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Scientology vs. psychiatry

■ The reader will find scattered in this series various references to Scientology's deep distrust of psychiatry. Church founder L. Ron Hubbard, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, "harbored a profound and obsessive hatred for psychiatrists, who, he declared, were 'chosen as a vehicle to undermine and destroy the West.'" Why? The *Journal* asked Cynthia Kisser, executive director of the Cult Awareness Network. She suggested Hubbard's views may stem from the fact that "the mental health community early on rejected" his ideas. "The best recruits," she told the *Journal*, "were people whose problems were not being solved by the mental-health profession. These people might buy into Scientology." Both the *Journal* and, more recently, CBS' *60 Minutes* program have done pieces on the newest manifestation of Scientology's anti-psychiatry stance. The church, they suggested, is a major force in the attacks on the drug Prozac, used to treat depression. More relevant to this series is the church's opposition to the drug Ritalin, a drug used to treat hyperactive children.

What are church's beliefs?

By CURTIS KRUEGER
Times Staff Writer

L. Ron Hubbard was a writer who conjured up tales of time travel and rocket ships to Mars.

But science fiction was not all that sprang from Hubbard's pen. He also wrote the book *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*. In it, Hubbard described a new kind of counseling, which he said could help people increase their IQs, cure themselves of arthritis, allergies, asthma and migraine headaches, and reduce their chances of having a car wreck.

The book was published in 1950 and eventually was incorporated into a religion that Hubbard named Scientology.

From the start, Scientology has been controversial. Scientologists believe that by using their methods, people will learn to know themselves better and become more able to accomplish their goals.

But critics say Scientology relies on deception to lure members and keep them loyal. Some call it a

Dianetics holds that people have an analytic mind, which is infallible, like a computer. But people also have a reactive mind, which contains the source of irrational behavior.

The reactive mind is made up of "engrams," which are the legacies of painful experiences from the past. People free themselves of their engrams by recalling the experiences that caused them. This occurs in a Scientology counseling process called "auditing." In auditing, people may attempt to recall events that occurred before their birth — as early as three days after conception.

A person who is audited generally is hooked up to a device called an "E-meter," similar to a lie detector. The auditor reads the meter on the device to evaluate the subject's responses to questions.

Scientologists also believe that man is an immortal being called a "thetan."

One of the unusual aspects of Scientology is that it keeps many of its teachings secret, even from its members. Students proceed from one level to the next, and learning the higher levels too early is forbidden.

One of these secret, higher levels is called "OT III," for "operating thetan three." In OT III, Scientologists learn that Xemu, the ruler of the galactic confederation, flew selected beings to volcanoes on a planet called Teegeeach, now known as Earth. This is said to have happened 75-million years ago. (Documents describing OT III became public during a 1985 court case).

Another unusual aspect is the price. Auditing can cost \$800 an hour. One couple, Tom and Carol Hutchinson of Marietta, Ga., said they purchased an auditing package that cost \$35,000.

Some Scientologists report that they can leave their bodies and influence events miles away.

Scientologists also may join the Sea Org (Sea Organization), a group of full-time staff members. Those in the Sea Org work 12-hour days and earn \$30 a week. Scientologists believe in reincarnation, and those who join the Sea Org sign billion-year contracts.

They also wear blue and white naval-style uniforms.

A common misconception is that all Scientologists wear uniforms. They don't. Non-staff Scientologists dress as they wish and hold non-Scientology jobs.

— This story includes information



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