

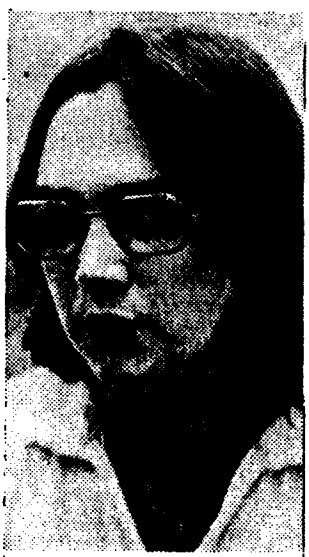
Ex-Scientologists express bitterness

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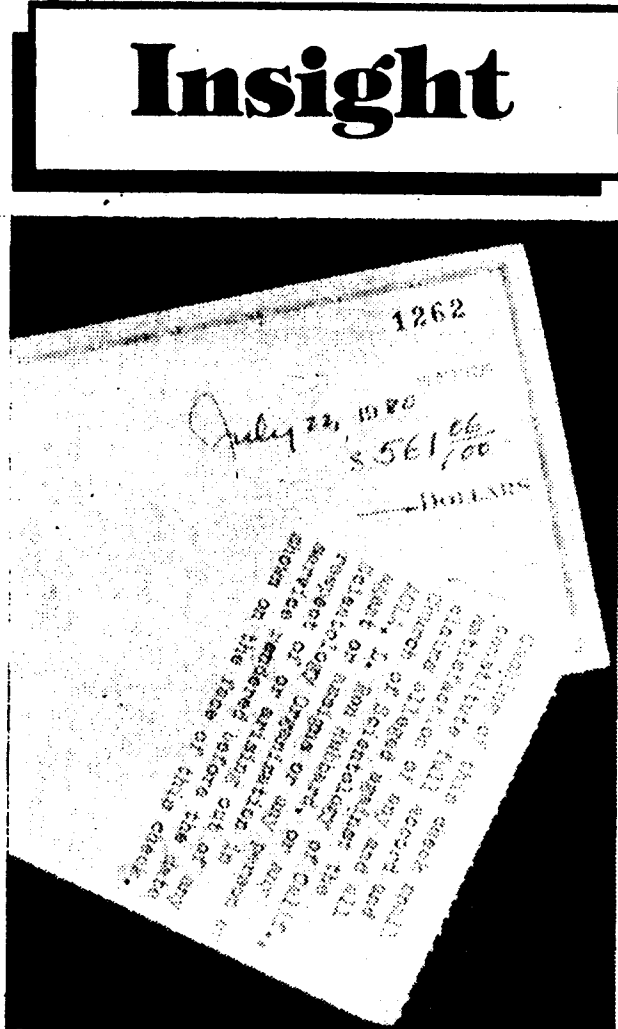
Insight



CAROL GARRITY
...humiliated



J. PETERSON
...embarrassed



STRING ATTACHED — When Carol Garrity left the Church of Scientology she requested and received all the money she still had on account at the church. The check she received, however, had a stipulation on the back that she could not agree with. Her lawyer is now researching ways to cash the check and render the notation on the back meaningless.

R-J photo

The Church of Scientology of Nevada

DISBURSEMENT VOUCHER

To: Andrew Boone

DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	CHECK NO.	BANK	BALANCE
July 22, 1980	Weekly pay	1.20			
July 29, 1980	Weekly pay	2.45			
Aug 5, 1980	Weekly pay	1.09			
TOTAL		4.74			

No. 06816

WEEKLY PAY - Andrew Boone kept receipts. Lots of them. His receipts give a black-and-white account of the financial life of a Scientology staff member. Shown above are sample receipts of his weekly pay. Boone became involved with the church in 1977, but left three weeks ago when four other high level Scientologists defected from the local

church. They were Carol Garrity, the top spokesman for the Church in Nevada, Utah and Arizona, and her husband, Paul, the treasurer of the local church; and Janie and Dick Peterson, two of the highest trained church counselors in the Valley.

R-J photos

By Sherm Frederick
R-J City Editor

Carol Garrity and Dick and Janie Peterson don't call Scientology a church anymore.

After dropping about \$40,000 in five years into church courses and training, they left the church three weeks ago disillusioned, angry and humiliated.

Is Scientology a church?

"No!" they answer.

"You never hear mention of God or any praying," Dick Peterson said of the church that won tax-exempt status only after a 19-year court battle with the IRS.

"It doesn't operate like a church," Garrity added. "It's run like a business. They (church members) run covert operations on people. That's not a church. I mean a church is where you go to get help."

Garrity and the Petersons occupied high positions in the Las Vegas church before they defected.

The Petersons were two of the highest trained church members locally; Janie was a former president of the board of the church and Garrity was the top spokesman for the church in Nevada, Utah and Arizona.

"I feel real embarrassed; I couldn't believe I was so stupid," Janie Peterson said.

"Now I just want to get moving in the right direction. I've been off track for five years."

Garrity, who spent most of her time trying to foster good public relations for the church, now thinks the church employs a form of brainwashing in maintaining its members.

"I think it is a highly sophisticated technique of programming," she said.

"You start out in Scientology and you do find some good things, but I found that the upper levels had me ... feeling very different and alienated from normal, everyday people."

Since Scientology drills "always work," you are made to believe something is wrong with you if you doubt the technology, she said.

"What you think is what L. Ron Hubbard (Scientology founder) writes in his policy statements. If you disagree then they tell you you have 'misunderstood' because Hubbard can't be wrong."

For example, Dick Peterson detailed two experiences in his training.

"When you get to (one upper level) you're supposed to be able to leave your body and read books and turn pages. You can also control another person's body and enter the bodies of cats and dogs."

One of the exercises a student is supposed to do is leave his body and find someone on vacation and order them to send the student a post card.

Later, "I asked a lot of (persons who went through the level) if they ever received their postcards and they said, 'Hell no.'"

"I was in such a mental state then that I actually thought I was doing it. You think it occurs, and if it doesn't you think something is wrong with you," Dick said.

In another level, students are taught there are invisible beings called Body Thetans in and attached to a person's body. Through auditing (a counseling process) the Body Thetans are sent away.

"When all the BTs are out of you, you then go on to another course where you learn there are still more BTs that have to be audited out," Dick said.

After leaving Scientology, remembering Body-Thetan and cat-

control exercises make Garrity and the Petersons laugh. But the smiles disappear when the subject of how much it costs to take Scientology training is mentioned.

In five years, Garrity spent about \$10,000 at the church. Janie Peterson spent about \$12,000 and her husband sunk in about \$18,000.

Beginning courses only cost about \$10. But the more advanced a student gets, the more it costs. Other basic courses usually cost about \$100.

But the advanced training costs about \$3,500 a level, they said. And then a new course called New Era Dianetics, which was only introduced recently, costs about \$20,000.

All through the course progression, members buy counseling time — called auditing. The auditing, which is done with the aid of a machine called an E-Meter, costs about \$3,500 a week (about 12 1/2 hours of counseling).

The E-Meter, an invention of founder Hubbard, is made up of two tin cans attached to a gauge by a wire. The student holds the cans and answers ques-

tions from the auditors, who supposedly are then able to detect problems with the student through the E-Meter and correct them.

Many Las Vegans become involved in the Church of Scientology when they answer a personality questionnaire bulk-mailed to area zip codes.

When a person fills out the questionnaire, he is later called and asked to come to the church to have his personality analyzed.

Once inside, church members identify a flaw in the individual's personality and push a course they claim will correct the problem. Those courses usually cost about \$5-10, Garrity said.

Dick said his "flaw" was a fear of dying. So he took the inexpensive basic courses and progressed all they way up through the highest and most expensive course offered locally in hope of solving it.

Five years and \$18,000 later, Dick found his fear of dying "never got handled." Although he does not fear dying as much now as before, he said, overall "I'm much worse off than I ever was when I got in."

Because of the ex-

pense involved with Scientology, zealous members take out loans to pay for courses. Others sell their worldly goods and become staff members.

Garrity said she sold her house and car and put it on account at the church when she went on staff. The not-so-unusual move enabled her to pay for the training she desired and still exist on the meager salary paid a staff member.

As the top spokesman for the church in three states, Garrity was paid anywhere from nothing to \$30 per week. "Usually about \$10 a week," she said.

Vaughn Young, a spokesman for the church from Los Angeles, took issue with allegation Scientology courses are too expensive.

"I agree it takes a lot of money," he said, but added Garrity and the Petersons are "obviously dissatisfied" and drew an analogy between paying for Scientology courses and paying for college.

"There are people that wouldn't give you a dime for a college education. Others will hock their house to go," he said.

In addition, he said if Garrity and the Petersons desire any or all of the money back they spend on church

courses and training, they can have it.

Concerning the feelings that Scientology can't deliver what it promises, Young said, "There are thousands of people who would disagree with the three or four in Las Vegas and they are clearly outvoted."

He also called Dick Peterson's comments about the specifics of his upper-level training in "bad taste."

He likened it to "the sort of thing you'd find in Ireland" where a Protestant might make a cruel joke about the Roman Catholic religion and a Roman Catholic might make a cruel joke about the Protestant religion.

And about the question of whether Scientology is a church, it is a religion "without a doubt," Young said. "Even the IRS says it is."

Garrity and the Petersons were into Scientology just about as deeply as one can get. Why did they get out?

All three, in different words, said they simply woke up and saw Scientology as a business, not a church.

"I started to take a look at what I got out of Scientology and saw that I really didn't get what I was supposed to get out of it," Janie said.

"We figured Ron (Hubbard) was nuts," her husband said.

An aggressive proponent of Scientology who often tried to stop newspapers from printing negative stories about the church, Garrity succinctly described how she now feels:

"Humiliated."