

# Scientology's Celebrity Apostates

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## INTRODUCTION

Having spent so much time and energy recruiting, and then pampering, celebrities, along with pestering them for additional contributions, the last thing that Scientology officials want to happen is for celebrities to leave (and even worse, to leave and criticize). Departures, however, occur from all groups, so inevitably they occur regarding Scientology celebrities. The members who depart are variously called defectors, former or ex-members, apostates, or people who have deconverted. Conservatively, dozens of celebrities have followed this general pattern by having exited Scientology. For example, anti-Scientology activist, Tilman Hausherr, began the online list of Scientologists and former Scientologists in 1997, and his updated list has 138 celebrities with documented Scientology involvement (in varying degrees), which includes 35 documented cases of celebrity apostates. The Scientology involvement of an additional number of people (over 125) is less certain.<sup>1</sup>

Although the process of deconversion has received less scholarly attention than has conversion, still the literature on the topic is extensive and far too vast to summarize here. What is possible, however, is to use categories that appeared in a reference article on deconversion that appeared in print in 2015.<sup>2</sup> It provided a fairly comprehensive review of deconversion literature, and many aspects that it identified within scholarly literature have relevance for conceptualizing the four Scientology deconversions that I discuss in this chapter. I supplement this reference article with Heinz Streib's impressive publication on deconversion, published in 2014, which provides additional insight into the phenomenon of renouncing previously held beliefs.<sup>3</sup>

The definition of deconversion that Ashley Samaha and I used fits well into a discussion of deconversion among Scientology's celebrities, partly because it

avoids the question of whether Scientology is a religion or some other social entity or entities. We defined deconversion as “a multidimensional process involving ‘loss of specific religious experiences; intellectual doubt, denial, or disagreement with specific beliefs; moral criticism; emotional suffering; and disaffiliation from [one’s previous] community.’”<sup>4</sup> This definition works well when discussing deconversion from Scientology, since it is sufficiently broad in scope to allow us to avoid the question, “is Scientology a religion?” The deconversion experiences that it identifies occur in any number of groups that involve community associations involving supernatural (i.e., religious) or secular beliefs.

A review of accounts from both mainstream and sectarian religions indicates that deconversion likely occurs for reasons of intellectual doubt, weakened social bonds, or moral doubt about beliefs and/or practices.<sup>5</sup> Following Stuart Wright’s work on departing sectarian groups, a number of factors begin the deconversion process. First, reduction of social isolation occurs in relation to the outside, wider society. Second, two-person intimacy may challenge the group’s demand to be the primary focus of attachment and attention. Third, people are less likely to allow intense scrutiny of one’s personal life and thoughts outside of emergency or crises situations (such as millennialist expectations). Fourth, defections and deconversions increase the more that people feel their organizations are not meeting their affective, socioemotional needs. Finally, deconversions increase in the face of questions concerning leaders’ moral lapses.<sup>6</sup>

I will return to these deconversion characteristics in the conclusion of this chapter, and I will examine the deconversion accounts of four ex-Scientologists—William Burroughs, Jason Beghe, Paul Haggis, and Leah Remini—about whom extensive evidence exists concerning their very public departures from Scientology.<sup>7</sup> Most departures from that organization, however, are not nearly so public with so much information available to analyze, so the earlier part of this chapter is a summary of various deconversion accounts or events that I will leave to others to analyze.

## QUIET OR PRAISEWORTHY DEPARTURES

Examples exist of celebrities who tried Scientology for a while, took some courses, but then gradually drifted away to something else. Critic and social commentator, Aldous Huxley (1894–1963), for instance, tried using Dianetics to recall his past, especially in relation to his father, but achieved little success. He commented privately in correspondence about his failure with Dianetics, then offered some observations about L. Ron Hubbard. He never made these comments publicly, however, and simply moved along to another personal development system.<sup>8</sup> Actor Patrick Swayze (1952–2009)

tried Scientology among other belief systems, trying to make sense out of his father's death. It is not clear if Swayze found what he was looking for, but if he did, then it was not in Scientology, since he left it not long after he tried it.<sup>9</sup> In 2007, actor Jeffrey Tambor (b. 1944) announced, "I have nothing against it, but I am no longer a Scientologist."<sup>10</sup> Scientology may attempt to win back celebrities such as these, but as long as they do not criticize the organization, the celebrities probably will not have any aggressive or intrusive actions taken against themselves.

Comedian Jerry Seinfeld (b. 1954) used a different departure strategy: he praised what Scientology courses taught him about communication:

I last really studied, oh, it's almost 30 years ago. But what I did do, I really liked, in terms of it's very . . . it was interesting. Believe it or not . . . it's extremely intellectual and clinical in its approach to problem-solving, which really appealed to me. . . . In my early years of stand-up, it was very helpful. I took a couple of courses. One of them was in communication, and I learned some things about communication that really got my act going.

It was just things about understanding the communications cycle . . . Even the volume at which I'm speaking now is the right volume for where you're sitting. I'm almost performing, in a way.

You would just understand that there's this kind of voice, and then there's this kind of voice, and then there's this kind of voice. I wasn't a natural performer at all, so I learned. I was always a pretty good writer in the beginning, but I really had to learn how to perform. Just a little thing like that, understanding that really helped me on stage to understand how you have to invade the space of the audience a little bit. I learned that early on. It was a very helpful thing to learn. You have to invade them just a little bit. Not too much, because then it's obnoxious. But you can't be short of them either, or you won't control them.

They have a lot of very good technology. That's what really appealed to me about it. It's not faith-based. It's all technology. And I'm obsessed with technology.<sup>11</sup>

While Scientology officials may not have liked his conclusion that their ideology was "not faith-based," Seinfeld's comments about what he gained were positive, even if he did not give a reason for his departure.

## SOME CRITICAL CELEBRITY APOSTATES

Negative comments about Scientology, however, by apostate Scientology celebrities were common. Among the more unique departure statements

came from songwriter and singer Lisa Marie Presley (b. 1968). She buried her departure notice in music lyrics on an album, *Storm and Grace*, in May 2012. In her song, “You Ain’t Seen Nothin’ Yet,” she used some terms about herself that have negative meanings inside of the organization, clearly implying that now she was out of it. In the song, she identified herself as “suppressive,” which is a term that Scientology uses to designate perceived opponents, and then she indicated, “Well, you ain’t seen nothin’ yet.”<sup>12</sup> The lyrics imply that Presley had Scientology handlers who controlled all aspects of her life. As she figured out that they were limiting what she saw and heard, the handlers’ response to her growing independence was that she was becoming evil and a Suppressive Person—an enemy to the Church. Her misbehaving, however, against Scientology’s constraints only has just begun.<sup>13</sup> A cryptic denunciation may have been safer for her, since anything that might have her declared as a Suppressive Person would cost her all contact with her mother, who is still a member. Her departure received widespread coverage on the Internet, but it seems not to have caused major damage to the organization. (A recent report, however, indicates that she now is working behind the scenes to discredit David Miscavige, so any assessment of the damage that her departure has caused may be premature.)<sup>14</sup>

## A FEW LOUDLY CRITICAL CELEBRITY APOSTATES

### William S. Burroughs

Another critical apostate whose impact is difficult to gauge with certainty is that of the American writer, drug user, and counterculture figure, William S. Burroughs (1914–1997), although Scientology’s reaction to his apostasy suggests that organizational leaders worried about damage that it might have caused. Known among the Beat generation for his dramatic and disturbing portrayals of the drug culture, Burroughs counted among his friends such Beat elites as Allen Ginsberg, Neal Cassady, and Jack Kerouac. While in Tangiers, Morocco, in the autumn of 1959, Burroughs first learned basic Dianetics and Scientology principles from a friend and probably read *Dianetics* during this time.<sup>15</sup> He did not begin auditing, however, until September 1967, when he was not far from Scientology’s British headquarters at Saint Hill, East Grinstead.<sup>16</sup> He found auditing to be a powerful procedure, immensely more effective in recalling a traumatic childhood incident than psychoanalysis.<sup>17</sup> Wanting more Scientology, he began taking courses, first in London, then (in January 1968) at Saint Hill Manor.<sup>18</sup> On May 30, 1968, Scientology opened an Advanced Org in Edinburgh, Scotland, and Burroughs (who had been to the city before and liked it) transferred to the new facility. Remarkably,

he went Clear on June 15, 1968, after eighty hours of auditing.<sup>19</sup> Undoubtedly because of his notoriety, this achievement was an important occasion for Scientologists, who ran nearly a full-page report about “the internationally famous American author,” who was “Clear 1163,” in one of its magazines distributed to members.<sup>20</sup> About the state he had achieved, Burroughs enthused, “It feels marvelous! Things you’ve had all your life, things you think nothing can be done about—suddenly they’re not there any more!”<sup>21</sup>

What Burroughs failed to reveal, however, in his enthusiastic Clear exclamations was that he had developed concerns about Scientology’s founder, L. Ron Hubbard, even though the two never met. He took note, for example, of the fact that so many Scientology women sexually idolized him in their dreams. Burroughs felt that Hubbard was not discouraging such fantasies because he was building an authoritarian personality cult around himself. He also reacted against Hubbard’s view of persons who were outside Scientology, which he called WOGS (a derogatory, colonialist term meaning “Worthy Oriental Gentleman”).<sup>22</sup>

Before taking various courses, Burroughs had to undergo routine security (or sec) checks, which Scientology leaders believed would uncover any negative attitudes or actions in people’s lives that might hurt the organization.<sup>23</sup> Burroughs hated these checks, thinking that they smacked of authoritarian, thought-police intrusions. We only know the name of one of the sec checks that he underwent (and I will return to it in a moment), but a basic one had existed since 1961 and was called “The Only Valid Security Check.” While hooked up to an E-Meter acting in the capacity of a crude lie detector, a person answered 174 questions on everything from criminal behavior to sexual practices. Given Burroughs’s lifestyle as a drug-using, pro-Communist, misogynist, homosexual who accidentally killed his wife,<sup>24</sup> it is impossible to imagine how he ever would have gotten through it. Questions included ones like: “Have you ever been a drug addict?”; “Have you ever practised Homosexuality?”; and “Do you feel Communism has some good points?” These and other lifestyle questions were ones that Burroughs would have found intrusive, just as he would have felt toward the “thought crimes” questions like, “Have you ever had any unkind thoughts about L. Ron Hubbard?” and a parallel question about Hubbard’s wife, Mary Sue Hubbard.<sup>25</sup> (Keep in mind that Burroughs used to use pictures of Hubbard as targets when he practiced shooting his air pistol.<sup>26</sup>) Scientologists working with Burroughs thought he harbored unkind thoughts toward Hubbard, so they required him to undergo the Johannesburg (or Jo’burg) Security Check, which took him three weeks and eighty hours of auditing to complete.<sup>27</sup> (The fact that Burroughs passed these security checks speaks volumes about how inaccurate they were.) He went Clear but, shortly thereafter, Burroughs left formal Scientology training,

never to take classes or courses on it again. His disdain for sec checks were major factors in his decision to leave Scientology, even though he remained impressed with auditing.

Even before Burroughs began courses in 1967, he had been writing columns about the group and its practices for the men's magazine, *Mayfair*. Over the years, much that he wrote about Scientology was positive, even at times being more complimentary to the group and its techniques in print than he was in private correspondence. In any case, after he departed the formal organization, Burroughs continued writing for *Mayfair*, and some of his articles included his reports about experimenting with some of the Scientology techniques he had learned while he was a formal student. From, however, the viewpoint of Scientology's leaders, Burroughs was practicing Scientology outside of the group's control and altering the technology through his experiments. He was using some Scientology concepts and techniques with people who were not taking appropriate Scientology courses inside an authorized Scientology facility. These actions caught up with him on January 27, 1969, when Scientology issued a *Hubbard Communications Office Ethic Order* placing him in a condition of Treason, barring him from all Scientology facilities and preventing him from taking further courses.<sup>28</sup> Even still, some of his writings about Scientology later that year remained complimentary, especially about the E-Meter.<sup>29</sup>

The content and tone of those writings turned in a decidedly critical direction in late 1969, when Burroughs realized "that his work was responsible for introducing young people to what he could now see was a cult."<sup>30</sup> His essay to them came out in January 1970, first in an underground paper, then in *Mayfair*, and finally (in March) in the *Los Angeles Free Press*. In 1972, Burroughs republished the essay, this time bundling it with five other writings critical of the organization.<sup>31</sup>

The first two paragraphs of the essay provide much insight into Burroughs's criticisms of Scientology. He addressed his essay directly to youth in the counterculture:

In view of the fact that my article and statements on Scientology may have influenced young people to associate themselves with the so called Church of Scientology, I feel an obligation to make my present view on the subject quite clear.

Some of the techniques are highly valuable and warrant further study and experimentation. The E Meter is a useful device . . . (many variations of this instrument are possible). On the other hand I am in flat disagreement with the organizational policy. Organizational policy can only impede the advancement of knowledge. There is a basic incompatibility between any organization and freedom of thought. . . .

It is precisely organizational necessities that have prevented Scientology from obtaining the serious consideration merited by the importance of Mr. Hubbard's discoveries. Scientologists are not prepared to accept intelligent and sometimes critical evaluation. They demand unquestioning acceptance.<sup>32</sup>

Burroughs was objecting to the fact that the organization controlled the release of Hubbard's knowledge by requiring that people acquire it only by enrolling in (often expensive) courses presented by the organization itself, then passing through an intrusive, peculiar, and expensive sec check. He believed that Scientologists should welcome opportunities for researchers and other non-Scientology bodies to investigate the scientific examination of the techniques.

Burroughs's own morally libertarian, pro-Communist views were obvious in the next set of criticisms, specifically against Hubbard, whom he had never liked:

Mr. Hubbard's overtly fascist utterances (China is the real threat to world peace, Scientology is protecting the home, the church, the family, decent morals . . . positively no wife swapping. It's a dirty Communist trick . . . national boundaries, the concepts if RIGHT and WRONG against evil free thinking psychiatrist[s]) can hardly recommend him to the militant students. Certainly it is time for the Scientologists to come out in plain English on one side or the other, if they expect the trust and support of young people. Which side are you on Hubbard, which side are you on?<sup>33</sup>

While Burroughs did not try answering the question for him, obviously he would have located Hubbard with society's conservative Establishment, since he was creating a cult of personality around himself instead of leading a movement advocating fundamental structural and social change.<sup>34</sup>

Three prominent Scientologists responded to Burroughs, including Hubbard himself. All three responses were surprisingly subdued, almost completely avoiding any personal attacks against the apostate writer himself. The first response came at the end of March 1970 from Gordon Mustain, who was the Deputy Guardian for Public Relations, U.S. Churches of Scientology. He went about responding systematically:

Your objections to Scientology appear to be twofold; first, that it is administered via an organization; and secondly, that what you consider to be Mr. Hubbard's political viewpoint differs considerably from your own.<sup>35</sup>

Mustain then proceeded with a fairly systematic response, a substantial portion of which was a sustained attack against psychiatry.

Mustain defended the dissemination of Scientology through an organization by arguing for its necessity. Axioms, he indicated, formed the bases of Scientology philosophy, and the group's technology provided the means through which the philosophy disseminated. Mustain's implication was that organizational policy facilitated the systematic application of the technology. Burroughs had called for the free dissemination of Scientology's insights to young people,<sup>36</sup> but Mustain replied that he himself had once been a hippy desiring the expansion of consciousness but saw the hippies' failure to attain that expansion because of their use of drugs, especially hallucinogens. His hippie phase "ended in frustration and disillusionment."<sup>37</sup> Scientology, however, succeeded where the counterculture failed:

But I found Scientology a workable way of getting my head straight and helping others get theirs straight, and I found a group of people working towards the same goals (freedom, peace, spiritual awareness, tolerance, and elimination of double think) that I had been working towards for years.<sup>38</sup>

In essence, Mustain had turned around Burroughs's fantasized hope that free-thinking hippies could receive and develop Scientology without the confines of Scientology's organizational structures and their restrictions.

On a different topic, Burroughs had raised the issue about why Scientology was so vehemently opposed to psychiatry, and Mustain offered a fairly typical array of reputed facts and anecdotes against the profession. They included alleged examples of inappropriate psychiatric hospitalization, high psychiatric deaths, and harmful psychiatric treatments.<sup>39</sup> The second Scientologist to reply to Burroughs, Hubbard's wife Mary Sue Hubbard (1931–2002, married to LRH 1952–1986), extended Scientology's criticism of the psychiatric profession. Concisely, she summarized what she thought the difference were between psychiatry and Scientology:

Scientology wants protections for the individual against easy seizure; established psychiatry want easy seizure without due process of law. Scientology wants an end to treatments which are harmful ant not effective; established psychiatry says it can not do without them. The intention of Scientology is to bring about reforms in psychiatry, but the intention of psychiatry is completely to suppress Scientology as evidenced.<sup>40</sup>

As portrayed by Mary Sue Hubbard, therefore, Scientology was a group defending individual rights, but the Establishment had refused to take from



it even its generous offers of help and improvement regarding a host of social and personal issues.<sup>41</sup> Indeed, because of the way that the Establishment (including the press) treated Scientology, Mary Sue Hubbard concluded that “at the moment we are the niggers of the press.”<sup>42</sup> Hubbard, who was on his ship, the *Apollo*, at the time this article appeared, informed his shipmates that “MSH has just had a hard hitting article by her published in the British *Mayfair*.”<sup>43</sup>

A careful read, however, of L. Ron Hubbard's response to Burroughs, in the context of developments during that period within Scientology itself, brings forth a different perspective on the group, one whose intent focused upon psychiatry's elimination:

The psychiatric efforts to get rid of a dangerous competitor [i.e., Scientology] is having the effect of forcing the Scientologist to handle government influences and reorganize to take over the entire field of mental healing. The Scientologist never would have dreamed of this. For years he acted with full regard for spheres of influence. He turned away both the physically ill and the insane.<sup>44</sup>

In contrast, therefore, to Mary Sue Hubbard's statement that Scientology was a psychiatric reformist movement, LRH indicated that Scientology was a take-all competitor, with the assumption that a victorious Scientology would replace psychiatry with its own techniques.

Hubbard's offering turns out to be the more accurate of the two interpretations. On November 29, 1968, which was prior to his response to Burroughs, Hubbard had issued an Executive Directive entitled, “The War,” in which he outlined his vision of the national and international effort by psychiatry to destroy Scientology. Now Scientology, Hubbard proclaimed, was fighting back. Moreover, “[o]ur error was in failing to take over total control of all mental healing in the West. Well, we'll do that too.”<sup>45</sup> Then again in December 2, 1969, an unidentified author, which had to be Hubbard himself, composed (on legal-length paper) a five-page document “[w]ritten for the Guardian and her offices.” Mary Sue Hubbard was the person who ran the Guardian Office, and only Hubbard was above her. Under the subtitle, “The War,” the document announced:

Our war has been forced to become “to take over absolutely the field of mental healing on this planet in all forms.”

That was not the original purpose. The original purpose was to clear Earth. The battles suffered developed the data that we had an enemy who would have to be gotten out of the way and this meant we were at war.<sup>46</sup>

Hubbard alluded to this war in his response to Burroughs, although he greatly turned down its intensity. Mary Sue Hubbard also knew of this war but veered away from even alluding to it in her response to Burroughs. Burroughs likely had no idea of the ferocity of Hubbard's antipathy to psychiatry and therefore did not appreciate how deep and pervasive the organization's hostility to psychiatry was.

The three Scientologists made other claims about Scientology in an attempt to refute Burroughs while not alienating him further. (After all, he had said that much of the technology, such as auditing, worked.) Hubbard claimed, for example, that Scientology had abolished the security checks that Burroughs hated so much,<sup>47</sup> when in fact they remained in the repertoire of Scientology technology. By 1975 they would reappear as "confessionals,"<sup>48</sup> then again in 1978 as "confessionals" and "Integrity processing."<sup>49</sup> Beyond, however, individual statements with which one might quarrel, what remains striking about all three of the Scientology responses is how respectful they were toward Burroughs. Mustain ended his response with an invitation: "This is the other side of the coin. When you've looked it over, if you wish to pursue it further, write. I'd be interested in seeing your comments." Mary Sue Hubbard ended her essay with a comment about the center based around his revolutionary ideas that Burroughs had hoped to establish.<sup>50</sup>

Maybe, Mr. Burroughs, you are a catalyst for just such a centre as you envision. Certainly the benefit to mankind of such researches into man's inner awareness would be greater than the doubtful good of man's current space programmes and much less costly.<sup>51</sup>

Admittedly this statement was not effusive, but it did provide some faint praise to one of Burroughs's dreams.

The tone of L. Ron Hubbard's response to Burroughs also was polite, almost to the point of being deferential. This politeness was surprising in light of what Hubbard had written a decade earlier about how to respond to critics:

If attacked on some vulnerable point by anyone or anything or any organization, ALWAYS FIND OR MANUFACTURE ENOUGH THREAT AGAINST THEM TO CAUSE THEM TO SUE FOR PEACE. Peace is brought with an advantage, so make the advantage and then settle. Don't ever defend. Always attack. Don't ever do nothing. Unexpected attacks in the rear of the enemy's front ranks work best.<sup>52</sup>

In short, Hubbard told his followers to attack a Scientology attacker sufficiently hard to make them desist with their criticisms.

In light of this policy, one might expect that Burroughs's critical essay about Hubbard and his creation, containing references to "Hubbard's overtly fascist utterances"<sup>53</sup> and "his grandiose claims"<sup>54</sup> might have evoked Hubbard's ire. Instead, near the beginning of his response, Hubbard announced, "I am hardly likely to attack a man for whom I have great respect. He is perfectly entitled to his views as to express them."<sup>55</sup> He then ended his essay by concluding:

As a famous celebrity, a pal of mine for years, once said, "If only people would criticize more and honestly and to the point! I feel when they don't they are not my friends."

So I count William Burroughs as a friend of mine. Whatever he writes he is trying to make things right, just like the Scientologists.<sup>56</sup>

Rather than criticize Burroughs or attack his character, Hubbard seems to have praised him! The note about his response, however, that Hubbard sent to his *Apollo* shipmates had a somewhat different tone:

*Mayfair* magazine UK published an article by me as a "World Exclusive." It may effectively handle a lot of things. It ended off the William Burroughs thing. It said why we're attacked and attacks hard. It appeared on the stands just before Parliament adjourned. Captain AOUK [Advanced Organization, United Kingdom] said it acted like an S & D [search and discovery of Suppressive Persons] on the crew there.<sup>57</sup>

Despite what Hubbard implied, the exchange was not quite over.

Whether this praise reflected Hubbard's professional esteem for another writer we do not know, but it had a positive effect on Burroughs. He had the last word in the debate, and he used it to support Hubbard's critical positions on the mass media and generally to agree with him about the poor quality of most psychiatrists. He implied, however, the current problems were a greater fault than what psychiatrists have claimed; the entire Establishment was unworkable. He did not offer any more directed criticisms of Scientology.<sup>58</sup> Although for years afterward, aspects of Scientology appeared in Burroughs's writings, "[i]n the final years, Burroughs appeared to think a great deal about Scientology, although he had absolutely nothing positive to say."<sup>59</sup>

It is impossible to gauge how much influence Burroughs had on potential young converts, either initially as a catalyst to conversion, then later as a dissuader to the same generation. His writings in a men's magazine would have reached a very small (and probably disinterested) audience but so would the three Scientology rebuttals to Burroughs and his criticisms. The entire debate took place before the advent of the Internet, although much of it now is retrievable through persistent searching. He was a prominent writer, so people recognized his name, but his literature was sufficiently avant-garde that his work was an acquired taste. After Burroughs, no other high-profile celebrity defections from Scientology took place until the new century, but thus far the departures of three of them have been loud and consequential.

### Jason Beghe

By the close of the first decade of this second millennium, the Internet had become a major media vehicle for the dissemination of accounts about loud and critical Scientology celebrity defections. Hollywood actor Jason Beghe was the first to fully exploit it. Like so many others, Beghe joined Scientology through Milton Katselas's acting class. He read a critical newspaper article about what Scientologists were like, but it did not resonate with the respect he had for his acting teacher, whom he had heard was a Scientologist. He asked two Scientologists in his class, Bodhi Elfman and Mary Thompson, about Scientology, and Mary gave him a copy of *What Is Scientology?* Impressed by what he read, he mentioned this impression to Elfman, who then took him over to the Celebrity Centre. Almost immediately he signed up for the two courses, and within his first 13 months had taken over 14 courses and services.<sup>60</sup>

Beghe continued his rapid rise through the courses, auditing himself through OT III in 1997 and attesting to OT V in 2003.<sup>61</sup> He also had gone Clear in 1995, which he described:

Here's what it's like to be Clear. Say you're born with a big heavy bag and you have been carrying it around on your back for your entire life.

Because you are born with it, you don't know anything is wrong—it's just part of life. You think it is normal to have this big, heavy thing that's like a 50 lb. back-pack with you all the time.

Now you get into Scientology and all of a sudden you start to lighten the load. The more you go up The Bridge, the more weight you take out of the bag. When you finally go clear, it's hard to imagine how you have lived with that huge weight on your back all that time.<sup>62</sup>

If one were to speculate about what was in Beghe's personal, heavy backpack that he carried around for years and believed it was normal, then one might offer that it had to do with anger. When asked, for example, about whether any similarities existed between himself and a police character that he played on television, Beghe answered, "I have a bad temper and I'm rash."<sup>63</sup> Likewise, in a letter sent by a Church of Scientology International official (Karen Pouw) to Andy Greene, who was the associate editor of *Rolling Stone* magazine (in an attempt to convince the magazine not to use Beghe as a source), Pouw stated, "for background, Jason Beghe first came to us for help with his anger management issues in 1994. . . . When he left the Church, he blamed it for his inability to control his lifelong hair-trigger temper."<sup>64</sup> It seems that Scientology courses did not alleviate his anger problem, since he pleaded *nolo contendere* [no contest] to a criminal misdemeanor assault charge involving a process server (Javier Hernandez) whom he struck. Beghe's version of the incident was that he "touched him because he refused to leave my property. I used remarkable restraint, frankly."<sup>65</sup> The lawsuit, however, described the incident differently:

Beghe became enraged, and ran down the driveway after Mr. Hernandez. Beghe reached him and struck Mr. Hernandez in the back of his head with his hand or fist, knocking Mr. Hernandez' [sic] phone out of his hand onto the ground. Beghe repeatedly punched Mr. Hernandez in the back including "kidney punches" and on the back of his head as he tried to escape.<sup>66</sup>

Initially demanding \$1 million, the case settled with Beghe paying Hernandez \$16,500 and \$2,500 to Hernandez's girlfriend who was with him on the day of the assault.<sup>67</sup>

Several (but not necessarily contradictory) accounts exist about how and why Beghe turned against Scientology. Putting together these accounts, it seems that his initial experience with Scientology was positive and represented by the quotes that he gave in *Celebrity* magazine articles about him. His doubts about Scientology may have begun before taking a series of courses called L11 and L12 in 1996. In order to take them, Beghe underwent the False Purpose Rundown, which is similar to a security check in that it probes into one's life looking for incidents holding oneself back from advancement but that one had not recalled previously. Beghe claimed that for weeks (at \$1,000 an hour) he was grilled in sessions lasting up to six hours, looking for incidents that he was withholding. There were none showing up, which drove disbelieving auditors to dig even more. Finally his auditors allowed him

to take the two L courses, the first of which was supposed to empower the person by removing one's "implant to harm."<sup>68</sup>

Consequently, both Beghe and other Scientologists were perplexed when, in 1999, he was in a life-threatening car accident—something that should not have happened at his level of advancement. Scientologists set out to find the accident's cause and eventually concluded that it was because Beghe had a homosexual friend.<sup>69</sup> This quest to find someone associated with Beghe who was harming ("suppressing") the reputedly empowering effects of Scientology's powers may explain why Beghe completed two PTS/SP [Potential Trouble Source/Suppressive Person] courses, one in 2000 and the other in 2002.<sup>70</sup> In any case, his doubts about Scientology likely began with this explanation.<sup>71</sup> By now, his Scientology training was going badly, taking him three to five years to attain OT V when it only should have taken him three to five weeks.<sup>72</sup>

He married in 2000 a woman who also was in Scientology and who delivered their first child in a silent birth.<sup>73</sup> Upon learning that he was going to be a father, Beghe took an inventory of his life and "realized that Scientology wasn't me."<sup>74</sup> He and his wife both left, but it took him about a year to disconnect from the organization. He was out by about August 2007.<sup>75</sup> Looking back on the Scientology courses and the promises attached to them, he realized that "it's all magical thinking."<sup>76</sup> The more courses and auditing he took, the more harm he believed they did, partly because they were brainwashing him to think like Hubbard.<sup>77</sup>

Details and dates around his departure and subsequent public criticisms are somewhat jumbled. Probably among Beghe's earliest attempts to get assistance with his departure took place when he contacted Andreas Heldal-Lund (b. 1964), a Norwegian man who ran the critical anti-Scientology website, Operation Clambake (xenu.net). Apparently Heldal-Lund put Beghe in touch with Scientology critic and videographer, Mark Bunker, who taped over two hours of an interview with Beghe three months after he had left, which Bunker posted on the Internet in early June 2008. In addition, Beghe was in touch with a local Los Angeles former Scientologist, Tory Christman (b. 1947), who in turn put him in touch with anti-Scientology Internet reporter, Tony Ortega (b. 1963), who subsequently posted articles about him. Beghe's basic allegation against Scientology is that auditing made him (and, he was sure, others) worse, not better. In essence, Beghe had concluded that none of Scientology's most basic services worked—they were simply part of a fraud. Neither Clears nor OTs gained any special powers. Homosexuals were not degraded beings, but he felt that too many Scientologists believed they were. Moreover, freeing himself from Scientology meant that the constant demand for money also stopped, as did the need to undergo irritating security

tests before taking upper-level material. In late summer 2008, Beghe traveled to Germany and spoke to Hamburg officials and others about his experiences and concerns, claiming that private investigators followed him throughout the trip.<sup>78</sup>

### Paul Haggis

According to author Lawrence Wright, Beghe answered an audition call in the summer of 2009 for a film that Paul Haggis (b. 1953) was casting. Beghe informed Haggis about his departure from Scientology (expecting that Haggis would reject him as a suppressive person), but Haggis insisted that he alone made casting decisions. Beghe told Haggis about his denunciation of Scientology on the Internet, and subsequently Haggis watched it, then contacted Beghe for a meeting because he, too, had some questions about Scientology policies, practices, and beliefs. In the meeting, Beghe shared with Haggis that in the late 1990s, he was having emotional problems, which Scientology courses and auditing only made worse. He felt that these courses and auditing installed Hubbard's "ways of looking at things," making one into "You the Scientologist" at the expense of you the person.<sup>79</sup> Beghe especially disturbed Haggis when he told the director what had happened to him after leaving: "he claimed that none of his Scientology friends would talk to him, his son had been kicked out of school, [and] he was being followed by private investigators and threatened with lawsuits."<sup>80</sup>

By the time Beghe and Haggis met in 2011, Haggis had been a Scientologist for around 36 years, having first become involved in 1975 while he still was living in Ontario, Canada. He visited Los Angeles in 1976, during which time he took sufficient courses to go Clear, moved back to Ontario in 1977 for a brief period, then returned (with his wife at the time) to Los Angeles.<sup>81</sup> By the early 1980s he had progressed up the Bridge to OT VII where he remained,<sup>82</sup> although subsequently he did the Purification Rundown some time prior to 1986. When interviewed in *Celebrity* magazine in 1986, he heaped praise on the Purification Rundown, indicating:

I found I could think a lot more clearly. Getting rid of all those residual toxins and medicines and drugs really had an effect. . . . But the big benefit was mental rather than physical. I really did feel more alert and more aware and more at ease—I wasn't running in six directions to get something done, or bouncing off walls when something went wrong. I was able to calmly hold a position, look at a problem and then go about handling it.<sup>83</sup>

In turn, he recommended the rundown to a highly emotional colleague who was on several prescriptions, and with her doctor's permission she stopped her medications and began the purification program. Haggis reported that, upon her completion, "if you met her today you wouldn't know she was the same person. She's lucid and stable and funnier than ever. If she hadn't done the program, I doubt she'd be working right now. . . ."84

Interestingly, Haggis did not reveal in his *Celebrity* interview that he was never able to read much of Hubbard's foundational book, *Dianetics*, having found it "impenetrable" after about the first 30 pages.<sup>85</sup> Equally serious was his reaction to the OT III story. As reported by Lawrence Wright:

Carrying an empty, locked, briefcase, Haggis went to the Advanced Organization building in Los Angeles where the [OT] material was held. A supervisor then handed him a folder, which Haggis put on a briefcase. He entered a study room, where he finally got to examine the secret document—a couple of pages, in Hubbard's bold scrawl. After a few minutes, he returned to the supervisor.

"I don't understand," Haggis said.

"Do you know the words?" the supervisor asked.

"I know the words, I just don't understand."

"Go back and read it again."

Haggis did so. In a moment, he returned. "Is this a metaphor?" he asked the supervisor.

"No," the supervisor responded. "It is what it is. Do the actions that are required."

Maybe it's an insanity test, Haggis thought—if you believe it, you're automatically kicked out. "I sat with that for a while," he says. But when he read it again he decided, "This is madness."<sup>86</sup>

Even though Haggis had a visceral reaction against this seminal Scientology document, he overlooked it. We do not know if Haggis shared these problems when he met with Beghe, whose own issues with Scientology included auditing and courses that, he concluded, simply did not work.

This meeting between Beghe and Haggis took place six or seven months after Haggis's troubles with Scientology had begun. In November 2008, California passed an antigay marriage vote (Proposition 8), and one of Haggis's two gay daughters informed him that Scientology's Church of San Diego had endorsed it publically. Incensed at what he saw as an egregious stand against human rights, Haggis shot off an e-mail to Scientology spokesperson Tommy Davis (b. 1972), demanding that the organization make a public declaration supporting gay rights. On a number of grounds, Davis refused, saying that the



lone Scientologist who had made the endorsement had been disciplined, and, anyway, the endorsement had attracted almost no public attention. In the last e-mail on this issue that Haggis sent to Davis in February 2009, Haggis insisted that the issue was “not a P.R. issue, it is a moral issue” about which Scientology shamed itself.<sup>87</sup> Beghe, of course, held similar views, objecting to his Scientology assistant's attempt to blame his car accident on his association with a gay friend.

The issues that Haggis harbored grew exponentially after—for the first time in his life—he began searching the Internet (after e-mail communication with Davis broke down) for Scientology information. Among the issues troubling Haggis was his discovery that Scientology spokesperson, Tommy Davis, had lied to a reporter about a policy known as disconnection. Disconnection required members to cease communication with—to disconnect from—people whom Scientology leaders deemed to be threats to “keeping Scientology working” by their engagement in actions such as criticizing, doubting, or opposing the organization and/or its leaders.<sup>88</sup> Davis denied the policy's existence; less than a year earlier (2007), however, Haggis's wife had to disconnect from her parents for the second time.<sup>89</sup>

More distressing Internet discoveries followed. Haggis found a lengthy investigative report on alleged violence within the Sea Org., much of it reputedly committed by the chairman of the board and current Scientology head, David Miscavige (b. 1960). Based upon accounts by formerly high-ranking executives—Marty Rathbun, Mike Rinder, Tom De Vocht, and Amy Scobee—reporters Joe Childs and Thomas C. Tobin of the *Tampa Bay Times* uncovered a culture of violence infusing the Sea Org and originating from the very top. “Physical violence permeated Scientology's international management team. Miscavige set the tone, routinely attacking his lieutenants. Rinder says the leader attacked him some 50 times.”<sup>90</sup> More distressing was his discovery (probably from Jenna Miscavige Hill's Ex-Scientology Kids website) that some very young teens and preteen children had signed billion year contracts as they worked in the Sea Org. He unloaded on Wright that “They were ten years old, twelve years old, signing billion-year contracts—and their parents went along with this? . . . Scrubbing pots, manual labor—that so deeply touched me. My God, it horrified me!” The stories of the Sea Org children reminded Haggis of the child slaves in Haiti.<sup>91</sup> Wright concluded his discussion of Haggis's reaction to children signing billion year contracts by saying, “in what seemed like a very unguarded comment, he said, ‘I would gladly bring down the church for this one thing.’”<sup>92</sup>

On August 19, 2009, roughly six months after the conclusion of Haggis's e-mails to Davis about getting Scientology to make a firm statement defending homosexuality, Haggis wrote to him again, this time to resign from the

organization. His cited four reasons for doing so. The first reason was his disapproval of Scientology's unwillingness to issue a statement that would have supported homosexuality as being a key element of human rights. The second reason related to Davis's denial of a policy on disconnection. Third, he stated that the violent atmosphere within the Sea Org indicated "serious, indefensible human and civil rights violations." Fourth, he was outraged that Scientology most certainly used material from one of the critic's supposedly confidential confessional files as part of the organization's attempt to discredit her through character assassination. At the end of the letter, Haggis concluded that he "could no longer be a part of this group," and resigned from it.<sup>93</sup>

A few days after sending the letter, Haggis found a group of Scientologists on his front lawn, intending to talk him into reconsidering his resignation. Celebrities in the group included Anne Archer and her producer/husband, Terry Jastrow, Emmy-winning composer Mark Isham, Earthlink founder Sky Dayton, and several people he did not know.<sup>94</sup> Haggis listened to their arguments but was not swayed from his decision. He did agree, however, not to distribute his letter further.<sup>95</sup> Ex-Scientology official Marty Rathbun, however, already had a copy, and two months later he asked Haggis if he could publish it on his blog. Haggis did not try to prevent him from doing so. Subsequently Rathbun's blog site received 51,000 hits in one afternoon, and reporters were attempting to reach Haggis from around the world. One reporter who did reach him was *New Yorker* writer and author Lawrence Wright, who subsequently presented a two-part article in the magazine in February 2011. That magazine article became the basis for a book, *Going Clear*, in 2013, and the book in turn provided the impetus for Alex Gibney's 2015 investigative report, *Going Clear: Scientology and the Prison of Belief*.<sup>96</sup> Jason Beghe and especially Paul Haggis played prominent roles in the documentary.

### Leah Remini

Almost all that we know about actor Leah Remini's involvement in, and break with, Scientology comes from her 2015 autobiography, *Troublemaker: Surviving Hollywood and Scientology*. Although the book is skimpy on dates of events, it nevertheless provides an interesting story of a celebrity who increasingly grew to be at odds with Scientology's two most powerful figures, David Miscavige and Tom Cruise, and the organizational behaviors and policies that reinforced their statuses. Once having broken with the organization, Remini's displeasure with it both broadened and deepened, to the point that she reached a near total rejection of it as a group offering anything of value.

In the beginning, however, her feelings about Scientology were very different. With a verbally, emotionally, and psychologically abusive father leaving Remini's mother when Leah was still a child (around 11 years old<sup>97</sup>), her mother joined Scientology in New York City, hoping to make a better life for herself.<sup>98</sup> Soon Leah and her sister were making the trip to the New York org from their New Jersey home and began taking courses—the Training Routines, the Success Through Communications course, and Scientology Life Improvement courses.<sup>99</sup> While taking these courses, Remini recorded the first of several observations she would make about Scientologist children—that children as young as seven years old were auditing.<sup>100</sup>

As still a child herself—one suspects that she was in very early teens—being a Scientologist meant a great deal to Remini, a girl who previously felt that she had never fit in with her peers.<sup>101</sup> For a poor child who never felt like she fit in, participation in Scientology gave Remini a sense of specialness—she said superiority—that probably goes a long way toward explaining why, over the years, she witnessed and experienced aspects of the organization that disturbed her but that she put out of her mind. It was far easier for her to concentrate on what she felt worked for her life than to explore issues that might have shattered that comfort.

Again, Remini frustrates by not giving dates, but sometime during her late adolescence and early teens, she, her sister, and her mother moved to the large Scientology facility in Clearwater, Florida, where she and her mother both signed Sea Org's billion year contracts.<sup>102</sup> She then entered the Estates Project Force, which she described as something like a boot camp for Sea Org. It involved doing hard labor for 12 hours a day—projects “like pulling up tree roots with bare hands, working heavy machinery on the grounds of [Scientology property], or cleaning bathrooms and hotel rooms.”<sup>103</sup> In addition, for two-and-a-half hours a day, they studied Sea Org policies and procedures.<sup>104</sup> During Remini's training at the Fort Harrison Hotel, a Sea Org official caught her sitting in a public area where paying guests were, and for this infraction a senior Sea Org member took her out into the harbor and threw her overboard.<sup>105</sup> The sheer inappropriateness of this action, especially against a young teen, never seemed to strike the minds of any of the parties involved or Remini's family, partly because the Sea Org member justified his action by citing an L. Ron Hubbard policy.<sup>106</sup>

Something involving children that did bother the young Remini when she saw it was the condition of the children's nursery:

The first time I went to the nursery I was devastated by what I found. The person in charge was a kid like me, just some random teenage Sea Org member on post, who was hardly qualified to be taking care

of children. [Remini's younger sister] Shannon was crying and soaked with urine in her crib. Before changing her and returning to my post, I vowed I wouldn't let her grow up this way. The neglect was overwhelming. I would immediately demand that the person on post clean up and change the babies.<sup>107</sup>

Remini told her mother about the conditions, and the mother tried but failed to use appropriate organizational structures to get conditions approved. In Remini's autobiography, the conditions of the children's nursery were the first issues involving Scientology that "really weighed on me. Though I was buying into the program, it raised a question inside me. While I didn't care so much about me, I wondered if we were doing right by this baby."<sup>108</sup> The family's dilemma, however, was that they had nowhere else to go.<sup>109</sup>

Out of the Estates Project Force and into the Sea Org, Remini worked 14-hour days, staying awake by smoking cigarettes and drinking coffee but rarely attending the eighth grade (probably meaning that she was between 12 and 14 years old).<sup>110</sup> Not long into her Sea Org career, however, someone wrote up Remini for having engaged in premarital sex with a boy. (Her boyfriend had lightly touched her breasts over her clothes.) For this transgression of Scientology policy about sex, Remini was facing assignment to the Rehabilitation Project Force (RPF). She had a good idea what the RPF was, since often she had seen people on it working around the Fort Harrison:

In 110-degree Florida heat and humidity, these men, women, and even children were forced to wear all black from head to toe as they did heavy MEST work (MEST is an acronym for matter, energy, space, and time) like cleaning grease traps in the kitchen or scrubbing dumpsters. And that wasn't all they had to do for their "spiritual rehabilitation." They also had to run everywhere they went—to the bathroom, to the galley, anywhere. They had virtually no liberties. As long as they were in the RPF they worked pretty much seven days a week, 365 days a year, and that's not including all the time spent doing security checks for their transgressions.<sup>111</sup>

Remini's mother, however, refused to allow her daughter to enter the RPF and instead initiated an administrative procedure that led to her two daughters being dismissed from the Sea Org. Knowing that now they should move out of Clearwater but without any place to go, they headed to another locale where the Scientology subculture was strong—Los Angeles.<sup>112</sup>

Sleeping at first on the floor of the apartment of her mother's friend, Remini and the rest of her family launched their new lives. Already behind in school for a year, Remini convinced her mother to let her drop out of school.

She began working a series of low-paying jobs to pay off a freeloader's debt from the courses she had received for free while a Sea Org member.

She found, and soon began to run with, unsupervised children and teens of Sea Org parents. About these children and teens:

[I]n Scientology, minors are considered spiritual beings and not children in need of protection and guidance. You are the only person responsible for the condition of your life, regardless of your age. The Sea Org members believed that their kids could make up their own minds. As a result, these kids could no longer live with their parents, most of whom had berthing in [Scientology's sleeping facilities].<sup>113</sup>

Somehow, amid what at times must have felt like chaos, Remini (who had no acting training) began auditioning for acting parts in television and movies. She landed her first small part in 1988.<sup>114</sup> In the fall of 1988, auditions were held for a show about models called *Living Dolls*. Remini wanted to be hired as a character, so to prepare for the audition she underwent exercises that were directly out of Scientology's Success Through Communication course and the Tone Scale. She got selected and acted on the show for a year until it wrapped up in December 1989.<sup>115</sup>

Into the early 1990s, Remini continued to win parts on television shows, and at some point in this period she began taking Scientology courses and auditing again. (Presumably she paid off her freeloader's debt.) Reflecting back on any gains she believed at the time to have acquired, Remini interpreted:

What I didn't realize at the time was that all the understanding I gained through auditing only related back to my life in the church and helped me be a Scientologist. My "gains" in Scientology were not related to the real world. I was so entrenched in the church that it had become my everything. I couldn't question that.<sup>116</sup>

This interpretation—that Scientology did not help Remini in the real world—was certainly *not* what came across in a *Celebrity* magazine cover article in 1995. She informed readers:

I really can't imagine what I would be like without Scientology tech in my life. It has helped me in my career, it has helped me in my life. I've noticed that when I stay on lines and actively move on The Bridge, and I am doing so because I want to go free, it just so happens that my career flourishes as does my life in general.<sup>117</sup>

Within about two years of providing these comments to *Celebrity* magazine, she landed a starring character on the television show, *The King of Queens*.<sup>118</sup> Issues in her private life were straightening out, too, in this period: in 1996 she met Angelo Pagán, whom she would marry (in a pared-down Scientology wedding) in 2002.<sup>119</sup> In 2004, she gave birth to her only child but did not follow Scientology's strict "silent birth" procedures.<sup>120</sup>

Remini's growing success merited her a second cover story interview in *Celebrity* magazine in 2002. She spoke about how her mother taught her to do the first Training Routine, TR-0, which allowed her to improve her relationship with her older sister. Moreover, because she said that she was not "raised with any real moral values," she received values from Hubbard's *The Way to Happiness*.<sup>121</sup> Receiving auditing on the Grades and attesting to Clear allowed Remini (she said) to get beyond the anxiety of auditions and her constant self-criticisms even before reading for a part. She indicated, "I felt a real sense of peace when I achieved the state of Clear."<sup>122</sup> When asked how, "as a successful actress with an incredibly busy schedule," she managed still to fit in time for Scientology courses, Remini's reply did not really answer the question but instead affirmed it: "I have never felt better than when I am on course or getting auditing."<sup>123</sup> Later in the interview, she mentioned the 9/11 attacks against the United States and offered, "Can you imagine what this place would be like if we were all Clear? . . . LRH gave us a huge gift. Let's give back." In this spirit, she thanked her "supervisor and auditors for not giving up on me and for treating me with love and kindness. The same with the church itself."<sup>124</sup> This interpretation—that Scientology personnel treated her with love and kindness—would diminish over the next few years as she increasingly had run-ins with the church over issues that she felt were inconsequential and banal.

Remini's answers to questions in both of her *Celebrity* interviews suggest that she understood the roles that she played in and for the organization. Years later, in her autobiography, she would write:

As a celebrity Scientologist, you are expected to be an example not only to the outside world but also to other Scientologists. Moving up the Bridge is important in setting an example for the group. And so is donating money. A lot of money.<sup>125</sup>

With a significant, steady income from her on successful television series, Remini's status within Scientology rose, and she began being invited to social events comprising the rich, inner circle of celebrities. As her status rose, so did the demands on her for donations. She estimated that she donated millions dollars before she left.<sup>126</sup> Problems quickly arose, however, around her donations when she demanded proof about how Scientologists used them or

planned to use them. For example, she gave \$50,000 to a charity that Kirstie Alley was running to help the New Orleans survivors, but she became angry when no one gave her pictures of volunteers distributing bottled water as she had been told they were going to. Likewise, she withdrew a tentative offer to make a \$100,000 donation for a community southwest of downtown Los Angeles when she learned that the charity plan involved distributing turkeys along with *The Way to Happiness* book. (She had expected that her donation would have gone toward something practical, like a kids' center, to watch children while their parents worked.)<sup>127</sup> She did make, however, a million-dollar donation to the International Association of Scientologists, which apparently elevated her to the status of someone who could associate with Tom Cruise.<sup>128</sup> Things did not always go well for her, however, at his dinner parties. During one party, in which Cruise “was manhandling Katie, dipping her in a forceful way and then making out with her,” a slightly upset Remini quipped to the couple, “you guys might want to get a room. . . .” She never imagined how much trouble she would get in for saying it. At another event in Cruise’s house, she witnessed what she considered to be an angry and unwarranted outburst toward his staff. On a third occasion, she was among guests whom Cruise manipulated into playing hide-and-seek with him in his 7,000-square-foot house. She concluded that Cruise might have been arrested emotionally at the age when he experienced his first major box-office success (in his case, which was when he was 21).<sup>129</sup>

She and her husband received an invitation to what some observers were calling the wedding of the century—Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes—to be held in Rome in November 2006. Cruise asked Remini to invite actor and performer Jennifer Lopez and husband Marc Anthony to the wedding, and Lopez accepted for them both, even though they barely knew Cruise. Remini was surprised to see Brooke Shields there, but at some point realized that Cruise had invited many of them simply for public relations reasons regarding Scientology itself.<sup>130</sup>

This revelation was only the first of many that Remini had about Scientology, which sent her on a personal (and ultimately futile) mission to reform the organization.

What she observed she did not like. She saw Sea Org members drinking; she saw high-ranking Scientologists Tommy Davis and Jessica Feshbach together, without their respective spouses, physically interacting as if they were a couple. Most disturbing to her was that David Miscavige was there without his wife and appeared instead to be with his assistant, Laurisse Stuckenbrock. (When Remini asked Tommy Davis about her whereabouts, Davis snarled, “You don’t have the rank to be asking about Shelly Miscavige.”<sup>131</sup>) She thought that high-ranking Norman Starkey was manhandling and dancing

inappropriately with Brooke Shields. Overall, Remini thought that the involvement of upper-level Sea Org members in the Cruise/Holmes wedding was not in accordance with Scientology policy and that Sea Org members behaved badly at it. She planned to return home and write Knowledge Reports about what she had witnessed, which would catalyze the organization to get itself back on policy and ethics.<sup>132</sup>

Upon returning to the United States, Remini quickly left for Clearwater in order to proceed up to OT VII. Before beginning the course, however, she was hit with a pile of Knowledge Reports about her behavior at the wedding! Remini concluded, however, that “[a]ll my crimes were on the spectrum of things that you have immature fights about in your teenage years.”<sup>133</sup> These reports, however, were sufficiently serious that she had to go through security checks, in which:

My auditor went at me for hours, days, weeks, and then months. It was relentless—absolutely relentless—as we went around and around on the same questions:

*What have you done to Tom?*  
*Do you have evil intentions toward Tom?*  
*Do you have sexual intentions toward Tom?*  
*What have you done to Katie?*  
*Do you have evil intentions toward Katie?*  
*What have you done to David Miscavige?*  
*Do you have evil intention toward David Miscavige?*

It was understood that the only reason I was saying those things about such high-level Scientologists was because I myself was guilty of such crimes.<sup>134</sup>

Persons whom Scientology security checks have to pay for the experience, and Remini had to put out an undisclosed amount of money to cover her ordeal.

Arguably, it got worse for her, since she next had to undergo a Truth Rundown. In this procedure, an auditor examines all relevant documents in order to determine what negative deeds or words a member has said or claimed to have seen about Scientology or its leadership and then pushes the person to identify what he or she did to cause those negative perceptions or deeds. In other words, the Truth Rundown attempted to get complainants to blame themselves for anything negative they believed that they knew or saw. She broke, and the process worked. “After weeks and weeks of twelve hours a day in auditing, they broke me and I retracted almost everything, I admitted that I caused a problem at the wedding.” The entire trip cost her \$300,000, spent on what she called “auditing to get reprogrammed.”<sup>135</sup>



In 2007, Tommy Davis and Mike Rinder invited Remini to join Anne Archer, Kirstie Alley, and Juliette Lewis in discussing and defending Scientology with BBC reporter John Sweeney. Someone from the Office of Special Affairs (OSA) drilled them in the technique of dead agenting, which involved “shutting down any criticism of the church by disproving the veracity of the source of information,” often with *ad hominem* attacks.<sup>136</sup> Remini also knew of the Fair Game Policy, in which an enemy of Scientology “may be deprived of property or injured by any means by any Scientologist without any discipline of the Scientologist. May be tricked, sued, or lied to or destroyed.”<sup>137</sup> Apparently some combination of dead agenting and fair game had broken down Sweeney, and Mike Rinder and Tommy Davis were laughing about it. She protested to them, insisting, “What you’re doing is wrong. He’s in your house. You should treat him with respect. I don’t think we’re doing ourselves any favors.” She refused to sign release papers that would have allowed one or both parties to use her interview publicly.<sup>138</sup>

When Cruise and Holmes announced their divorce in 2012, Remini felt vindicated about Starkey—whom she felt had been inappropriate with Brooke Shields—after she learned that he flew back from Italy in disgrace. Jessica Feshbach and Tommy Davis took extended leaves from the Sea Org and got married. No one, however, still was able to answer her question about where David Miscavige’s wife, Shelly, was. Remini received a \$300,000 credit to her account for what she had gone through (security checks, the Truth Rundown, etc.) in Clearwater.<sup>139</sup> David Miscavige himself assured her that she was fine but being kept out of sight because suppressive persons constantly were trying to subpoena her. Uncertain as to whether Miscavige was telling the truth, Remini reached out to some Suppressive Persons who only recently had defected from the organization.<sup>140</sup> Defector Mike Rinder told her that Scientology’s management “was continually subjected to, and inflicted physical beatings on, other Sea Org members” and that they were backed by LRH policy in doing so.<sup>141</sup> Rinder and former captain of the Flag Service Organization, Debbie Cook, informed her about the Hole, which was a double-wide trailer on property that Scientology owns in Southern California where disfavored upper-level Sea Org members were held, humiliated, and punished.<sup>142</sup> Her conversation with Debbie Cook motivated her, for the first time in her life, to search the Internet for information about Scientology. What she discovered made her cry and then ask, “How could I have been blind to the stories that the rest of the world knew?” She then answered her own question: “The reason for their blind faith lies in their core belief that they alone have the answers to eradicate the ills of humanity. You run back to the safety of the group that shares your mentality, and in this way your world becomes very insular.”<sup>143</sup>

Remini made the mistake of not following her own insights by trying to tell some Scientology friends about the information she was acquiring and the sources from which she was acquiring it. They refused to examine anything and probably are the persons who wrote Knowledge Reports about her to the organization.<sup>144</sup> Remini's Scientology handlers learned about these reports and confronted her, but she held her ground and counterattacked regarding Scientology's disconnection policy. She demanded to know why all Scientologists have to separate or disconnect from Suppressive Persons, but Tom Cruise was still allowed to see ex-wives and Suppressive Persons Nicole Kidman and Katie Holmes? Seemingly, she had come to believe that the finessing of Tom Cruise's needs at the expense of other Scientologists was hypocritical. When Miscavige attempted to salvage Remini, she laid into him about the number of individuals and families forced into debt in order to continue courses on *The Bridge*.<sup>145</sup> When a Scientology handler told Remini that LRH policy told her to disconnect from her stepfather because he was a suppressive person, she instead "decided to sever ties with Scientology permanently."<sup>146</sup>

## CONCLUSION: SCIENTOLOGY CELEBRITY DECONVERSIONS AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Three of the four conversions examined here are what social scientists call declarative departures.<sup>147</sup> Individuals announce their reasons for leaving a group, often by presenting information to the media or the public about what life was like on the inside or what they *remember or are willing to tell*. In other words, they declare the reasons for their departure, possibly in a manner that paints themselves in positive light. The reason or reasons for the exiting are obvious from the accounts, almost always involving physical, emotional, and/or sexual abuses; leadership struggles; financial malfeasance; or doctrinal heterodoxy. Consequently, defectors' accounts often portray the defecting members as having little other choice except to leave. A similar way to view these departures is to look at them as "heretical exits," in which involve disaffiliating and terminating from a group are appropriating a previously heretical belief system (i.e., secularism) to explain one's previous involvement.<sup>148</sup>

While it is possible that these accounts are biased intentionally, unintentional bias also may creep in as one tries to settle scores while leaving. Memory, too, is imprecise, and one necessarily recalls incidents in the past through the lens of more recent times. Declarative departures almost always intend to damage the reputation of the remaining groups and enhance the image of the apostates. Certainly ex-members can, and sometimes do, lie, and they may

give unambiguous interpretations to issues and events that, in reality, call for nuance and shades of gray.

My own experience, however, with apostates' departure accounts is that most of them are more-or-less accurate and involve honest reporting. In addition to people's basic sense of integrity, critical apostates know that their former groups may examine their criticisms carefully and pounce on any inaccuracies. Often, accounts or other forms of documentation will support defectors' claims, giving them increased reliability.

In this chapter, three of the former members' accounts are declarative. William Burroughs published his critical reasons for leaving Scientology in a newspaper, magazine, and eventually a book; Jason Beghe put his departure account on the Internet; and Leah Remini wrote a book about her involvement in, then departure from, Scientology. Paul Haggis's departure account, however, is more difficult to categorize. Stuart Wright identified "overt departures" as ones categorized by quiet departures that occur after negotiations fail to resolve issues with organizational leaders.<sup>149</sup> Consequently, the leaders know about the deconversion, but the departing former member does not draw attention to it among outside parties. Haggis's deconversion shared characteristics with overt departures, but eventually he declared his reasons for leaving to the press. He had conducted an extensive e-mail correspondence with Scientology spokesperson Tommy Davis before he undertook the private fact-finding venture that eventually culminated in his departure, and he announced that departure in a final e-mail to Davis himself. Several days later, to a group of Scientologists on his front lawn who were trying to reconvert him, he agreed that he would not disseminate his e-mailed resignation any further. However, another vocal ex-member, Marty Rathbun, already had a copy, and when Rathbun asked Haggis two months later if he could post his resignation e-mail on his blog, Haggis did not stop him, and it quickly went viral. Consequently, Haggis's deconversion contained elements of both overt and declarative departures, but certainly after his statement went public, he participated in media events that were critical of his former group.

As separate factors, intellectualism/intellectual doubts and psychological stress have correlated with deconversion from some mainstream religions,<sup>150</sup> but variations of both may help explain Beghe's deconversion. Gradually, he came to the conclusion that the courses did not work, to the extent that they did not bequeath special powers to Scientologists who reached various levels. After he was an OT, he had a nearly fatal car accident, which neither he nor his Scientology handlers thought was possible. One of his handlers, however, asserted that Beghe must have been in the presence of a Suppressive Person (causing some sort of magical power loss), which likely was a particular gay friend. Beghe did not accept the explanation,<sup>151</sup> and he noticed that the

continuing auditing courses were making him feel worse, not better and more empowered. Eventually he realized that the course claims and the auditing claims were magical, and he rejected them (and felt better being outside of Scientology's confines and concepts).

In addition to issues about *how* people deconverted, *why* they did so also are important to know. *Moral doubts* were central to Haggis's decision to both start questioning Scientology and then to leave. A moral doubt that he first had raised 10 months earlier with spokesperson Davis involved Scientology's position on gay rights. The name of the Church of Scientology of San Diego had appeared on an advertisement against gay marriages (California's Proposition 8), and Haggis was outraged. He demanded that Tommy Davis make a public statement saying that Scientology supported gay rights, but Davis refused, saying that the San Diego org's opposition had not attracted much notice, so it was better to leave it alone. When Haggis wrote his severance letter to Davis in August 2009, the first reason that he gave for his decision to leave was Davis's refusal to support gay rights.

Gay rights, however, was not the only issue that drove Haggis to resign from Scientology. While searching the Internet for information, Haggis found Scientology's responses to several high-level executives, and he realized that some of the material that current officials used to defend the organization came from the defectors' supposedly confidential confessional or auditing files. Specifically about one defector, Haggis charged, "You took Amy Scobee's most intimate admissions about her sexual life and passed them onto the press and then smeared them all over the pages [of] your newsletter!"<sup>152</sup> He expressed his moral outrage at the use of this confidential information by stating, "that kind of character assassination is unconscionable."<sup>153</sup>

Moral doubt about the lifestyles of either other members or leaders can motivate defection, as persons perceive others as hypocrites—people who say one thing but live another.<sup>154</sup> Hypocrisy is what Remini claimed to have seen during and around the Cruise/Holmes wedding. Any number of other issues could have initiated doubts about Scientology leading to defection: the "overwhelming" neglect that she has witnessed regarding Sea Org children in a nursery;<sup>155</sup> the operation of the Rehabilitation Project Force, which even included children;<sup>156</sup> Hubbard's prohibitions on thinking critically;<sup>157</sup> constant demands for financial contributions;<sup>158</sup> and so on. None of these issues drove her to defect or even to question seriously her involvement in Scientology. What finally drove her to leave was the extent to which Scientology's elites allowed themselves allegedly to commit adultery, drunkenness, sexual harassment in the context of inappropriate dancing, secrecy about a missing person, unacceptable resource misallocations (at least in her mind) toward Tom Cruise's lifestyle, obligatory social disconnections from Scientology-critical family and friends,

and constant reports against one another for alleged Scientology violations.<sup>159</sup> Subsequent to leaving Scientology, Remini was a contestant on the television show, *Dancing with the Stars*. She devised the idea of using her departure from Scientology as the basis for a dance routine, which she and her partner choreographed and performed. In it, she was a puppet to the puppetmaster, and the puppetmaster was what she called the “Church of Hypocrisy.”<sup>160</sup>

William Burroughs’s sense of Scientology hypocrisy was of an entirely different nature from either Haggis’s or Remini’s. In an era when youth were challenging what they considered to be unjust authority, Burroughs felt that Hubbard was creating a cult around himself—one that allowed no intelligent or critical questioning and that supported an array of conservative social and sexual values. To be sure, these were moral concerns, but they (except perhaps for one concerning authoritarianism) were rooted deeply in the cultural politics of the era. Burroughs’s abounding disdain for sec checks, however, certainly had parallels in complaint by two of the three other celebrities, and we will return to them shortly.

*Weakened social bonds* frequently appear as another factor in deconversion and they do, too, in Scientology apostate accounts, albeit in a way that is somewhat unique in existing academic literature. The general assumption in scholarship is that when individuals’ support networks of family and/or friends depart from or disintegrate within groups, the remaining individuals are more likely to leave than when those networks were strong.<sup>161</sup> Regarding Scientology, however, some members defected because they rejected Scientology policy that required them to disconnect from persons whom the organization determines is a Suppressive Person. Often, such persons were family or friends, as was the case with Haggis’s in-laws, with whom their daughter—his wife—broke off contact because of their Suppressive Persons designation. Haggis proclaimed that he found such disconnection orders “morally reprehensible.”<sup>162</sup> Jason Beghe told Haggis about being disconnected from Scientology friends after he left.<sup>163</sup> In Remini’s case, the final incident was when her handler told her that LRH (presumably through policy) was telling her to disconnect from her stepfather. In response, Remini exploded:

I’m not going to have a church tell me who I can and cannot talk to. That day is done. Where does it stop? What if my mother was an SP? Should I disconnect from my mother? Do you think I’d disconnect from anyone after the way you and the church have treated me?<sup>164</sup>

True to policy, almost all of Remini’s Scientology friends disconnected from her.<sup>165</sup>

The important variant to the contribution that weakened social bonds had to defecting Scientologists Haggis and Remini is that, after their doubts initially appeared, they broke from official policy and turned to the Internet. They went to sources who were outside the social bonds of Scientology for information. What they found (in terms of critical material) stunned them. After reading online Davis's rebuttals to critics, Haggis confessed that "I was left feeling outraged, and frankly, more than a little stupid."<sup>166</sup> After spending time on the Internet, a humbled Remini asked, "How could I have been blinded to the stories that the rest of the world knew?"<sup>167</sup> In these cases, doubting Scientologists loosened bonds with their group and reached into the forbidden world of Internet criticism. Inspired by the Internet, both doubters then spoke with Suppressive Persons, which meant further diminishing the social bonds with current members. They deliberately weakened social bonds in ways that allowed forbidden information and social contacts from the outside to reach them.

Beginning in late November 2016, Remini presented an eight-part television series on the A&E network in which she interviewed many people who claimed (like her) to have been victimized. After a Church of Scientology official attempted to block the shows by writing caustic letters to network officials about Remini, she responded with a legal demand for \$1.5 million in compensation and damages, which Scientology, in response, refused to pay.<sup>168</sup>

### **UNIQUE CONTRIBUTORS TO SCIENTOLOGY CELEBRITY DECONVERSIONS: RELENTLESS DONATION PRESSURE AND DISDAIN OF SECURITY CHECKS**

At least two activities that deconverting Scientologists mentioned as activities they had disliked in the group were the constant requests and demands for financial contributions and the obligation to undergo security checks. In and of themselves, neither of these activities was enough to make deconversion necessary, but both were ancillary reasons why people left. Both of these activities have parallels in some other high-demand groups, so it is likely that they play similar roles in deconversions in other contexts. Beghe, for example, complained that some auditors for upper-level courses cost \$1,000 an hour, and he had to use them for weeks.<sup>169</sup> Haggis reported that he spent \$100,000 on courses in addition to about the same amount to various Scientology causes, plus \$250,000 to the International Association of Scientologists. "The demands for money—'regging,' it's called in Scientology, because the calls come from the Registrar's Office—never stopped. Paul gave them money just to keep them from calling."<sup>170</sup> Remini, who donated millions of dollars to Scientology, said that she did so out of a "combination

of coercion and responsibility. When I heard from the church the causes my money was being put toward, I believed them," she indicated. Nevertheless, "[t]he church is relentless when it comes to fundraising and solicitation. The plea is always a variation on the same refrain: 'You've got to step up, because if you do it, people who are not contributing will start to. So you need to do this to save the planet.'"<sup>171</sup> In one instance, her business manager, who was a Scientologist, advised her against donating to a Scientology request because she did not have the money. The organization pulled in the business manager and put him through a sec check.<sup>172</sup>

When Remini went to Clearwater after the Cruise/Holmes wedding to do additional courses, instead she spent \$300,000 "on auditing to get reprogrammed."<sup>173</sup> Much of that money went toward paying for sec checks, in which her "auditor went at me for hours, days, weeks, then months. It was relentless—absolutely relentless as we went around and around on the same questions."<sup>174</sup> Despite the money that she paid, she never got to take the courses she had traveled to Clearwater to complete. In contrast, Burroughs's complaints about sec checks were that they were demeaning and insulting—a waste of time. While Burroughs was at Saint Hill, so many people were getting sec checked that a Scientologist had to deliver his in a broom closet. Sec checks, he felt, were one way that Hubbard was developing a cult a personality, and it sickened Burroughs.<sup>175</sup> In his 1970 critical publication on Scientology, Burroughs mistakenly stated that the organization had discontinued sec checks, but he was correct in identifying the continuing practice associated with sec checks—the assignment of "conditions" to members as indications of their relationship to the operation of Scientology. Negative conditions included the labels, "Nonexistence," "Liability," "Treason," and "Doubt" for people who had committed offenses against the organization, and people labeled as Liabilities had to wear grey rags around their arms.<sup>176</sup> He retorted, "Does Mr. Hubbard seriously expect mature scientists, artists, and professional men who have distinguished themselves in their respective fields to submit to this prep school nonsense?"<sup>177</sup>

Looking back on the four deconversion accounts summarized in the chapter, intellectual doubt and psychological strain, along with moral doubts about leaders and other members, can be factors in Scientology celebrity deconversions as they are with other groups. Issues around social isolation are complicated, because some of the celebrity defectors had to build some social distance between themselves and other Scientologists in order to undertake efforts to acquire critical information from the Internet and Suppressive Persons. For them, the issue was not that internal social bonds had weakened; it was that they had to loosen them in order to acquire (what for them was) new information. Almost all of the defectors disliked security checks and the

constant demand for donations, and these last two contributing factors may not have entered the academic literature on deconversion even though they likely also apply to some other high-demand subcultures.

At some point in the future there likely will be more declaratory celebrity deconversions or heretical exits, which will provide additional material for analysis. As I was completing an earlier draft of this article, author Tony Ortega revealed that Lisa Marie Presley was behind the distribution to various media of police reports and interviews indicating that David Miscavige had hired private detectives to follow his estranged father. As she hoped, the media she targeted produced stories about it. Ortega ended his piece cryptically, indicating, “our sources tell us she has more planned.”<sup>178</sup> Perhaps additional celebrities will be exiting the organization fairly soon.

## NOTES

1. Tilman Hausherr, “Celebrities in Scientology FAQ,” January 25, 1997, revised June 21, 2015, lists 70 Scientology celebrities, 21 Scientology celebrity rumored dabblers, and 21 former Scientologists. Andy Cush, “A Comprehensive Updated List of Every Celebrity Linked to Scientology,” April 2, 2015. Another is in a source that most serious academics avoid—Wikipedia—which lists 59 current Scientology celebrities, 26 former members, and 13 deceased members (Wikipedia, “List of Scientologists,” accessed February 28, 2016, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Scientologists](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Scientologists)).

2. Stephen Kent and Ashley Samaha, “Deconversion,” *Vocabulary for the Study of Religion*, Volume 1, A–E, ed. Robert A. Segal and Kocku von Stuckrad (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2015), 387–392.

3. Heinz Streib, “Deconversion,” *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, ed. Lewis Rambo and Charles Farhadian (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

4. Kent and Samaha, “Deconversion,” 387, quoted in Heinz Streib and Barbara Keller, “The Varieties of Deconversion Experiences: Contours of a Concept in Respect to Empirical Research,” *Archiv für Religionspsychologie/Archive for the Psychology of Religion* 26, no. 1 (2005): 191.

5. *Ibid.*, 388–389.

6. *Ibid.*, 389; based upon Stuart Wright, *Leaving Cults: The Dynamics of Defection* (Washington: Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, 1987), 25, 31, 38, 44, 46.

7. The definition of apostates that sociologist David Bromley offered is worth mentioning here: “The apostate role is thus defined as one that occurs in a highly polarized situation in which an organization member undertakes a total change of loyalties by allying with one or more elements of an oppositional coalition without the consent of the organization.” David G. Bromley, “The Social Construction of Contested Exit Roles: Defectors, Whistleblowers, and Apostates,” in David G. Bromley, ed., *The Politics of Religious Apostasy: The Role of Apostates in the Transformation of Religious Movements* (Westport: Praeger, 1998), 36.



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14. Tony Ortega, "How Lisa Marie Presley Became Scientology Leader David Miscavige's Worst Nightmare," *Underground Bunker*, April 21, 2016, <http://tonyortega.org/2016/04/21/how-lisa-marie-presley-became-scientology-leader-david-miscaviges-worst-nightmare/>.
15. David S. Wills, *Scientologist! William S. Burroughs and the "Weird Cult"* (United Kingdom: Beatdom Books, 2013), 57, 59.
16. *Ibid.*, 107.
17. Ted Morgan, *Literary Outlaw: The Life and Times of William S. Burroughs* (New York: Henry Holt, 1988), 440–441.
18. Wills, *Scientologist!*, 107, 109, 119.
19. *Ibid.*, 128–129.
20. *Advance Magazine*, "William Burroughs: Clear 1163," Issue 2 Volume 1, 1968, 5.
21. Burroughs quoted in *Ibid.*
22. Morgan, *Literary Outlaw*, 441.
23. For an academic discussion of security checks, see Susan Raine, "Surveillance in New Religious Movements: Scientology as a Case Study," *Religious Studies and Theology* (2009): 73–75.
24. *Ibid.*, 194–196.
25. L. Ron Hubbard, "The Only Valid Security Check," *Hubbard Communications Office Policy Letter*, May 22, 1961, in L. Ron Hubbard, *The Technical Bulletins of Dianetics and Scientology Volume IV, 1960–1961* (Copenhagen: Scientology Publications, 1976), 275–281 (capitalization in original).
26. Morgan, *Literary Outlaw*, 442.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Wills, *Scientologist!*, 144–145.
29. *Ibid.*, 147–149.
30. *Ibid.*, 152.
31. William Burroughs, *Ali's Smile, Naked Scientology*, 5th ed., 2000 (Bonn: Expanded Media Editions, 1972).
32. William Burroughs, "Burroughs on Scientology," *Los Angeles Free Press*, March 6, 1970, 33.

33. Ibid.
34. Wills, *Scientologist!*, 125.
35. Gordon Mustain, "Organization Electrodes: Open Letter to William Burroughs," *Los Angeles Free Press*, March 27–April 2, 1970, 29.
36. Burroughs, "Burroughs on Scientology," 41.
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39. Ibid.
40. Mary Sue Hubbard, "Mr. Burroughs, You're Wrong about My Husband," *Mayfair*, June 1970, 53.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. L. Ron Hubbard, "Orders of the Day," Vol. III, No. 96, April 6, 1970, 2.
44. L. Ron Hubbard, "A Reply to William Burroughs," *Mayfair*, August 1970, 6 (article reprint).
45. L. Ron Hubbard, "The War," *Executive Directive from L. Ron Hubbard*, November 29, 1968, 2.
46. [L. Ron Hubbard], "Confidential: Intelligence Actions; Covert Intelligence; Data Collection," CS-G [*Church of Scientology-Guardian*], Dec[ember] 2, 1969, 5.
47. Hubbard, "A Reply to William Burroughs," 4.
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49. L. Ron Hubbard, "Confessional Procedure," *Hubbard Communications Office Bulletin*, November 30, 1978, in L. Ron Hubbard, *The Technical Bulletins of Dianetics and Scientology*, Volume XII, 1978–1979 (Copenhagen: Scientology Publications, 1976), 245.
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51. Mary Sue Hubbard, "Mr. Burroughs, You're Wrong about My Husband," 53.
52. L. Ron Hubbard, "Department of Govt Affairs," *Hubbard Communications Office Policy Letter*, August 15, 1960, in *The Organization Executive Course*, Executive Division 7 (Los Angeles: Church of Scientology of California, 1974), 484 (capitals in original).
53. Burroughs, "Burroughs on Scientology," 33.
54. Ibid., 41.
55. Hubbard, "A Reply to William Burroughs," 3.
56. Ibid., 6.
57. L. Ron Hubbard, "Orders of the Day," Vol. III, No. 156, June 5, 1970.

58. William Burroughs, “. . . And a Final Word from William Burroughs,” *Mayfair*, August 1970, 6.
59. Wills, *Scientologist!*, 206.
60. Church of Scientology Celebrity Centre International, “Jason Beghe: Actor/Clear, Hubbard Basic Art Course Graduate,” *Celebrity Minor Issue 285* (1995): 14.
61. Church of Scientology Celebrity Centre International, “Jason Beghe,” *Celebrity Major Issue 303* (1997): 13; Kristi Wachter, “Jason Beghe and Scientology,” *Scientology Lies*, accessed March 13, 2016, <http://www.scientology-lies.com/faq/celebrities/jason-beghe.html>.
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66. *Ibid.*
67. *Ibid.*
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69. Tony Ortega, “Scientology’s First Celebrity Defector Reveals Church Secrets,” *Village Voice*, April 15, 2008, <http://www.villagevoice.com/news/scientologys-first-celebrity-defector-reveals-church-secrets-6391153>; Tony Ortega, “Scientology’s ‘Super Power Rundown:’ What Is It, Anyway?,” *Village Voice*, January 11, 2012, <http://www.villagevoice.com/news/scientologys-super-power-rundown-what-is-it-anyway-6700611>.
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77. PageSix.com, “Ex-Scientologist Rips Church,” April 16, 2008, <http://pagesix.com/2008/04/16/ex-scientologist-rips-church/>; Ortega, “Scientology’s First Celebrity Defector.”

78. Tony Ortega, “Jason Beghe Is Still Denouncing Scientology—This Time in Germany,” *Village Voice*, September 16, 2008.

79. Beghe, quoted in Lawrence Wright, *Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood, & the Prison of Belief*, 320–321. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013).

80. *Ibid.*, 321.

81. Lawrence Wright, “The Apostate: Paul Haggis vs. the Church of Scientology,” *New Yorker*, February 14 & 21, 2011, 6, 5, <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2011/02/14/the-apostate-lawrence-wright>.

82. *Ibid.*, 28.

83. Church of Scientology Celebrity Centre International, “Celebrity Interview of the Month, Executive Producer Paul Haggis,” *Celebrity* (1986): 7, 11.

84. *Ibid.*, 22.

85. Wright, “The Apostate,” 6.

86. *Ibid.*, 8. For a discussion of the security around the O.T. story, see Susan Raine, “Surveillance in New Religious Movements,” 86.

87. Wright, “The Apostate,” 14.

88. Hubbard’s official policy on disconnection stated, “The term ‘disconnection’ is defined as a self-determined decision made by an individual that he is not going to be connected to another. It is a severing of a communication line.” Several paragraphs later he added, “A Scientologist can become PTS [i.e., a potential trouble source] by reason of being connected to someone that is antagonistic to Scientology or its tenets. In order to resolve the PTS condition, he either HANDLES the other person’s antagonism . . . , or, as a last resort when all attempts to handle have failed, he disconnects from the person.” L. Ron Hubbard, “PTSness and Disconnection,” *Hubbard Communications Office Bulletin*, September 10, 1983, in L. Ron Hubbard, *The Organization Executive Course*, HCO Division, Volume 1 (Los Angeles: Bridge Publications, 1991), 1041–1044 (capitals in original).

89. Wright, “The Apostate,” 14–15.

90. Joe Childs and Thomas C. Tobin, “Scientology: The Truth Rundown, Part 1 of 3 in a Special Report on the Church of Scientology,” *Tampa Bay Times*, June 21, 2009, 1, <http://www.tampabay.com/specials/2009/reports/project/part1.shtml>.

91. Wright, “The Apostate,” 19. Haggis specifically mentioned the Exscientologykids.com website, created by David Miscavige’s niece, Jenna Miscavige Hill. Wright (“The Apostate,” 19) mentioned that she joined the Sea Org at 14, but her subsequent autobiography has her signing the billion year Sea Org contract at seven. See Jenna Miscavige Hill and Lisa Pulitzer, *Beyond Belief: My Secret Life Inside Scientology and My Harrowing Escape* (New York: William Morrow, 2013), 7–9.

92. Haggis, quoted in *Ibid.*, 19.

93. Paul Haggis to Tommy Davis, August 19, 2009, in “Paul Haggis Resigns from Church of Scientology,” October 23, 2009, <http://www.scientology-cult.com>

/declarations-of-independence/59-paul-haggis/158-paul-haggis-resigns-from-church-of-scientology.html.

94. In Alex Gibney, *Going Clear: Scientology and the Prison of Belief*, GC Productions, 2015, at around 1.44.00, Haggis indicated that the number of people on his lawn were ten.

95. The account in Gibney varies slightly from the account in Wright's initial article. Wright indicated that Haggis agreed not to disseminate the latter further (Wright, "The Apostate," 19.) In Gibney, *Going Clear*, Haggis indicated that he had sent copies of the letter to 25 other Scientologists and also to Marty Rathbun. He gave the impression that he did not agree to remain quiet about his discoveries.

96. Gibney, *Going Clear*.

97. Church of Scientology Celebrity Centre International, "Celebrity Interview with Leah Remini," 2002, 19.

98. Remini and Paley, *Troublemaker*, 6–11.

99. *Ibid.*, 13.

100. *Ibid.*, 15.

101. *Ibid.*, 17.

102. *Ibid.*, 24.

103. *Ibid.*, 25.

104. *Ibid.*

105. *Ibid.*, 27.

106. *Ibid.*, 28. For Hubbard's practice of overboarding Sea Org members as punishment, see Russell Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah: The True Story of L. Ron Hubbard* (New York: Henry Holt, 1987), 288, 292, 294, 295.

107. Remini and Paley, *Troublemaker*, 30.

108. *Ibid.*

109. *Ibid.*, 31.

110. *Ibid.*, 33.

111. *Ibid.*, 37.

112. *Ibid.*, 38–39.

113. *Ibid.*, 45–46.

114. *Ibid.*, 46–57.

115. *Ibid.*, 57–67.

116. *Ibid.*, 75.

117. Church of Scientology Celebrity Centre International, "Celebrity Interview of the Month: Leah Remini," *Celebrity Major Issue* 288 (1995): 12.

118. Remini and Paley, *Troublemaker*, 88–94.

119. *Ibid.*, 79, 96–99.

120. *Ibid.*, 101–103.

121. Church of Scientology Celebrity Centre International, "Celebrity Interview of the Month: Leah Remini," *Celebrity Issue* 342 (2002): 19.

122. *Ibid.*, 20–21.

123. *Ibid.*, 21.

124. *Ibid.*

125. Remini and Paley, *Troublemaker*, 121.

126. Ibid.
127. Ibid., 122–123.
128. Ibid., 124–125.
129. Ibid., 125–128.
130. Ibid., 136–137.
131. Ibid., 142.
132. Ibid., 137–148.
133. Ibid., 150. One action, for example, that got Remini in trouble was asking the wedding coordinator if she and her husband could sit next to Jennifer Lopez and her husband. What Remini did not realize until later was that, by changing tables, she was unable to promote Scientology to nonmembers who were sitting at her original location, and thereby she had committed a transgression. Ibid., 144.
134. Ibid., 151–152.
135. Ibid., 154–155.
136. Ibid., 157–158.
137. Ibid., 159.
138. Remini in Ibid., 159–160.
139. Ibid., 172–174, 178.
140. Ibid., 179.
141. Ibid., 180.
142. Ibid., 180–182.
143. Ibid., 182.
144. Ibid., 182–184.
145. Ibid., 184–188.
146. Ibid., 194.
147. Ibid., 390; based upon Wright, *Leaving Cults*, 72–73.
148. See Streib, “Deconversion,” 272.
149. Wright, *Leaving Cults*, 69–72.
150. Kent and Samaha, “Deconversion,” 388. For intellectualism and deconversion, see David Caplovitz and Fred Sherrow, *The Religious Drop-Outs: Apostasy among College Graduates* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1977), 182; Streib, “Deconversion,” 272. For psychological stress and deconversion, see Robert Wuthnow and Charles Y. Glock, “Religious Loyalty, Defection, and Experimentation Among College Youth,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 12, no. 2 (1973): 173–175; and Streib, “Deconversion,” 272 (on emotional suffering).
151. Ortega, “Scientology’s First Celebrity Defector,” 4.
152. Paul Haggis to Tommy Davis, August 19, 2009, in “Paul Haggis Resigns from Church of Scientology.”
153. Ibid.
154. Kent and Samaha, “Deconversion,” 389; see Streib, “Deconversion,” 272 (on moral criticism).
155. Remini and Paley, *Troublemaker*, 30.
156. Ibid., 37.
157. Ibid., 73.

158. Ibid., 121, 124.
159. Ibid., 134–155.
160. Ibid., 219.
161. Kent and Samaha, “Deconversion,” 389.
162. Paul Haggis to Tommy Davis, August 19, 2009, in “Paul Haggis Resigns from Church of Scientology.”
163. Wright, *Going Clear*, 321.
164. Remini and Paley, *Troublemaker*, 194.
165. Ibid., 214–217.
166. Paul Haggis to Tommy Davis, August 19, 2009, in “Paul Haggis Resigns from Church of Scientology.”
167. Remini and Paley, *Troublemaker*, 182.
168. Tony Ortega, “Leah Remini Demands \$1.5 Million from Scientology for Interfering with her A&E Series,” *The Underground Bunker*, November 22, 2016, <http://tonyortega.org/2016/11/22/leah-remini-demands-1-5-million-from-scientology-for-interfering-with-her-ae-series/>.
169. Ortega, “Scientology’s First Celebrity Defector.”
170. Wright, *Going Clear*, 216.
171. Remini and Paley, *Troublemaker*, 121.
172. Ibid., 204.
173. Ibid., 155.
174. Ibid., 151.
175. Wills, *Scientologist!*, 125.
176. Ibid., 14–15. Burroughs was not specific about what condition required people to wear the gray rag, but Hubbard’s biographer, Russell Miller, specified that it was people labeled “Liability.” See Miller, *Bare-Faced Messiah*, 251–252.
177. Burroughs, *Naked Scientology*, 15.
178. Tony Ortega, “How Lisa Marie Presley.”

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