

### Son Of Scientology

He's the son of the founder of the controversial church he now calls a dangerous cult. For a look inside Scientology, see story below.



# Son of Scientology

by Dennis Wheeler

He's been called the Son of Scientology.

His name has been changed from L. Ron Hubbard, Jr., to Ron DeWolf, and he's the firstborn son of the former science fiction writer who founded the Church of Scientology. It's been 23 years since he's seen his father, and he suspects that the founder of what many people call a destructive cult may, in truth, be dead.

"To be perfectly frank, my life's been pretty much of a disaster and a miserable mess because of Scientology — and you can quote me on that," he told the *News-Herald* recently in an exclusive interview.

At the age of 48, DeWolf still has the startling red hair that characterized his father. He lives with his wife and youngest son in Carson City, Nevada; five other children are grown and live elsewhere.

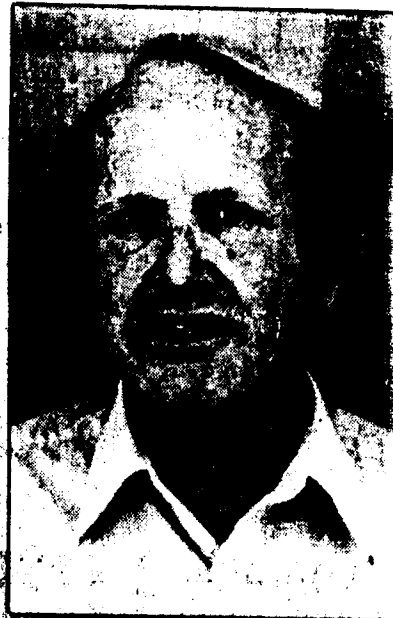
While the "DeWolf" family may seem relatively normal, the Hubbard family was far from typical, says DeWolf.

His version of his father's life, in fact, is radically different from that painted by the Church. Scientology publications portray the senior Hubbard as an idealistic young man who traveled the world in search of truth — an explorer, writer, filmmaker, soldier, and humanitarian, highly educated and eager to eliminate the ills of modern society.

But DeWolf flatly says: "Better than 90 percent of what my father has written about himself is untrue." He tells harrowing tales of his own childhood, recalling how during World War II "my father used to mix phenobarbital with bubble gum and give it to me and my sister — I remember the darn stuff was very bitter. Then he would tell us stories, great stories, but I could never remember him finishing a lot of them. He would feed us the bubble gum, then try to put us in hypnotic trances in order to create what he called a 'moonchild.'"

This, says DeWolf, stemmed from his father's continual interest in black magic and the occult. DeWolf himself was born prematurely, weighing two pounds, two ounces, and he now tells people, "I wasn't exactly *born*, I was aborted. He was trying to do an abortion bit on me. He had one of these insane things, especially during the '30s, of trying to invoke the devil for power and practices. My mother told

The father started a church which the son calls a dangerous cult. An inside look at Scientology through the eyes of an early leader.



me about him trying out all kinds of various incantations, drugs and hypnosis...His initials for it were PDH — pain, drugs, hypnosis. The use of PDH, coupled with black magic, was an effective form of brainwashing or mind control. You'll see throughout early Scientology literature, 'PDH.'"

DeWolf also describes his father as a wife-beater. "He used to beat her up quite often. He had a violent, volcano-type temper, and he smacked her around quite a bit. I remember in 1946 or 1947 when he was beating up my mother one night. I had a .22 rifle and I sat on the stairway with him in my sights, and I almost blew his head off."

Then, in 1950 when DeWolf was 18, the senior Hubbard wrote the phenomenal best-selling book which gave birth to the Church of Scientology, *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*. The book, according to its publishers, documented the results of Hubbard's intensive

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research on roughly 280 "case histories." But DeWolf says, "All were subcreated by Dad. None of them were case histories whatsoever; they were done strictly out of his mind, sitting at a typewriter in a few weeks' time."

Nevertheless, soon after the book's publication, "Dianetics Foundations" were set up in order to allow people to buy "dianetic auditing," or counseling. DeWolf received auditing in Seattle, but his father refused to let him tell his auditors his true identity — which, DeWolf points out with a laugh, "makes it rather impossible to receive any auditing if it's being done under an assumed name and you can't reveal 99 percent of your past...One day I got tired of it, and told one of the auditors who I was. You would have thought the poor girl went into cardiac arrest...That was my first taste of being what later I used to refer to laughingly as 'the great red godlet.'"

Hubbard's relation to his father allowed him to rise rapidly in the world of Dianetics, and he was one of the original incorporators of the very first Church of Scientology in New Jersey in 1954. Later he became the chief instructor of advanced clinical courses both in England and the United States, delivering many of his lectures, he says, off the top of his head while stoned on drugs. "Also later on, I became Executive Secretary, which meant that I was the head of Scientology in the United States."

DeWolf says he was present at the 1954 convention of Scientologists in Arizona at which his father fired a pistol into the floor, thus allegedly demonstrating the process called "R245" — shooting a "Suppressive Person" in the head. "I thought he was kidding and that it was a blank, but it wasn't; there was a hole in the floor. It was for real; he meant it."

During the '50s, DeWolf continues, he conned people out of their money, used black magic, distributed drugs, and took advantage of the Church's female followers, participating in private orgies with his father and three or four women. "His theory was that one has to open or crack a woman's soul in order for the satanic power to pour through it and into him," DeWolf said in a recent magazine interview. "It got kind of far out, culminating in a variety of sex acts. Dad also had an incredibly violent temper. He was into S&M and would beat his mistresses and shoot them full of drugs." His father used amphetamines and cocaine, DeWolf says, plus some hallucinogens.

The women serving L. Ron Hubbard, says his son, "were very good at doing the dirty work, at running money or drugs back and forth. They were very good at getting blackmail on people. They were very good in any of the dirty-tricks department, because they had absolutely totally slavish devotion to L. Ron Hubbard."

Current members of Scientology may be horrified at these stories of the early days of their church, especially since the tales are told by the actual son of the sect's founder. And DeWolf himself admits that the drug abuse and black magic rites "weren't necessarily in the Scientology hierarchy, not at the top of the pyramid but more like side-by-side with it. You could be a Scientology leader and not know anything about it."

In 1959, DeWolf abruptly left the Church. The defection, he says, was prompted by his wife, Henrietta, whom he'd always shielded from Scientology. "She's terribly patient and loses her temper maybe once every five years — and if she ever does, the whole universe shakes," says DeWolf with a grin. "Anyhow, she just flatly said to me one day, 'Make your choice — me or Scientology,' and she really meant it. Perhaps because of my own childhood, my

family was very important to me. So one weekend I just threw a letter in the mailbox and left, to drive cross-country to Los Angeles. Then on January 3, 1960, my father sent me a telegram saying he was going to have me arrested for theft of a mailing list and money — that he was going to 'crush' me, and that I'd better run and hide or he would find me and destroy me." Later, however, father and son were more amiable and exchanged correspondence, although they never saw each other again.

Life outside Scientology was "terrible" at first, says DeWolf: "I didn't know how to make a living — except for being a god." Since 1959, though, he's held a variety of jobs, currently as an apartment manager and before that in the security division of a casino/hotel.

Scientology officials now sometimes claim that DeWolf denounces his famous father only to gain publicity for himself and to promote the book he's writing. DeWolf, however, claims that in the past 23 years since leaving the cult, he's received only \$6,300 related to Scientology "from both sides of the fence."

And not all professionals in the "anti-cult" field trust DeWolf. Scientology officials, while reluctant to admit DeWolf's very existence, when faced with his accusations distribute a transcript of a videotape which DeWolf made in 1972. On tape, DeWolf says he had no personal knowledge of any wrong-doing or illegal acts or brutality against people by members of Scientology, and that he lied in earlier testimony.

DeWolf now says the tape was made "under duress...I did a lot of talking to a lot of people, and nobody believed me. They thought that what I had to say was as far out as Scientology itself. But I can't expose L. Ron Hubbard without exposing myself. So I had to reach a point where I was ready, willing, and able to in actual fact let everything — everything — hang out. The whole ball of wax — the good, the bad, the beautiful, the ugly...It wasn't really until 1978, in fact, that I got out from under it. I didn't have all kinds of counselors or 'deprogrammers.'"

The elder Hubbard, according to his son, "had a tremendous amount of charisma. His ability to sway people was really quite awesome. I saw people come in there angry as hell at him, and two seconds later they'd walk away happy — you'd wonder what happened. That's one of the reasons it was very difficult for me, and for many other people, to get away, to get out from under."

DeWolf's mother, he says, was divorced from his father and died an alcoholic in 1963, bitterly opposed to her ex-husband and the organization he founded. To date, according to DeWolf, Hubbard is known to have had at least seven children by three wives. His current wife, Mary Sue, is one of nine top Scientology leaders convicted on charges of conspiracy, burglary, or theft of secret documents from federal offices in Washington, D.C. In 1975, DeWolf's half-brother Quentin apparently committed suicide in Las Vegas; he was found in a car with a hose running into it from the exhaust pipe.

Is the founder of Scientology himself still alive? Probably not, says DeWolf, "although I haven't seen his body, or been to his funeral." Hubbard hasn't made any tape recordings to his followers for several years, and if he is alive, he's in hiding, perhaps on a resort ranch in Southern California. As recently as a year ago DeWolf received typewritten correspondence purportedly from Hubbard, but he claims the style of writing isn't his father's. The last documented time a non-Scientologist saw Hubbard, according to DeWolf, was in 1980.

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Scientology officials say the founder of their church is alive and well, still engaged in "research," although they claim he gave up his role of leadership in 1966. In the Scientology mission in Santa Rosa (as in most missions) is a mailbox emblazoned with Hubbard's "Standing Order," which states that any mail addressed to him will be received by him. And Hubbard's 850-page novel, *Battlefield Earth*, will be released by St. Martin's Press in October — the book tells of interplanetary war and "intergalactic financial intrigue" between Earth and the "Psychlos."

The future of Scientology? DeWolf believes the entire superstructure is crumbling under the glare of publicity and incontrovertible, documented evidence that Hubbard repeatedly has lied about himself — thus prompting even his most devoted followers to wonder if he's lied about other things as well. "The key to sorting someone's head

out about Scientology is L. Ron Hubbard," says DeWolf. "He is 'source,' 'cause,' 'creator,' and 'founder.' Lay the true and actual man and his past out and the 'construct' falls apart. There's no need to argue or even debate."

Infighting in Scientology at the moment is rampant, DeWolf believes. "Remember this basic thing — it's a money-and-power game, period. It's who's got the money, who can step on whom to climb up higher, who can control the most number of people, who's got the best 'stats,' meaning statistics. It's a mad scramble up the pyramid, and 'let's see who we can trample in the climb.'

"There's a lot of strong-arm stuff which of course the corporations of Scientology have always disavowed as being some misguided member doing something on his own initiative," DeWolf continues. "Or maybe they are changing. But the only problem is they've said that before — over and over and over again. About once a year they say that, and we always used to say the very same thing."