named Marjorie Cameron agreed to birth the moon child/Antichrist, and it probably had nothing to do with the prospect of free rent. The actual ritual consisted of Parsons banging Marjorie on an altar while Hubbard chanted a bunch of mystical gobbledygook.

“as Hubbard continued the incantation, Parsons and Cameron consummated the ceremony upon the altar. This same ritual went on for three nights in a row. Afterward, Parsons wrote to Crowley,

“Instructions were received direct through Ron, the seer.... I am to act as instructor guardian guide for nine months; then it [the baby] will be loosed on the world.” Crowley was unimpressed. “Apparently Parsons or Hubbard or somebody is producing a Moonchild,” he complained to another follower. “I get fairly frantic when I contemplate the idiocy of these goats.” Alastair Crowley smack down. I cannot sanction their buffoonery.

The moonchild would never come to fruition. When Marjorie actually got pregnant an abortion was quickly procured, presumably because Parsons and Hubbard realized that a tiny, wailing, diaper-soiling antichrist can really put a damper on your bachelor-sex-magick pad. Over time Parsons became increasingly disenchanted with Hubbard when good Ol Randy Ron began having affairs with numerous

women in the house, including Jack's girlfriend Sarah Northrup, a teenage "second-degree magician" who had already caused quite a bit of drama in the house to the point that Aliastir Crowley referred to her as a vampire and implied that she was an evil seductress. Jack Parsons was jealous of the affair between Hubbard and Sarah Northrup, but tried to save face in his correspondence with Crowley, writing, "About three months ago I met Captain L. Ron Hubbard, a writer and explorer of whom I had known for some time ... He is a gentleman; he has red hair, green eyes, is honest and intelligent, and we have become great friends. He moved in with me about two months ago, and although Betty and I are still friendly, she has transferred her sexual affection to Ron.

I think I have made a great gain and as Betty and I are the best of friends, there is little loss. I cared for her rather deeply but I have no desire to control her emotions, and I can, I hope, control my own. I need a magical partner. I have many experiments in mind." That was a long winded way of explaining the wizarding version of a friend zone. She's a familiar now.

Another of their experiments was not remotely magical: Hubbard and Jack would attempt to go into business together with some

harebrained boat selling scheme, but Hubbard would eventually break the agreement, steal \$10,000 from Jack and run off with Sarah Northrup to Miami to claim the boats for himself. After learning of the treachery, Alistair Crowley mocked Jack Parsons for being a sucker, prompting Parsons to take action. "Hubbard attempted to escape me by sailing at 5 P.M., and I performed a full evocation to Bartzabel [the spirit of Mars or War] within the circle at 8 P.M. At the same time, so far as I can check, his ship was struck by a sudden squall off the coast, which ripped off his sails and forced him back to port, where I took the boat in custody... Here I am in Miami pursuing the children of my folly; they cannot move without going to jail. However I am afraid that most of the money has already been dissipated." That's the word I'm going to use if I steal money and spend it. "I'm sorry, that money has m dissipated." I like how it implies zero responsibility. "That money has been aerosoled. It was the weirdest thing, I remember I went to a strip club for ten hours, and by the end of the night, poof. Money gone. It's a mystery." When black magic didn't have the intended effect, Jack tried a more pedestrian approach. He sued Hubbard, and they settled out of court. I bet he still chalked this modest victory up to magic. "Via

the casting of a powerful sorcerous hex within a flaming pentagram of lambs blood I was able to obtain a fiduciary settlement for a fraction of the money I was owed. Hail Satan!"

Incidentally the church of Scientology does officially acknowledge that Hubbard was involved with thelema and the OTO, but they claim that he was acting on behalf of the US government as a spy, infiltrating the organization.

"Mr. Hubbard accomplished the assignment," the church maintains.

"He engineered a business investment that tied up the money Parsons used to fund the group's activities, thus making it unavailable to Parsons for his occult pursuits." It was the noblest of thefts. Hubbard, the church claims, "broke up black magic in America."

So yeah, Hubbard banged a bunch of wannabe magicians, assisted with black magic jerkoff sessions and then defrauded his friends all in the name of patriotism. 'Merica! Hey, some of us served our country by fighting the Nazis, some of us fucked witches. We don't kink shame.

As it turned out, Sarah Northrop and Hubbard's honeymoon period would be short; they immediately experienced relationship problems. That's a mild way of putting it. In Sarah's own words: "...I thought

he was a great war hero, a captain of a ship that had been downed in the Pacific, and he was weeks on a raft, he had been blinded by the sun, his back had been broken. All of these things were complete lies." "We had this terrible fight and he told me he was going to commit suicide if I didn't marry him. I really believed him, so we got married." The marriage was abusive from the jump. Hubbard once struck Sarah with a 45 caliber revolver across the face because she was smiling in her sleep, which he interpreted to mean that she was thinking of someone else. Pretty telling when you assume that every time your wife is smiling, she could only be picturing someone other than you. He must have secretly known how awful he was. "He said that he would kill me rather than let me leave him." Hubbard was now legally married to two women, an official bigamist, a thief, a liar, basically the perfect Messiah and purest vessel for a brand new religion. Again in Sarah's own words, "he said many times that the only way to make any real money was to have a religion. " weirdly, you won't find any of this in the Scientology literature. The abusive bigamy and calculating con-man stuff isn't prominently featured on their website. After the birth of their first child, in 1950 Hubbard began working on what would become Dianetics: The

modern science of mental health, essentially a self-help book of pseudoscientific pop psychology, a book which claimed that you could think away cancer and arthritis, and a book that also vilified homosexuals as dangerous deviants. "The sexual pervert (and by this term Dianetics...includes any and all forms of deviation...such as homosexuality, lesbianism, sexual sadism, is actually quite ill physically...he is very far from culpable for his condition, but he is also far from normal and extremely dangerous to society..."

Much of the content of the book reminds me of those personality tests we covered in episode 92, in fact Scientology would later include its own "assessment" which it calls "The Oxford capacity analysis" to make it sound academic, and of course it has nothing to do with Oxford. And just like all of those frauds we discussed in the personality test episode, Hubbard was a guy with no psychiatric training purporting to teach people how to understand their minds, control their brains, and better their lives. He was like a guru, a pseudo-scientist, and a life coach all rolled into one rubbery lipped wife-beating con-man. So of course, the book went viral. As we learned with "the secret," people enjoy being told that they're secretly powerful wizards and that magic is real.

In Dianetics, named for dia—Greek for “through” and nous—meaning “mind”—Hubbard posited that the human brain is split between two conflicting personas, so to speak: the analytical and the reactive. Basically he claimed that the brain is a perfect calculating machine but over time it becomes cluttered and filled up with traumas that need to be cleared out. These traumatic experiences are encoded in the human brain as “engrams,” and only someone trained as an “auditor”—which is the Dianetics equivalent of a therapist—could help identify and clear out those Engrams. Now, engrams weren’t limited to conscious experience. For instance, engrams could involve the trauma a person had experienced as an embryo by being subjected to the sexual activity of its parents. You hear that, pregnant ladies? Keep the pee out of the V if you don’t want to eff up your b. (That’s “baby.”) Hubbard would also claim that embryos were frequently traumatized by abortion attempts. “It is a scientific fact that abortion attempts are the most important factor in aberration. The child on whom the abortion is attempted is condemned to live with murderers whom he reactively knows to be murderers through all his weak and helpless youth!” Apparently in Hubbard’s mind millions of women were constantly attempting and

failing to abort babies. It seems like the lesson here is that if you're going to get an abortion, just be thorough. Hubbard claimed to be pro life but it seems like he's just encouraging doctors and pregnant women to get better at abortion. Of course, Hubbard himself would be responsible for numerous abortions of fetuses he himself had created and he would later pressure members of his "sea organization" to terminate pregnancies in order to keep the population of the boats manageable. We'll get there.

All of this in-womb trauma nonsense did not endear Hubbard to the psychiatric establishment; he and his book would be rejected and mocked by most noted psychiatrists and psychoanalysts, and in return Hubbard began to despise the entire field, he bore a grudge against an entire scientific discipline. Another contributing factor to his salt and shade was that he had actually suffered from some pretty extreme mental anguish at various times in his life and there are documented letters in which he begged therapists to provide treatment and felt that they had either rebuffed him or failed. He would eventually write that if psychiatrists "had the power to torture and kill everyone, they would do so." He continued, "Recognize them for what they are: psychotic criminals—and handle

them accordingly." Hubbard claimed that Psychiatry was "the sole cause of decline in this universe." " You've heard of proportionate response? This wasn't it. "You so-called 'psychiatrists' are unwilling or unable to cure my violent paranoia and dangerous delusions of grandeur? Thanks a lot, satans." Not a drama queen at all.

Hubbard's extreme hatred of psychiatry explains why, even to this day, Scientology is antagonistic toward traditional therapy and psychiatric treatments. I don't know if you've ever seen those crazy interviews with Tom Cruise where he goes off on therapists and anti-depressants, it's pretty intense. Scientologists like to portray auditors vs psychologists as if they're like dogs and cats, they're just natural enemies. But in reality it's like this weird one-sided hatred where Scientologists are super bitter and sober all their time despising psychiatry while psychiatrists don't know what the hell an auditor is.

So these Dianetics equivalent of the therapist—auditors—they utilize what's known as an E-meter to try to identify malicious Engrams, or destructive memories, within the mind. An E-meter is basically a stripped down lie detector. The patient or subject is encouraged to talk about incidents from their past

while holding onto two metal cans which are supposed to measure the intensity of electrical impulses, and supposedly those impulses should spike when an Engram is detected. Scientologists claim that the meter is actually detecting the physical weight of human thoughts, which is as bonkers as it sounds, but not nearly as bonkers as it's going to get. Xenu awaits. So when the auditor detected an Ingram he/she would ask the subject to divulge more about that experience or memory, to try to discharge some of the energy behind it. There is some benefit to this. It's like exposure therapy, gradually exposing yourself to traumatic thoughts and memories until they lose their power is a time tested technique. It's basically just therapy, but with a bunch of witch doctor mumbo-jumbo. Because of course according to Hubbard, engrams also tended to indicate trauma from past lives. But otherwise, you know, just like therapy. Ultimately there probably are some benefits to experiencing auditing. It's cathartic. It's like Catholic confession. You're getting stuff off your chest. Of course that's going to make you feel "lighter." your heavy thoughts aren't weighing you down, metaphorically, except that Scientologists would say literally because they're crazy. The goal of dianetics and Scientology was to erase your

reactive mind completely, so that you became a creature of logic, and you had gone fully "clear." at which point you would become a superhuman, your ills would mysteriously heal themselves, you would be impervious to sickness. Suck it, gonorrhoea. You will never disrupt my sex Magik again.

Now of course just like we discussed in our episode modern quackery when we talked about the secret, the problem with claiming that the mind is a magical Harry Potter wand of course means that any Scientologist who gets sick is failing to live up to their magical potential, they're demonstrating that they are incapable of becoming fully clear. Sickness is really just weakness and personal failure. So again, victim blaming. This is why Tom Cruise is such a freaking nutjob who does his own stunts and can't admit that he's getting older and refuses to stop when he gets hurt, there's so much machismo associated with Scientology because when you're clear you're expected to be perfect. If you're declared clear and then appear in public with the sniffles, that's literally a threat to the entire religion. You have become both a liability and an embarrassment, because the only possibilities are that the religion is a lie, or that you failed and aren't actually clear. Dianetics sold millions of copies

and was on the best seller list for over 100 weeks straight. It was a national sensation; book was published in 1950 and within months Hubbard collaborated on creating the Hubbard Dianetics research foundation, which would be like a corporate version Dianetics. But with great success comes great scrutiny. Isn't that the Spider-Man quote? Hubbard's book claimed that "going clear" was the key to unlocking superhuman abilities, and all throughout Dianetics are assertions that Hubbard's theories are "scientifically proven" so where were all the super humans? If Hubbard had proof that his techniques worked, there had to be at least a few 4.0's in the world. I'm not going to get super deep into this, but Hubbard would eventually explain that a clear was someone who had registered a 4.0 on the tone scale. The tone scale is a way of categorizing and gauging a person's level of enlightenment, basically. It's like a hotness scale for the soul. That chick is a 1.1 on the tone scale, bro. Hubbard theorized that the scale could go all the way up to 40, and claimed that a person achieving those higher levels would have powers that even he couldn't fully imagine. most of us lowly unclears are registering in the low twos and threes, but one of the defining characteristics of anyone

at 4 or above (apart from immunity to germs) is that they could supposedly recall in perfect detail any image or particular moment from their lives. A "clear" had full access to the power of their minds, along with photographic memories. So now that Dianetics has gone mainstream, and promised results in as little as 20 hours, where were all of the mental supermen and superwomen? Under pressure to produce evidence, Hubbard revealed at a press conference in Los Angeles the first supposed "clear," a Physics student named Sonia Bianca. "The audience began peppering her with questions, such as what she had had for breakfast eight years before, or what was on this page of Hubbard's book, or even elemental formulas in physics, her area of specialty. She was incapable of responding when someone asked the color of Hubbard's necktie, when he briefly had his back turned to her. It was a very public fiasco."

Ultimately, however, it wasn't scientific debunking that led to the fall of Dianetics, it was cultural fickleness. Just like any other fad, it had its moment, and by 1952 that moment had passed. Within two years of the publication of Dianetics, the HDR foundation was bankrupt and Hubbard was once again evading creditors.

But by this time, Hubbard had bought into his own hype. And of course with all the nonsense he was spewing about superhumans, he had to project an image of perfection, even though he was a snaggletooth ugly fuck. As his ego grew, so did his paranoia. He believed that the psychiatric profession as a whole was out to get him, that they saw him as competition and were trying to have him institutionalized. In Sarah's words again, "he degenerated into a really paranoid, terrifying person." When she threatened to leave him, Hubbard kidnapped their child and fled to Cuba. "He called me and told me that he had killed her. He said he had cut her into little pieces, and dropped those pieces into a river." After Sarah learned that Hubbard had secretly returned to the states, she sued him for custody, at which point he accused his wife of being a communist to try to get her arrested. He said, "I'm a public figure and you're a nobody." Sarah filed for divorce, and was able to obtain custody of their daughter, and as punishment Hubbard cleared out the bank accounts and left her and his child penniless. Hubbard would experience profound bouts of depression, self-doubt, paranoia, and anxiety; his increasingly grandiose persona masked a seething cauldron of insecurities. His disputed memoirs reveals a

peak beneath the surface (the memoirs is publicly disputed by Scientology, though when it was submitted as evidence in a lawsuit they changed their tune and argued that it was private and privileged and should be inadmissible). So in his memoirs Hubbard wrote "affirmations" for himself, and they're both hilarious and revealing. "You have no urge to talk about your navy life...It is not necessary for you to lie to be amusing and witty. You like to have your intimate friends approve of and love you for what you are. This desire to be loved does not amount to a psychosis. You can sing beautifully. Material things are yours for the asking. Men are your slaves. You are not sleepy or tired ever....Your psychology is advanced and true and wonderful. It hypnotizes people. It predicts their emotions, for you are their ruler. You will live to be 200 years old. You will always look young. You have no doubts about God. You are not a coward. Your eyes are getting progressively better...You have no fear of what any woman may think of your bed conduct. You know you are a master. You know they will be thrilled. You can come many times without weariness.... Many women are not capable of pleasure in sex and anything adverse they say or do has no effect whatever upon your pleasure." I love that he throws all

women under the bus as being unable to experience pleasure. Not that he's incapable of pleasing them, they're just a bunch of repressed frigid bitches.

He further wrote a whole section of goals and compliments for himself, ""You are radiant like sunlight. You are a magnificent writer who has thrilled millions. You are psychic. You do not masturbate. There are no snakes in the bottom of your bed."

Whoa. That took a turn. "You will become an excellent cook. You will chop people into tiny pieces and bake them into strudel, and no one will be the wiser, for you are stealthy like a fox. A cannibalistic master chef of a fox."

It's easy to see how a man with such extreme delusions—including delusions of grandeur—might be able to focus all of his intensity and creativity and charisma into manifesting *actual* grandeur, drawing acolytes into his gravitational orbit via the overwhelming power of unfiltered crazy. The law of attraction from "The secret" isn't a real scientific phenomenon, but if you believe something strongly enough it is certainly possible to get other people to believe that thing. For instance, the law of attraction from the secret. And that's the real power of the secret, it's possible sell millions of books claiming

magic is real based on the sheer power of will and white-woman privilege. The judge in the previously-referenced lawsuit, btw, would render a withering judgment against Hubbard and the church, both literally and via scathing prose. ""The organization is clearly schizophrenic and paranoid, and this bizarre combination seems to be a reflection of its founder LRH. The evidence portrays a man who has been virtually a pathological liar when it comes to his history, background, and achievements. The writings and documents in evidence additionally reflect his egoism, greed, avarice, lust for power, and vindictiveness and aggressiveness against persons perceived by him to be disloyal or hostile. At the same time it appears that he is charismatic and highly capable of motivating, organizing, controlling, manipulating, and inspiring his adherents.... Obviously, he is and has been a very complex person, and that complexity is further reflected in his alter ego, the Church of Scientology."

Speaking of which, in 1953 Hubbard cobbled together has extensive mailing list from the success of Dianetics, mashed together all of his science fiction mumbo-jumbo and officially created Scientology, along with a ladder of steps that had to be completed on the path to

going clear. Each of those steps required paying large sums of money to unlock more advanced techniques and the next set of increasingly ridiculous theories and supposed superhuman abilities. He called it a bridge, which makes zero sense, because it's always represented vertically—it is definitely a ladder—but whatever, confusing bridges for ladders is the least whackjob element of Scientology.

So less than a decade after founding the church, in the early 1960s, Hubbard applied for tax exempt status, and was initially denied. He fled from the United States with the IRS on his heels, and would soon found the so-called sea org. It was like he was trying to re-create his Navy service but on a party cruise. The sea Organization initially consisted of three dilapidated vessels operating offshore in international waters. Members of the sea org crew had to sign a contract which stipulated that they pledged loyalty and their souls for the next 1 billion years. "I, _____ DO HEREBY AGREE to enter into employment with the SEA ORGANIZATION and, being of sound mind, do fully realize and agree to abide by its purpose which is to get ETHICS IN on this PLANET AND UNIVERSE and, fully

and without reservation, subscribe to the discipline, mores and conditions of this group and pledge to abide by them.

THEREFORE, I CONTRACT MYSELF TO THE SEA ORGANIZATION FOR THE NEXT BILLION YEARS." I think the language of the contract immediately nullifies the contract. Any claim to be "of sound mind" is kind of contradicted by the fact that you're signing up to live on a dirty boat for a billion years. You're clearly not of sound mind, and any contract signed in that state is meaningless. Saying you're of sound mind doesn't make it true. "I, being of sound mind, do hereby stipulate that pigs shall fly and Astroturf waffle catnip." 1 billion years. It reminds me of how in America people will get sentenced to life in prison + like 30 years. Like just in case there's a zombie plague and you die, you're not getting off the hook, you still have to spend 30 years of your reanimated zombie life behind bars. So ridiculous. Can you imagine spending 1 million years on a fucking boat, swabbing the decks and cleaning toilets or whatever, and knowing you still have 999 million years to go. I'd love to see them legally try to enforce that contract. Like "Yes I'd like to report a violation of labor contract. Yeah Marvin smith just left off the boat and swam to shore, and we'd like you to bring him back.

Why? Well, see, we technically own his soul. Not for eternity or anything crazy, just for the next 999 million years."

Hubbard would actually leader stipulate that anyone who died was granted a 21 year "leave of absence" from the Sea Org and then expected to return. At this point Hubbard's delusions flared out of control, he would spin elaborate stories to the crew over dinner about intergalactic warfare that he had witnessed in past lives, and claimed that at one point he had been a rich Phoenician prince and hid treasure all along the Mediterranean. The crew was thrilled to learn that they were on a mission to discover Hubbard's buried princely treasure. It would be nice to get some working showers for the next billion years.

Hubbard ran his fleet of three rickety ships as a full-on pirate style dictator. He would even throw disobedient or inept crewmembers overboard. "Students and crew were lined up on deck in the early hours every morning. They waited to hear whether they were on the day's list of miscreants. Those who knew they were would remove their shoes, jackets and wristwatches in anticipation. The drop was between fifteen and forty feet, depending upon which deck was used.

Sometimes people were blindfolded first, and either their feet or hands

loosely tied. Non-swimmers were tied to a rope. Being hurled such a distance, blindfolded and restrained, into cold sea water, must have been terrifying. Worst of all was the fear that you would hit the side of the ship as you fell, your flesh ripped open by the barnacles. Overboarding was a very traumatic experience." Imagine pulling yourself out of the frigid water and heading back to your cramped little filthy cabin and putting another check mark on your calendar for the day. 364 billion to go.

Hubbard would eventually tire of the sea life, he would sneak into Florida and spend the rest of his days in hiding, managing Scientology behind the scenes while dodging tax collectors. He worked super hard to try to make Scientology a legitimate religion, or at least erase any arguments against it being a religion. For instance, the symbol of Scientology is 100% just a Christian cross with some spikys around the middle, and he forced auditors to wear priestly robes. "Any staff who are trained at any level as auditors...are to be clothed in the traditioned ministerial black suit, black vest white collar silver cross for ordinary org wear." So basically he was saying: "if you attack Scientology, you're also attacking and questioning the validity of Christianity. Because we have all the same stuff." Meanwhile,

Scientology began to take hold in Hollywood. Early celebrity converts like Priscilla Presley and John Travolta raised the religion's profile, and aspiring actors began flocking to the church with hopes of following a template that seemed to be working. Tom Cruise was actually introduced by Scientology by his first wife, actress Mimi Rogers, who has since left the church. Actors in Hollywood are notoriously desperate for a leg up, because the competition is fierce, and Scientology provided access to stars and also a social network combined with the rudimentary therapy that was auditing. Travolta had been introduced to Scientology before he became famous, by an actor friend, and after his first couple auditing sessions he started getting booked for commercials and then landed his big break in the sitcom *Welcome Back Kotter*. And mistaking correlation for causation, he attributed his success to Scientology. But of course success was the exception, not the rule. Most aspiring actors floundered and obscurity while sinking all of their money into additional trainings to move up the so-called "bridge to total freedom."

So the "bridge (ladder) to total freedom" is the path to enlightenment in Scientology, you start as a lowly standard human but as you work your way up by paying

for additional courses you eventually reach the "OT" levels, and you have officially become an "operating thetan." (Thaytan). Thetan refers to the soul, and as you moved up the ladder your soul would begin operating on increasingly efficient levels and you would supposedly begin developing those superhuman abilities like telekinesis and telepathy. And moving up the ladder is not just a matter of auditing and coursework, there's also the "purification rundown," consisting of supplements and intense heat exposure, basically sitting in saunas for hours until you've sweated out all of that pathetic mortality and achieved your superpowers. "I want you to sit in here and sweat until you levitate. You don't open this door until you can open it with your mind." The rundown is still part of the process of becoming clear, it's been described as "a controversial [detoxification](#) program which involves heat exposure for up to 5 hours a day and can exceed 4 weeks in length. It is known to cause heatstroke damage, which includes brain injury, heart problems, organ failure, and death. 5000 mg niacin doses also cause liver damage...The participant had a restricted diet, including large doses of vitamins and a teaspoon of salt, and spent at least an hour a day jogging in a rubberised suit. For

some, this regimen lasted for months." There have been multiple deaths associated with the rundown. Also with each new level, more of the elaborate mythology and additional secrets would be divulged. Even though the top level was OT eight, OT3 is when you get access to the whole whiz-bang enchilada of crazy: you get to read a stack of papers handwritten by L Ron Hubbard which claim to reveal the entire origin story of humanity. Keep in mind that as a loyal Scientologist at this point you've already invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in your journey up the bridge to enlightenment. they're not stupid...they don't go full Xenu until you're all in. And that's by design, because if they busted out with this lunacy on day one, prospective members would run for the hills. This stack of papers is like one of those cans of nuts with coiled paper snakes inside. It's shocking.

You may have seen the incredibly ridiculous and 100% accurate encapsulation of the OT 3 story in cartoon form on South Park. And they weren't kidding. Brace yourself. Scientologists believe that 75 million years ago a humanoid civilization was spread out among the stars, yet strangely, life looked much like it did in the 1960s when Hubbard was writing this story. People wore the same clothes,

drove the same kind of cars, but they had elected an evil warlord named Xenu as ruler. (He's called a dictatorial warlord, but if he was *elected* that's kind of on you. That's just politics, and poor judgment. Y'all voted for Xenu) Anyway. To handle the problem of overpopulation Xenu forced his citizens to show up at government headquarters for supposed tax audits, and once they were there they would be frozen with injections of glycol to their hearts. Direct quote from L Ron Hubbard: he "boxed them up in boxes, threw them into space planes... The DC8 airplane is an exact copy of The space plane of that day." Which is interesting, because the DC eight... Not an intergalactic space plane. So I guess it wasn't an *exact* copy. But whatever. Those DC8 not-space planes loaded with frozen interstellar humanoids flew to the galactic prison planet, which we know today know as earth but at that time was called Teegeeeack. On earth, the planes dropped all of those frozen humanoid bodies into volcanoes, and then for good measure dropped some atom bombs on top of the volcanoes so it was like a volcano-human-bomb sandwich. At that point all of the frozen souls were thawed and boomsploded and released into the air, and those free floating alien spirits are called thetans. The

Thetans were then captured and forced to sit and watch 3-d movies on what Hubbard described as "super colossal screens." and these screens implanted visuals and images into their...spirit brains I guess? There's no point in questioning any of this. So nowadays when a human child is born, a bunch of thetans leap into its body, and those disembodied souls of ancestral alien intergalactic previously-frozen and volcano-thawed humans are the cause of all of our strife and anxiety and stress. And only Scientology and the process of auditing can help you expel those thetans. Because we're not trying to placate the Thetans or allow them to rest easily or deal with the fact that there are millions and millions of disembodied souls floating miserably around our atmosphere through no fault of their own, having been tricked and frozen and blown up and persecuted as a result of a failed political system, but that's someone else's problem, Scientology just wants to get them out of *you*.

Whew. Can you imagine going through all of that intensive, highly emotional auditing, all of these courses, paying all of this money—it takes approximately \$100,000 to get to clear, another 20,000 or so to get to OT three, by the time you hit the maximum level of OT eight you've got between 400 and

\$500,000 invested in your enlightenment—so you've just finished OT 2, you're over 100k in and feeling like you're making progress, you're maybe wondering why you don't have superpowers but you do have a spring in your step because you're so close to learning all the secrets, and you finally reach operating thetan level three, and you're led into a secret room and they crack open the locked briefcase, and you sit there and you read...that. Mind boggling. Soul crushing. Thetan crushing. Makes my Thetans cringe.

For all of the grifting and obvious craziness of the church, it does seem that around the time L Ron Hubbard wrote this stupid nonsensical gobbledegook he was damaged enough to believe his own mythos. This was when he claimed that an extremely powerful and malevolent thetan was inhabiting his body and he employed some of his most trusted advisors and disciples to help him get it out. Toward the end of his life he clearly suffered from delusions and paranoia, he was less of a cult leader and more of a liability. The *real* cult leader of Scientology—the guy behind the guy—would come later. L Ronn Hubbard died of a stroke in 1986, leaving a power vacuum in the church of Scientology.

The church panicked and held emergency meetings to figure out how to handle the announcement. After all, Scientology promised literal immortality to those who achieved the highest operating Thetan levels, and yet the most revered and accomplished Scientologist has just succumbed to pancreatitis. It was decided that a massive meeting of Scientologists would be called, and the death would be framed as a choice: Hubbard had decided to discard his body mortal body, and had moved on to a spiritual plane of research.

The man who would step into the power vacuum and try to sell that dubious bullshit from the stage of Los Angeles's Palladium theater is someone that I firmly believe to be genuinely evil, rather than delusional. David Miscavige, the current leader of Scientology, is a dangerous sociopath. Some former Scientologists will claim that Miscavige is in fact a true believer, but I don't buy it, I think he's the worst kind of grifter because he absolutely knows that this is a scam and a cult and he doesn't care. He knew L Ron Hubbard didn't choose to "transcend his body." Motherfucker had a spontaneous stroke and pitched forward into his chili. At least that's how I imagine it. No, Miscavage isn't a believer, he's a calculating liar who craves power,

and he abuses that power.

David Miscavige wasn't recruited to the church, he was inducted into the church by default in 1971 at age 11 when his parents joined Scientology.

He would eventually become a kind of attack dog for the church, he was a huge believer in the philosophy of "fair game," a Scientology principle stating that anyone who opposes or questions the church is an enemy and should be taken down via all available tactics. Enemies are fair game. Perhaps the biggest fair game operation was waged against the IRS in an effort to bully the government into recognizing Scientology as a religion and granting tax exempt status. Scientologists bugged federal buildings and stole Documents, slashed tires, they went after anyone who painted them in a negative light, even poisoning the pets of journalists who wrote unflattering stories. Now as bad as Miscavage is, much of this actually started under Hubbard, so let's not let him off the hook. Hubbard had created the infamous rehabilitation project force, or RPF, located on the seventh floor of the Scientology Hollywood headquarters. Have you seen the giant blue building, the main headquarters of Scientology in LA? At 1300 L Ron Hubbard Way? Yep, the church convinced the city to name an entire street after a

cheating, lying bigamist and homophobic cult leader. The building was a former hospital, it's bright blue and has these giant wings, it could almost be a Kirkbride batwing hospital except more boxy and industrial and blue. The blueness is really the most striking element. That's the defining characteristic. It's like the color of the heads of the blue man group. It's incredibly garish and ugly, with the word Scientology in these massive block letters that look like they're encrusted with giant diamonds, it's heinous. And on the seventh floor was where Miscavige would confine members who were questioning their faith, and initiate the process of re-indoctrination. It was a gulag, a combination of a prison camp with intensive brainwashing. Five hours of auditing per day, followed by hours of backbreaking labor, no free time. And you might ask, why wouldn't people just leave? Well obviously there's the fear of being excommunicated from the church, known as disconnection, people who leave the church are shunned. You could be declared an SP, or a Suppressive Person. SPs are often referred to by the derogatory term "squirrel," which was a nickname L Ron Hubbard bestowed on defectors. This still happens today. If the defector has information that is potentially dangerous to the

church, they are harassed, followed, videotaped, stalked. And if all that isn't enough of a reason to not get on the bad side of the church, and to stay even when you know you should go, there's an even more practical reason: remember all of that auditing, when you were encouraged to explore the most sensitive memories of your childhood and divulge all of your secrets? Those sessions are meticulously recorded. Scientology is a giant, paranoid, powerful organization that knows all of your secrets. All of your information is kept in what is called a "P.C." or pre-clear folder. And Scientology has entire teams, like the office of special affairs, dedicated to pouring over the PC folders of people who have left the church or are considered candidates for defection, so that they can dig up incriminating, or embarrassing, or sensitive information. Blackmail material.

So back to David Miscavige's campaign against the IRS. He viewed the IRS as an existential threat to the organization, and to be fair, they were. L Ron Hubbard had forbidden the organization from paying taxes because he considered Scientology a religion. so according to the IRS, by the 1980s The organization owed half a billion dollars. Half a sea org contract. Which was more than they

had in the bank at the time. So Miscavige rallied the troops, encouraged individual Scientologists to sue the IRS, and to sue even individual IRS agents, it was a total harassment campaign, they piled paperwork and litigation and endless motions on top of endless motions, they made themselves an absolute nightmare and headache for the government. They dug up dirt on the IRS including publishing the amount that the organization was spending on conferences and drinks and how much it was costing taxpayers. They waged a media campaign, it was all out war because they felt like they were fighting for their lives. And they won.

On October 1, 1983, Scientology was officially deemed a religion by the IRS and David Miscavige declared victory, holding a massive celebration in an auditorium with all the pageantry of a creepy Nazi rally, there were fireworks and giant gilded set-pieces, it was as if they had won a literal war. Scientology now rakes in money from donations and even L Ron's Hubbard's novels are considered scripture and are tax exempt. On top of that, Scientology doesn't have to pay a living wage to "volunteers" of organizations like the sea org. Scientology is worth billions, and they're not required to give any of it back to the government. It's fucking

infuriating. No religion should be tax exempt. None.

So a little more about Miscavige. He is infamous for violently abusing his staff. Striking them, kicking them, verbal abuse. He's not a big guy, he's smaller than Tom Cruise when they're side by side, but he's a mean little bastard with a Napoleon complex. He has forced people to lick the floor, sentenced them to isolation, forced them to fight for his approval. Literally. In one shocking incident he arranged a game of musical chairs for some of his highest-ranking lieutenants, and decreed that anyone who ended up without a chair would be ejected from the organization, declared a suppressive person and disconnected from the church. It was brutal. And at the end of it, he changed the rules and said that everyone would be allowed to stay, so it was all for nothing, these people were bruised and battered for his amusement. He's a vicious, sadistic little fuck. Plus there's this little tidbit: his wife, Shelley Miscavage, supposedly "withdrew from public life" in 2007 and has not been seen since. Multiple missing persons reports have been filed and the police claim that they have contacted her and that she expressed that she simply has no interest in... Leaving her house? Talking to anyone, ever? It's insane,

this little fucker clearly killed or imprisoned his wife and has gotten away with it. Sue me, Scientology. Prove I'm lying, produce your wife you crazy little piece of shit.

Let's end by talking about the state of Scientology today, and where it's headed. I mentioned the Scientology website in the beginning and on that website you can watch every episode from the Scientology television network, which is an app you can download onto Apple TV, DIRECTV, whatever. I watched it, it's really well made. It is high budge. This isn't some cellphone footage. On our Patreon version I'm going to play some clips but I've decided not to play them on the regular feed, because I'm genuinely worried that Scientology will try to have the episode taken down. They do this. They are petty. We've talked about how litigious they are, they're notorious for issuing takedown notices for anti-Scientology videos and audio content on the basis of copyrighted material. But I'll describe some of what I watched on the regular feed and play the clips on the Patreon version. So it starts off with David Miscavige telling you what you can expect. They highlight all of their property, all of the money, that's what really comes across is the absolute luxury that Scientology is capable of flaunting. There are lots

of pretty faces, David Miscavige has excellent hair, his eyes I'm assuming were digitally enhanced because they are creepily blue. Everyone's eyes just pop, metaphorically. You're invited "behind the scenes," where The church has an entire media production arm creating propaganda videos, there's a whole TV series called "meet a Scientologist, and another called "voices for humanity" highlighting the church's humanitarian outreach. They have a tv show called "freedom TV" featuring investigative journalism (question mark). Also: Barf. This is just a bunch of brainwashed cultists "doing their own research." Like you're going to be uncovering the dirty secrets of non-Scientology organizations without exposing the truth of your own? There are some great segments in these videos, The supposed pro athlete I've never seen before who claims he couldn't breathe correctly before Scientology. Apparently it doesn't just clear your soul, Scientology clears your sinuses. And the woman who claimed that Scientology and Scientology techniques saved her marriage. That one is really amazing to me, L Ron Hubbard was a notorious abusive paranoid womanizer, wife beater, and bigamist. The cornerstones of a healthy marriage. Did I mention all the money? It's

mind boggling when watching the videos. Like half of the footage is stock video of smiling, diverse, pretty people standing in front of sunsets or whatever, but the other half is religious bling on display. These Scientology centers, like the "purification center" that you get to tour in one episode, are lavish, high tech, modern, state of the art. E meters are not a couple of soup cans anymore, now they're called "spiritual technology" and look like something designed by Aliens. All streamlined molded plastic and steel, super smooth and blinky. The church is much more savvy and slick than they used to be, but it's clear from watching these videos that fundamentally they are still the same old bigoted crazy science-fiction cult. For instance they've softened their official rhetoric on homosexuality, but they now place a huge emphasis on "family values" and the importance of reproduction in a relationship which is basically just an anti-gay dog whistle, and I mentioned those purification centers, they're still pushing dangerous detox. I'll play a clip in the Patreon version of a guy who literally believes that he's sweating out drugs from years ago.

If you do watch it, and I didn't really pay attention to this but I should have, because I listen to a podcast from a woman who briefly join

Scientology planning to create an expose and then sort of didn't. But she did create one uneven but occasionally interesting podcast. She claimed that she had infiltrated Scientology but really she just took a tour and one of the recruitment centers, which anyone can do because that's what a recruitment center is for. They try to impress you with this lavish setting and then they give you a test which reveals how disappointingly average and unremarkable you are without the benefit of Scientology in your life. But she also talks about the fact that they are coached not to blink, or to blink as little as possible, and maintain eye contact, and how creepy it is once you notice it. So if you watch any Scientology stuff or drop by the recruitment center, be on the lookout for that. My favorite part of the podcast though was how she described test takers as "Testees"—like there are testers and testees—which struck me as way more funny than it should. "The Testees we're disappointed to learn that they were living average, unremarkable lives which only Scientology could improve." If I were some testee I would be constantly disappointed with my plight. It's not a dignified position.

NEW PATRONS:

Shawna, Deborah, Mariajo, Georgia,

also my mom and my aunt Jackie Who also helped raise me, that's how you know you're killing it, when a significant percentage of your supporters have changed your diaper on at least one occasion. Hey I'm not complaining, my family is the best. People complain when they get a review and it's from a family member or something, and I'm like damn, can you imagine your family members not giving you positive reviews? That must suck. But speaking of not family members giving us positive reviews, we are reading review at the end of every show, and here's a super quick one:

READ A REVIEW

So tunny

I love these guys. They always make every topic more interesting with their commentary.

SmBOWER from the United States

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