

John's Worldly Ramblings



4.7

Woody Saves

Alternate titles: *The Scientologist Stare*
 From Enron to L. Ron
 Save Me, Xenu!
 Don't be Dark

Every unhappy person is unhappy in their own way. Happy people are all alike, especially Selfosophists, whose positive-thinking therapies make every day a beautiful day...

A few years ago I was watching “Larry King: Live” and he was interviewing Tom Cruise. (Personally, I don’t think Larry King is a real reporter, he’s just another talk show host along the lines of David Letterman, only not as charming. If you have any issues with me saying that, see if you can get your hands on the interview he did with Marlon Brando, which was wacky, but not nearly as wacky as the stuff I’ve been learning.) One of the subjects Cruise talked about was Scientology, which I never really knew much about, but in listening to Tom, it piqued my interest. He talked casually and in unspecific terms about how Scientology saved lives, how drug addicts were cured and how psychological illnesses were treated all without the use of drugs. Immediately you get the picture that it’s all bullshit, this is what I thought.

But then I pondered on it a little more and thought, “What if it were true?” It is possible, right? The power of the mind is intense, positive thinking doesn’t hurt, so can’t it help? Is there a way that Scientology can actually teach you how to develop your mind and cure you of something like a chemical dependency or a psychological trauma?

Incidentally, the success rate for alcoholics who try to quit drinking on their own is about five percent. The success rate of Alcoholics Anonymous is about five percent. So, basically, a person’s got to really want to quit. Maybe Scientology has the answers to unlock the doors to making you want to quit your addictions.

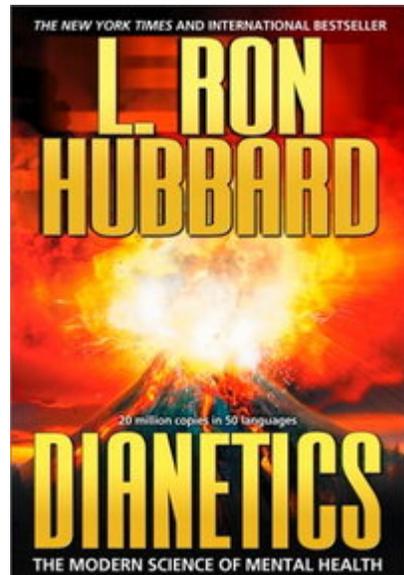
Well, I didn’t do anything about it, so here we are a few years after that interview. A number of things spurred this Rambling. I bought the second season of the show “Millennium” and there’s an episode called “Jose Chung’s Doomsday Defense” which centers on a writer who’s investigating a religious cult called “Selfosophy,” a direct, chillingly accurate parody of Scientology. It’s an uncharacteristic episode that is full of dark humor, but it reignited the inquisitive portion of my brain so commonly overshadowed by the erotic portion of my brain usually, typically concerned with Donkey Punches and Dirty Sanchezes. Another catalyst was Tom Cruise’s recent wacky behavior that can’t be avoided at any cost. “Ritalin is a street drug.” Wow. No kidding. So is morphine, but that has actual medical uses, as well. The final straw was Amazon.com. I love Amazon because of the customer reviews. Typically when I look for books, I’ll read the lowest rated reviews because if the things that bothered the reviewer I don’t think would bother me, the chances that I would like the book are good. One book I recently looked up was Dianetics because I still had no idea what it was. The positive reviews were all glowing and all said pretty much the same thing (obviously all written by Scientologists). The negative reviews were insane, filled with bits of information about Scientology and L. Ron Hubbard. They also said the book was terribly written and incredibly difficult to get through. One review in particular canned it for me; I had to find out more about Scientology.

A couple months ago Larry King was interviewing a pastor named Joel Osteen and his wife who said that as Christians they feel that they should avoid exposure to

things that go against their beliefs: music, movies, books. I, on the other hand, think you should intentionally expose yourself to learn about new things, experience things you've never done, see places you've never been—draw a tentative line where your own moral code says so. Read books, listen to music. I suppose, if you really, really wanted, you could interpret this as a form of “Do what thou wilt,” but that’s not accurate. It’s not based on any philosophy or belief. It’s based on freedoms granted to me as an American unaffiliated with any organization or belief system that would either lead me to believe or flat out tell me what I should or should not read or do. Not to mention the concept that knowledge is power. Right? I mean, it’s not, “Knowledge is power except for these books here... and this one... and those over there. Don’t read those because selective knowledge is power.”

Basically, if you are a Scientologist, stop reading right here because you’re not allowed to—Ron says so.

The cover of the book Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health features an image of a volcano erupting. This is something I remember from years ago when you’d see television commercials for Dianetics during “The People’s Court” or whatever. It never occurred to me that it had any real significance other than maybe the metaphor of an explosion of knowledge or something else equally tacky. But it means so much more, and theoretically, you wouldn’t know about it unless you were a committed Scientologist who spent years and thousands of dollars to reach the level where you’re told these secrets. But I’m getting ahead of myself...



Lafayette Ron Hubbard was born in 1911 in Nebraska, of all places. As near as I can figure, he was a dickhead from the moment he was born... and a pathological liar. He was also a racist: "They [the Chinese] smell of all the baths they didn't take. The trouble with China is, there are too many chinks here." Very Longshanks. He was also, quite literally, a psychopath and a hypocrite.

He had an odd career in the Navy where despite recommendations from a number of senior officers that he be given a position where he could be sufficiently supervised, he kept getting the opportunity to prove what a fuck up he was. During World War II he, for some reason, was in command of a trawler, and initiated an attack on an enemy submarine that Hubbard spotted off the Oregon coast. For more than two days his ship and another depth charged the area despite Hubbard being the only one who maintained that a sub was there. The crew of the other ship sustained three minor casualties and some damage from the activity. There was no sub. Shortly thereafter, the Navy got it right and Hubbard did not receive another command. He claimed illnesses and got out of the Navy with partial disability pay which he continually requested be increased and which he continued to receive until the day he died despite amassing a fortune of hundreds of millions of dollars.

Elron then (Elron was actually a pseudonym under which he published some of his pulp stories) got into the occult. He buddied up with one of master Satanist Aleister Crowley's pupils, Jack Parsons, in the States. Although they never met, Hubbard said Crowley was a dear friend of his. Hubbard actually swindled a good deal of money from Parsons and participated in a number of black magick rituals. Even a crazy fucker like Crowley could tell just by letters from Parsons that Hubbard was a nutcase and wanted nothing to do with him.

Scientologists, as it has so recently been pointed out, despise the use of drugs. However, Hubbard frequently used LSD, acid, marijuana, among other drugs throughout his life. There were periods when he existed on a diet almost exclusively of drugs, especially when he was cranking out some of his more... secret Scientology lessons.

There are rumors that Scientology was started as a result of a bet between Hubbard and Isaac Asimov or Kurt Vonnegut or R.A. Heinlein. This is an urban legend, but the truth is just as idiotic. Hubbard actually said, "Writing for a penny a word is ridiculous. If a man really wants to make a million dollars, the best way would be to start his own religion." Scientology evolved from and incorporates the "science" of Dianetics, which is based on elements of Buddhism, the occult, and early theories of Freud and Jung. I love the irony of Scientology being built on

abandoned theories of psychiatry's founding fathers while Scientology itself sees psychiatry as one of its greatest enemies—later lumping the clergy of Christianity in the same boat as psychiatrists. Hubbard claimed to have become blinded and crippled in the War and healed himself by using his Dianetic techniques. Hubbard did suffer from arthritis, a duodenal ulcer, bursitis, conjunctivitis and foot issues from before the War until his death. Scientology has maintained claims since it began in 1950 that it can cure all these ailments.

The history of how Scientology began and evolved is incredibly elaborate. I won't be going into much detail, but I'd recommend reading [A Piece of Blue Sky](#) by Jon Atack, which is available as a free download on a number of websites. But it all starts with a promise: Scientology promises to do what you need it to do whether it be to make you smarter, cure depression, teach you to learn faster, rid yourself of chemical dependencies, or heal your ailments (including arthritis, cancer, etc.—seventy percent of all ailments are psychosomatic and curable through Dianetics). And it can do all this by removing engrams, or early memories, which are actually the cause of your pains. Let's say something traumatic happened to you long ago and at the time a car's horn was blaring, it was raining, your shoes were wet and you had gas. Later in life, the blaring of a horn might not activate this engram and make you feel bad, but perhaps the horn and one too many tacos at lunch would and the result might be a toothache. Scientology gets rid of those engrams through a process the call Auditing.

While Auditing, an E-meter is used, also known as an Electropsychometer, which is actually a device used in lie detectors. The person being audited holds electrodes in his hands and is asked questions; his responses register on the E-meter. In dealing with an incident, the auditor asks about the beginning of the incident, registers the response on the E-meter and then asks the subject to remember a similar, earlier experience, and then to go earlier and earlier. Originally this was intended to help recall memories from the womb (an early psychological theory—actually engrams are, as well as the ability to remember womb experiences), but then subjects were able to go into past lives, and eventually, lives (I shit you not) quadrillions of years in the past. When the initial instance is eventually found, it's

relieved, the subject is supposed to have an experience about the effect upon him and biggity-bam, he's free of the effects of the engram chain. Plus, no more shit stains in my undies. Sounds stupid? Fuckin' right. But imagine Vincent Vega holding onto E-meter electrodes trying to find the cause of and solution to his goddamn bunions.

Nothing in Scientology is free. Auditing costs money. Lots of money, and you're expected to do lots of it, especially if you want to become what they call a "Clear," someone devoid of all engrams. And you totally want to do that because engrams are hella bad news, which you'll find out about soon. First, there are eight "Release Grades" to go through, then on to the "Clearing Grades" (when you become a Clear), then the secretive "OT grades" (of which there are at least eight at this point—the eighth was released shortly after Elron's death in '86).

Anyways, Ron wanted to make shitloads of cash. He did right off the bat. Scientology was incorporated in '53. A banner year was '72 when more than 30 million dollars was funneled to his personal accounts from the various Scientology churches and organizations, but their target for the year was 80 million.

Despite making enemies of the CIA, AMA, IRS and multiple governments around the world, L. Ron was arrested only once, early in his Scientology career. He officially resigned from Scientology in the 1960s as the head of it's power structure to avoid implication in legal problems lobbed at his organization, but was clearly in charge up until just prior to his death through various internal organizations that often overthrew internal organizations Hubbard himself had previously set up. His paranoia of all those around him often was the reason for these power shifts. The typical members of Scientology often had little or no knowledge of the political struggles that periodically wracked the church/science but were subject to pricing increases and were thrown when former leaders were kicked out of the group. Members of the church were told not to read negative things about Scientology or Hubbard. And you had to obey. If a member did something against the wishes of the organization or certain high-ranking members, they could be punished severely or labeled "Suppressive," which was banishment from the church and its members. Scientologists were ordered not to speak with any Suppressives; in a number of

cases, divorces occurred because a spouse was declared Suppressive and families were separated if a child or parent was declared Suppressive. If you were caught communicating with a suppressive, you yourself could become one. In a line from the eerily accurate episode of "Millennium": "Selfosophy has the legal right to cut me off from my beliefs, from my friends... from everything."

Scientology gets its hard on from suing. L. Ron himself wrote: "The law can be used very easily to harass, and enough harassment on somebody who is simply on the thin edge anyway... will generally be sufficient to cause his professional decease. If possible, of course, ruin him utterly." Scientology brings about frivolous lawsuits against people, agencies, governments or publications for libel, slander, copywrite infringement, disclosure of secrets, whatever it can dream up to keep its secrets secret and to harass and tie up its enemies. Again from the awesome "Millennium":

Heh-heh, that is a very perceptive point, Detective, but our therapeutic techniques are patented for that very reason. If a disgruntled ex-member tries to make them public, we would simply sue that person to the fullest extent, but in full accordance with the law. Heh-heh, furthermore, just because your suspect might "coincidentally" be a Selfosophist, I don't think it's fair to place Selfosophy itself under suspicion. In fact, if you continue to do so, we may have to regard this harassment as a form of discrimination, and sue to the fullest extent, but in full accordance with the law.

One guy was sued eighteen times by Scientology, as of 1990. No bullshit.

I've never seen a black Scientologist. I don't think there are any. Scientology also doesn't want homosexuals, Communists, journalists or the mentally deranged in their midst. Scientology's goal is to "make the able more able." Hubbard has some fucked up theories about the Zulu tribe in Dianetics where he says that if they were taught English they would give up their savage ways.

New Scientology members are taught how to lure people off the streets into an auditing session by asking a series of simple questions like, "What would you most like to be?" Eventually they introduced themselves as a Scientologist and deflected negative comments with diversionary tactics:

"Didn't the Australians ban Scientology?"

"Where did you hear that?"

"In a newspaper."

“Well, you can’t believe the newspapers, can you?”

This craziness worked quite often. Then they try to find out what a person’s problem is and promise that a Scientology course can solve the problem.

During the course of being taught how to deal with people, other lessons are given in diction and in becoming immune to bullying tactics of someone pushing “hot buttons.” In these lessons they are also taught what I call the Scientologist Stare. You saw it from Tom Cruise during his interview with Matt Lauer when he talked about Ritalin: his concentration was on Lauer and he was not thrown by his reactions. This Scientologist stare is the look on a person’s face that is convinced they are absolutely and unequivocally right and you need to see it, too. (This type of stare is not limited to Scientologists; lots of religious folk can wear it.)

At some point, Scientology decided to call itself a religion instead of a science. Just to be clear, Dianetics is a self-proclaimed science. It is based on out of date (even at the time of it’s initial publication) scientific theories and shit Elron just made up, just like the rest of Scientology. It claims to be scientific fact, but provides absolutely no data, experiments, research or proof other than baseless claims. Funny thing about an institution as opposed to a religion is that in an institution, you can keep things private. You can sign non-disclosure agreements. Religions are different, there’s no reason for that. But religious organizations don’t pay taxes, thank god. And Scientologists still sue and sue and sue people who try to make public their secret documents and practices.

Ron was an extremely prolific writer with a peculiar style. In addition to his scientific/religious bibliography, he was also something of an accomplished science fiction writer. His fiction is littered with references to Scientology and inventive language many have trouble getting through. The most consistent criticism of Hubbard’s fiction is his massacre of the English language. Scientologists routinely buy multiple copies of Hubbard’s books so they show up on the best-sellers lists.

Despite the claim that Scientology is based on science, there is no actual data proving any of it. Despite claims that engrams cause your problems, there is no proof of that. Despite Tom Cruise saying he personally helped cure drug addicts of

their addictions, there is no proof of that. Making a claim is one thing, proving it is something entirely different.

People believe in auditing. Auditing has directly caused the deaths of unknown numbers of Scientologists who wasted their time trying to rid their minds of the engrams that caused cancer and other diseases. In the event you were unaware, memories don't cause cancer, bad cells do. And those cells don't get to be bad because of negative memories.

After someone is deemed a Clear, there are additional levels they can aspire to called OT Levels, or Operating Thetan. A thetan is an immortal spiritual being that has lived past lives and hold memories from that life. Most of the OT Levels are lame and uninteresting, with the exception of two: 3 and 8.

Scientology members are exposed to the truth of level OT3, which takes years and tens of thousands of dollars to reach. What follows is actually what OT3 is, it's been written up in various publications and entered into court testimony and evidence from Scientology's own publications. Get ready to have you mind blown:

75 million years ago, Xenu was the ruler of a Galactic Confederacy that consisted of 26 stars and 76 planets including Earth, which was then known as Teegeeck. The planets were overpopulated, each having on average 178 billion people. The Galactic Confederacy's civilization was comparable to our own, with people "walking around in clothes which looked very remarkably like the clothes we wear this very minute" and using cars, trains and boats looking exactly the same as those "circa 1950, 1960" on Earth.

Xenu was about to be deposed from power, so he devised a plot to eliminate the excess population from his dominions. With the assistance of "renegades," he defeated the populace and the "Loyal Officers," a force for good that was opposed to Xenu. Then, with the assistance of psychiatrists, he summoned billions of people to paralyze them with injections of alcohol and glycol, under the pretense that they were being called for "income tax inspections." The kidnapped populace was loaded into space planes for transport to the site of extermination, the planet of Teegeeck (Earth). The space planes are described in detail and look exactly like DC-9 airplanes without the engines.

When the space planes had reached Teegeeack, the paralyzed people were unloaded and stacked around the bases of volcanoes across the planet. Hydrogen bombs were lowered into the volcanoes, and all were detonated simultaneously. Only a few people's physical bodies survived. (This, by the way, is the meaning behind the volcano on the cover of Dianetics, which became the cover art only after OT3 was released, i.e.: after Hubbard made it up.)

The now-disembodied victims' souls, which Hubbard called thetans, were blown into the air by the blast. They were captured by Xenu's forces using an "electronic ribbon" and sucked into "vacuum zones" around the world. The hundreds of billions of captured thetans were taken to a type of cinema, where they were forced to watch a "three-D, super colossal motion picture" for 36 days. This implanted what Hubbard termed "various misleading data" into the memories of the hapless thetans, "which has to do with God, the Devil, space opera, etcetera." This included all world religions, with Hubbard specifically attributing Roman Catholicism and the image of the Crucifixion to the influence of Xenu. The interior decoration of "all modern theaters" is also said by Hubbard to be due to an unconscious recollection of Xenu's implants. The two "implant stations" cited by Hubbard were said to have been located on Hawaii and Las Palmas in the Canary Islands.

In addition to implanting new beliefs in the thetans, the images deprived them of their sense of identity. When the thetans left the projection areas, they started to cluster together in groups of a few thousand, having lost the ability to differentiate between each other. Each cluster of thetans gathered into one of the few remaining bodies that survived the explosion. These became what are known as body thetans, which are said to be still clinging to and adversely affecting everyone except those Scientologists who have performed the necessary steps to remove them.

Get it? This is what Scientology is actually all about: ridding yourself of murdered alien souls whose deaths and post-death conditioning were so horrible that they affect you to this day!

The Loyal Officers finally overthrew Xenu and locked him away in a mountain, where he was imprisoned forever by a force field powered by an eternal

battery. (Some have suggested that Xenu is imprisoned on Earth in the Pyrenees, but Hubbard merely refers to "one of these planets" in the Galactic Confederacy; he does, however, refer to the Pyrenees as being the site of the last operating "Martian report station," which is probably the source of this particular confusion. Duh.) Teegeeack/Earth was subsequently abandoned by the Galactic Confederacy and remains a pariah "prison planet" to this day, although it has suffered repeatedly from incursions by alien "Invader Forces" since then.

Scientologists don't actually deny the accounts of Xenu but claim they are pulled out of context and published for the purpose of ridiculing their religion. Journalists and critics of Scientology counter that Xenu is part of a much wider Scientology belief in alien past lives, some of which has been public knowledge for decades. For instance, Hubbard's 1958 book Have You Lived Before This Life documents past lives as described by individual Scientologists during auditing sessions. These included incidents such as being "deceived into a love affair with a robot decked out as a beautiful red-haired girl," being run over by a Martian bishop driving a steamroller, being transformed into an intergalactic walrus which perished after falling out of a flying saucer and being "a very happy being who strayed to the planet Nostra 23,064,000,000 years ago".

So that's the story behind OT3. OT Levels 4 through 7 provide more of the same, auditing procedures that rid you of the thetans but without the dazzling story.

OT8 was released after Hubbard's death in 1986. The secrets of OT8 are only divulged at sea on a Scientology vessel. OT8 is still steeped in mystery, but from what I can find there are two main points of interest: Hubbard's death is explained by saying that he is leaving the confines of his body to continue his work on the levels of OT beyond 8 before returning to Earth in the form of a politician, and that Jesus Christ was a pedophile and a homosexual with a bad temper. Additional rumors that it is divulged that Hubbard is god can't be confirmed.

JOSE CHUNG is seated at a table writing on a tablet, interviewing a young man, JOSEPH P. RATFINKOVICH, who is speaking animatedly. He has the earnest and hopelessly converted look of a religious nut.

JOSE (Voiceover) ... Until I reentered the story.
And it's about time! You see, while
conducting this research, I was contacted
by a recent Ratfinkovich, who, in one of
those coincidences found only in real life
and great fiction, actually was named
Ratfinkovich: Joseph P. Ratfinkovich.
And he promised to reveal to me the
never-before, disclosed secret behind
Selfosophy ...

RATFINKOVICH (pausing dramatically)
Goopta ... is God.

JOSE That's it? To find out the ultimate
revelation of Selfosophy is that "It's
God!" -- a guy who invented the damned
thing -- is not really much of a "Wow," is
it?

RATFINKOVICH Actually, the "Wow" can
lead you to near-spiritual happiness --
away from despair, depression ... (with
upturned nose) And even flippancy.

JOSE Please, I assure you that I regard this
subject with the utmost respect and
seriousness. (solemnly) You have my
word as a writer.

We see Jose jot down, "Nutball."

Despite Hubbard's death, Scientology is still a fucked up organization whose
current leader, David Miscavige, shoots photos of people he considers his enemies
with a .45 automatic.

Surprisingly, Scientologists don't leave when they learn about OT3. It seems
most Scientologists are forced out by being declared Suppressive or leave after
encountering Scientology's upper echelon of governance who demand more and
more money, make demands that stray from what are perceived as Hubbard's ideals
and impose totalitarian rules and regulations. Many excommunicated Scientologists
formed or joined up with groups that practice Scientology outside the official canon

of The Church of Scientology. These groups are known as “squirrels” and are seen as perhaps Scientology’s greatest enemies.

When Scientologists are confronted with the truth of OT3, they believe it and work to rid themselves of body thetans. How could anyone believe a story like that? Scientology is a brainwashing cult. If you brainwash a particular type of person, perhaps someone who is depressed and believes that learning how to get rid of bad memories will relieve their depression, you can get them to believe anything over time.

Scientology is a religion; let’s give them that. It’s belief system is based on disprovable conjecture and faith-based stories that do not change despite new and changing evidence and empirical data. Scientology doesn’t like the gays, not even lesbians. (Imagine not liking lesbians.) Scientology recruits. Scientology is persecuted. Scientology demands tithes. Scientology attacks other religions. Scientology claims things that cannot be disproved as proof and ignores the things that can be proven contrary to their beliefs. Scientology promises more than the physical world has. I think that’s the real purpose of religion: to tell us there’s something else beyond the obvious. Right, wrong or indifferent, all I’m saying is religions, at their most boiled down, provide a hope and a goal and Scientology isn’t an exception.

Should a Scientologist ever approach me, I’ve given some thought to what I should do. Large parts of me want to actually kick the shit out of the first one I meet. A number of violent reactions sound good, but would invariably result in a lawsuit or lawsuits where I would be prosecuted to the fullest extent, but in full accordance with the law. Rather, I feel the best way to confront a Scientologist would be to take a step back from them, point directly at their face and repeatedly scream “SUPPRESSIVE!” It’s practically guaranteed to make them run away. And if I ever meet Tom Cruise, I’ll shake his hand, tell him how much I enjoy most of his movies and ask him to tell me about Xenu.

I’ve decided that I like researching religions provided they include bad science fiction in some way. I guess next I’ll tackle Zoroastrianism which believes people are born either good or evil and engage in a cosmic spiritual war, or

Mormonism where John Smith found a different version of the Bible written on gold tablets that no one but him saw buried in North America in the 1800s and read it out loud while it was placed inside a hat to a guy who wrote down what he read to form the holy scriptures of the Mormon Church.

I'll believe that when my shit turns purple and smells like rainbow sherbet.

JOSE The Selfosophist psycho finally confronts the writer, killing him. The police give chase, but because he keeps a positive attitude: "I can get away, if I think I can get away," he gets away.

FRANK That's very downbeat.

JOSE Life is downbeat, Monsieur Noir.

John