

# BARE-FACED MESSIAH: THE TRUE STORY OF L. RON HUBBARD

Rev Chris Worfolk





# TODAY'S SPEAKER

- ✿ Introductions probably aren't necessary
- ✿ But, hello, I'm Chris
- ✿ I grew up in Leeds. Then I went to university here. Then I started Skeptics. Then it's now.



Sunday, 27 June 2010

- Invited to speak at the Imperial War Museum
- Well, invited to explore
- But I did speak
- To Gijsbert



# SCIENTOLOGY

- ✱ Scientology is a religion
- ✱ Or possibly a cult
- ✱ Though of course, we know the only difference between a religion and a cult - it size



Sunday, 27 June 2010

- Here is everyone at Scientology London (one of)
- Claims to be fastest growing religion
- Claims 8 million members (inc course drop outs)
- Generates half a billion dollars a year
- Volunteer Ministers, Narcanon, Marshalls, Criminon, human rights and more



# SCIENTOLOGY

- ✱ So what is this Scientology nonsense?
- ✱ I use the word nonsense as if a god sired zombie taking all our sins somehow makes more sense of course
- ✱ Let's open it up to the floor



Sunday, 27 June 2010

- Here is us a year later at a different one
- You'll notice I'm now in the centre (Copson approach)
- Thetans, engrams, auditing, clearing
- Xenu and the aliens



# L. RON HUBBARD

- ✱ The man, the legend, their everything
- ✱ He'll be back!
- ✱ Born in 1911, died in 1986, but that is not quite all of his life



Sunday, 27 June 2010

- Lafayette Ronald Hubbard
- A ginger
- Had lived past lives
- And he'll live future ones
- David Miscavige (Trom Cruise)



# L. RON HUBBARD

- ✱ Of course, Elrond is a fictional character
- ✱ But the L. Ron Hubbard many know and love could well be described as one too



Sunday, 27 June 2010

- When I say the name Elrond
- What is truth, and what is legend?



# L. RON HUBBARD

- ✿ Writer, explorer, pilot, nuclear scientist
- ✿ “I wouldn’t call Ron a renaissance man. A renaissance man is someone who is fairly good at a lot of things. Ron was amazing at everything.”



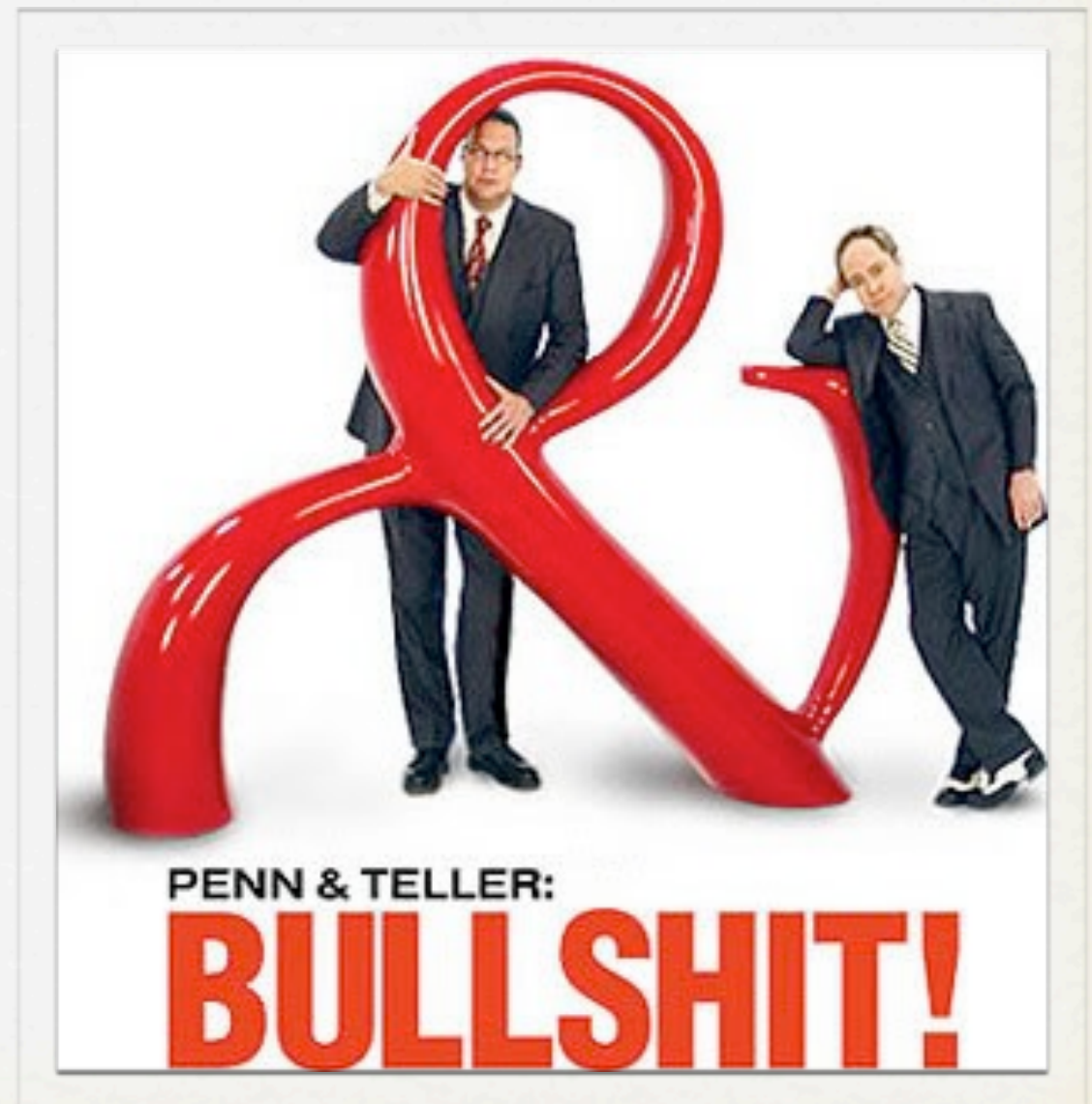
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- Quote from a Scientology video
- More than a man
- We was an Operating Thetan



# L. RON HUBBARD

- ✱ As Penn & Teller would say...
- ✱ Well, Penn would say...
- ✱ It's all bullshit



Sunday, 27 June 2010

- Almost everything in official church biographies is bullshit
- It's fiction, most written by Ron
- But the truth behind him is far more amazing
- He was an amazing man. To sell all this bullshit.



# EARLY LIFE

- ✿ Not quite riding barely broken horses by the time he was 3 years old
- ✿ Though he was somewhat of a prolific writer
- ✿ Earned 21 Scout merit badges in as many days



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- He was very much mothered by the family
- He was a favourite child
- He kept a journal and loved to write
- Didn't protect other kids from bullying
- Eagle Scouts didn't record ages



# TRAVELS IN THE EAST

- ✿ “He travelled far and wide in the Far East, taming local natives and exploring new cultures”
- ✿ Except for the bit of bad luck he picked up being born on Friday the 13th



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- His father was posted to Guam
- He spent a short period there, then went home
- Told the newspaper of his exploits
- Dropped out of school, tried to back to Guam
- 13 March 1911 was actually a Monday



# RON THE EXPLORER

- ✿ “Between 14-18 (1925 - 1929) he travelled widely, went to George Washington University to do nuclear physics, became a director via the Caribbean Motion Picture Expedition and conducted the West Indies Mineral Survey”



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- The latter being the first complete survey of Puerto Rico
- Actually he was heavily tutored to get into GWU
- He started there, then enlisted in the US Marine Corps Reserve
- He did civil engineering, not unclear physics
- But didn't spend any time studying anyway



# UNIVERSITY YEARS

- ✿ Joined the staff of The Hatchett
- ✿ Founded the Gliding Club
- ✿ Began writing for Sportsman Pilot



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- An avid writer he got onto the board of The Hatchett
- Soon they were publishing a literary review too
- Founded the gliding club and was soon “Flash Hubbard”
- Never actually got his full pilot’s licence though



# THE CARIBBEAN

- ✿ That summer Hubbard said about organising the “Caribbean Motion Picture Expedition”
- ✿ Hundreds of students joined him in his brave quest



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- It was more of a summer cruise really
- To his credit he did get 100 people organised
- But the trip ran out of money, got to Bermuda and sailed back
- Half the crew deserted



# PUERTO RICO

- ✿ Conducted the West Indies Mineral Survey
- ✿ The first complete survey of Puerto Rico
- ✿ It's just a shame that nobody can find all the records he made



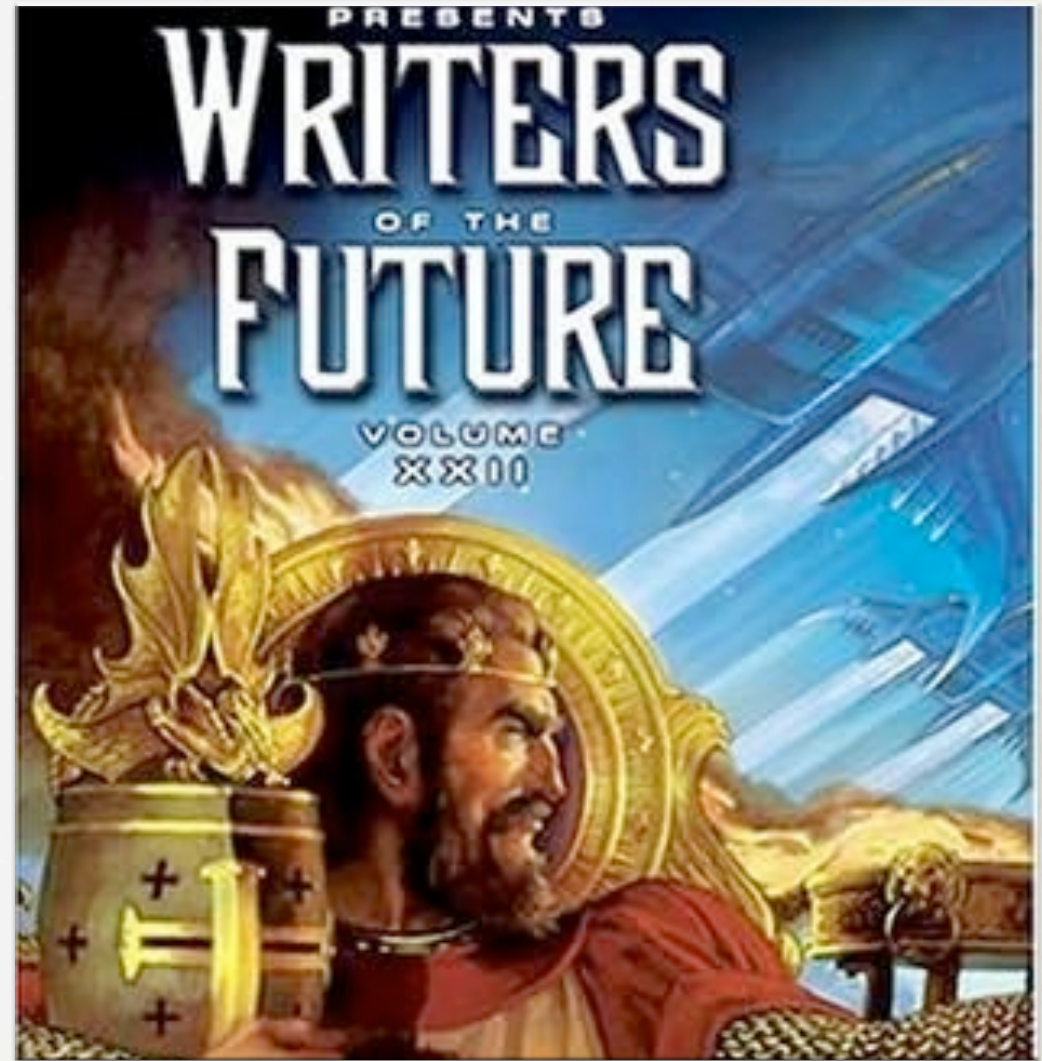
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- He got back to find crab grades and dropped out
- His father sent him to go help the Red Cross
- He didn't want to, and just went exploring



# TRUE TALENT

- ✱ “Between 1933 and 1941 Ron wrote over seven million words”
- ✱ This is probably the closest to the truth we’re going to get today



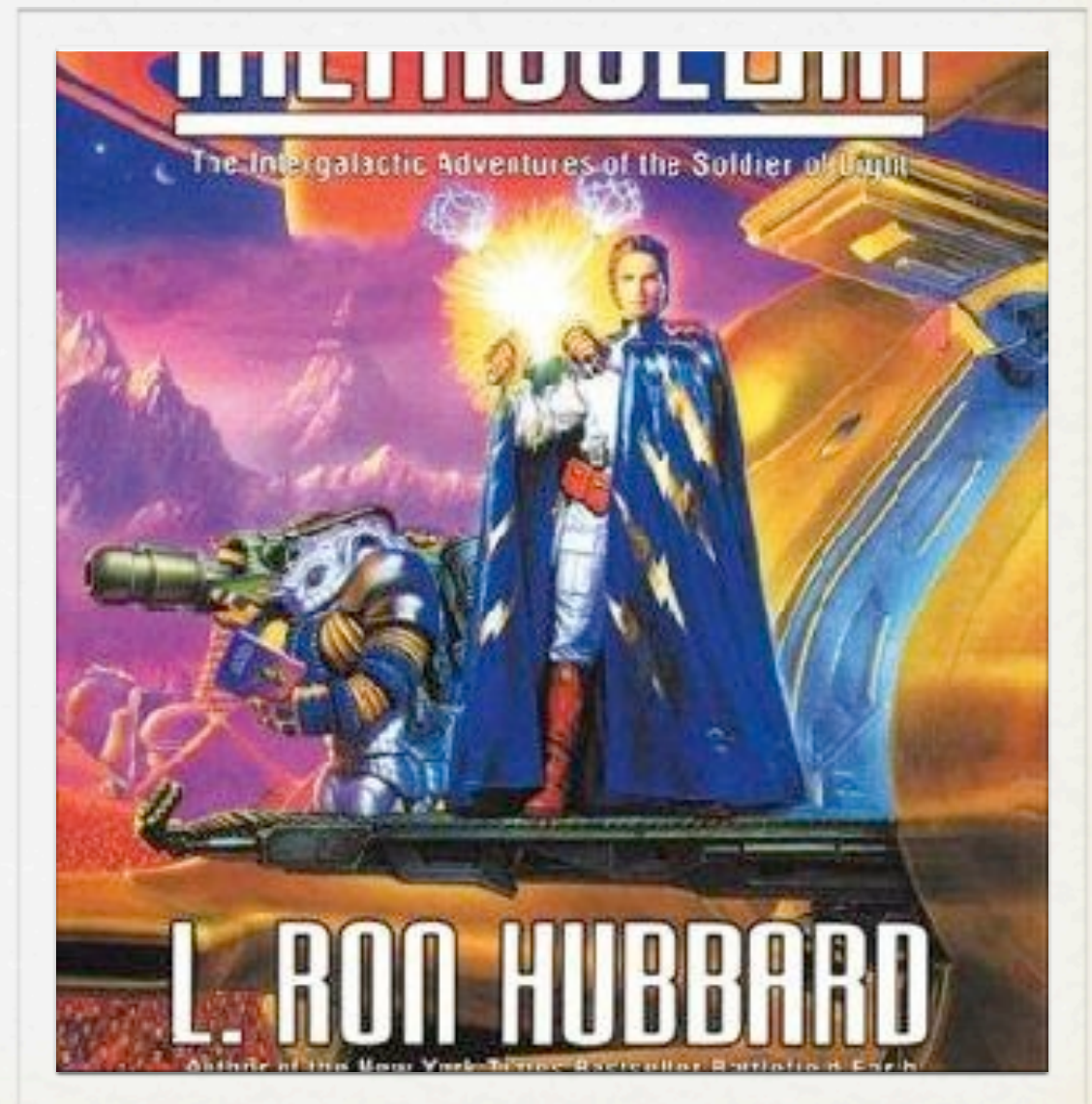
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- He didn’t write anywhere near 7 million words
- He tried to make it as a writer but failed
- Then he discovered Pulp
- Spent time in New York
- Met Polly and gave birth to his first son
- Hardbook novel, which he spent on a boat



# SCIENCE FICTION

- ✿ “Ron was asked to try his science fiction and when he did, he changed the face of the genre”
- ✿ Because who hasn't read a book by L. Ron Hubbard?



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- Campbell became editor of Astounding
- Meanwhile he joined the Explorer's Club
- Went up the coast with Polly
- Spent some time on an Alaskan radio station
- Got himself commissioned in the Navy



# WAR STORIES

- ✱ “Ron was a war hero and the first causality to be returned from the Far East”
- ✱ Of course, if you draw your map the right way, anywhere can be East



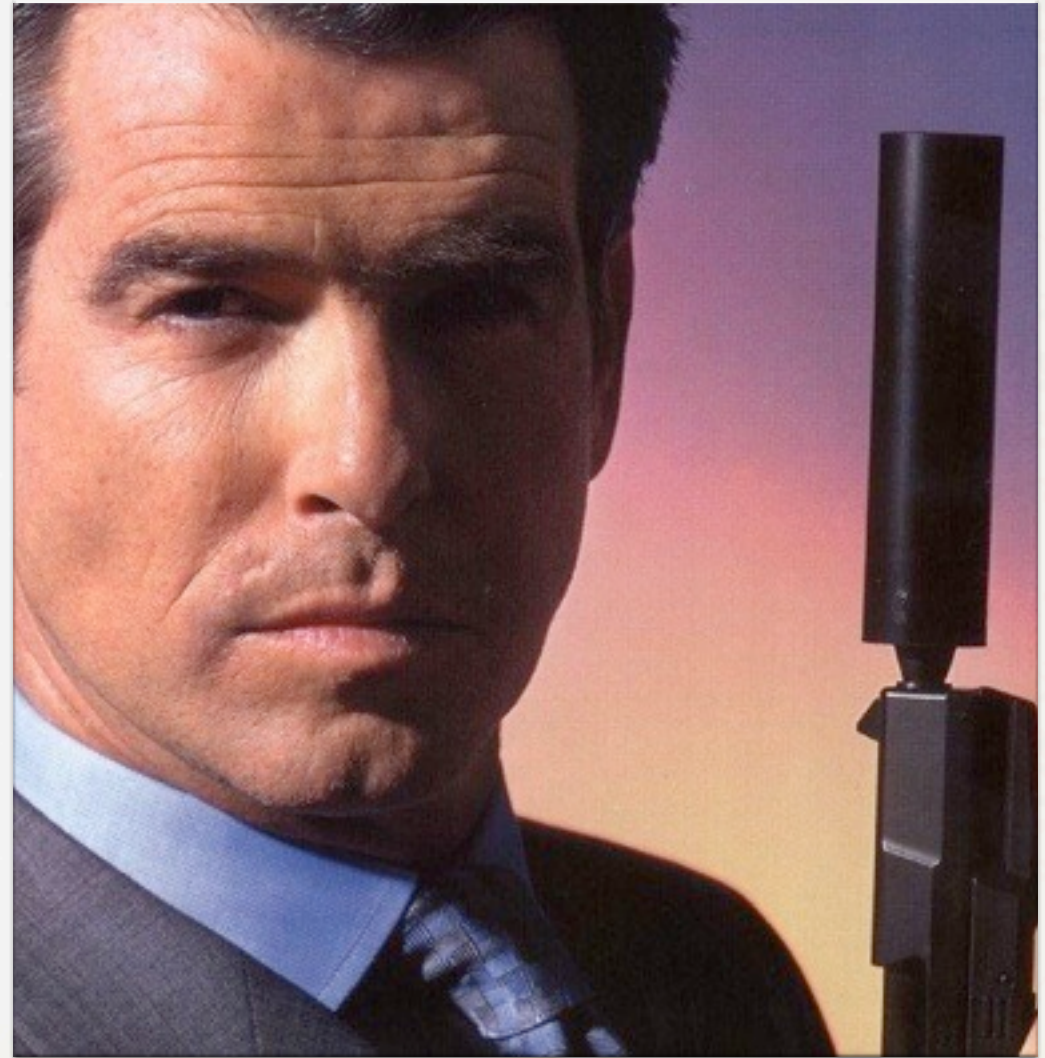
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- Started out as a paper pusher
- Got to Australia and then got sent home for being too arrogant
- Was eventually offered command of a sub chaser
- Dark glasses from the flash burn
- Several days, 5 ships and 2 blimps chasing “dead wood”
- Was send back to his desk job
- Went to the hospital pretending to be sick, discharged



# BLACK MAGIC

- ✿ “Hubbard broke up black magic in America and rescued a girl”
- ✿ How James Bond of him
- ✿ Not too busy to start a boating business however



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- He left the Navy and moved onto Jack Parson's ranch
- There he started shagging Betty
- Ron participated in the dark magic
- Formed Allied Enterprises and ran off with \$10,000
- He then married Betty (Sara) without Polly knowing



# THE WORK BEGINS

- ✿ “In 1948 his writings on the nature of life began to privately circulate and all that read it regarded it as a huge breakthrough”
- ✿ Even if Ron later admitted Excalibur didn't actually exist



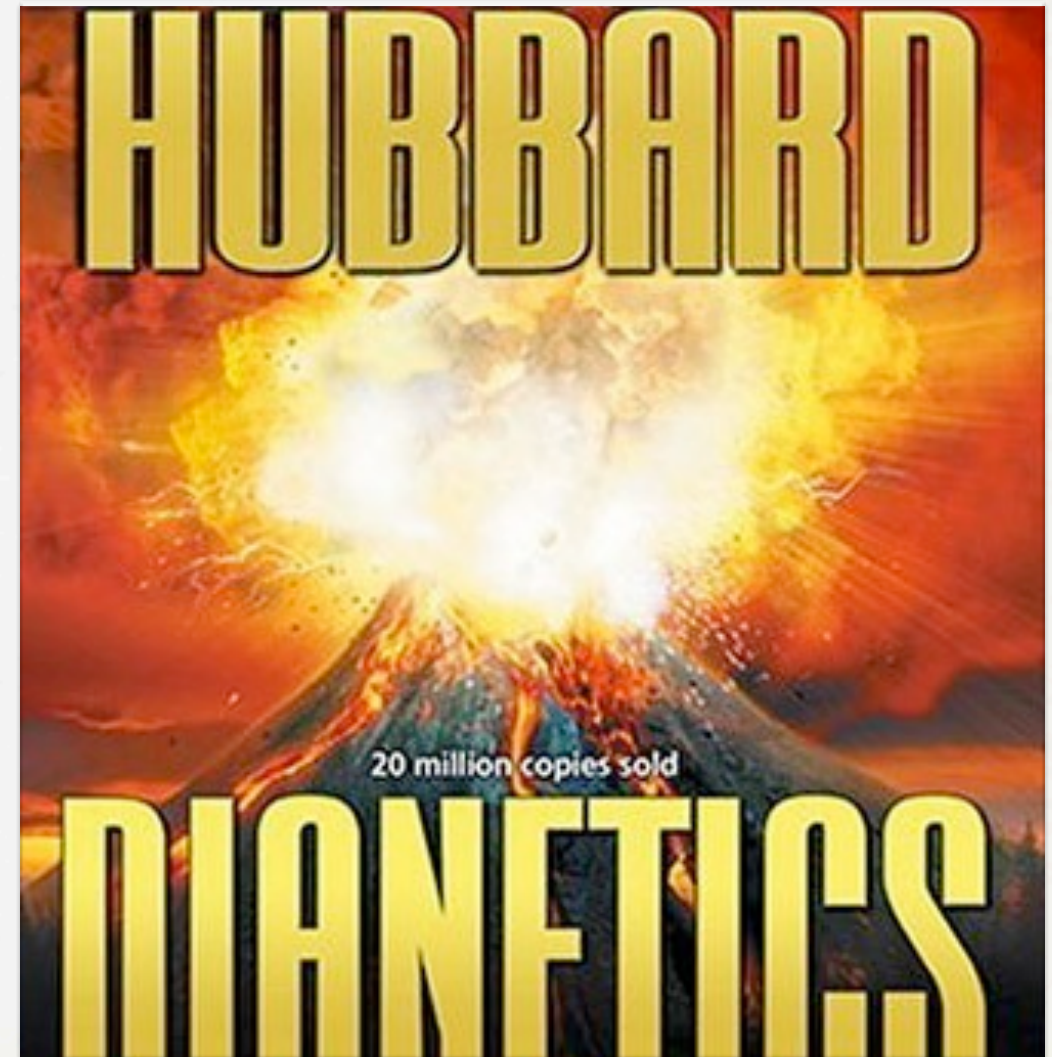
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- Moved to California with the now Sara
- “Foot injury no longer needed”
- 1947 Polly filed for divorce, Ron and Sara moved back home
- They then moved to Los Angeles to become a hypnotist
- He went back to writing pulp
- And began working on “Science of the Mind”



# DIANETICS

- ✱ Launched in 1950  
Dianetics was received cautiously at first but soon became a national craze
- ✱ Not the lack of quote marks, this actually happened!



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- Moved to New Jersey in 1949 at the request of Campell
- Sara was pregnant and gave birth to Alexis
- Dr Joseph Winter got involved, they wrote a paper
- SciFi fans bought the book and began auditing their friends
- Reached the LA Times best seller list
- Ron began running a course at \$500 a time
- Scientific American said it contained the last amount of evidence, ever



# THE FOUNDATION

- ✿ “The government tried to force him to work for them for evil but he resigned and escaped - and ever after the government hated him”
- ✿ Basically, the Navy said, “I’m sure you signed up with us...”



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- Ron began lecturing in LA, failed first clear
- Hubbard Foundation of Dianetics
- Bought a \$4.5 million mansion in California
- Ron was amazing lecturer
- The courses continued, covering up breakdowns
- Art Ceppos and Winter resigned, Ron reported them as communists
- Kidnapped his own daughter from Sara
- Kidnapped Sara and tried to have her committed
- FBI said he was crazy so he fled to Cuba



# BACK IN THE USA

- ✿ Millionaire Don Purcell began bankrolling Hubbard
- ✿ They said up a new foundation in Wichita
- ✿ At which point Ron began plotting the conversion to religion



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- Sold his daughter for a divorce
- Married Mary Sue
- Purcell threw away his glasses
- Foundations went bankrupt
- Ron opened the Hubbard College with only traded for 6 weeks
- Enough time for Ron to run a conference
- Introducing the e-meter and talking about “Scientology”



# PHOENIX

- ✿ “Hubbard got many honours and awards including an honorary doctorate”
- ✿ Hubbard moved to Phoenix, Arizona and founded the Hubbard Association of Scientologists



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- 1952, came up with the term thetan
- Came up with the idea of Operating Thetan
- Jesus was only just above a Clear
- His first son “Nibs” became a Scientologist
- History of Man, published by Scientific Press of Phoenix
- He moved to London and founded Hubbard Association of Scientologists International
- Got a PhD from Sequoia University
- Had Helen O’Brien move the publishing business to Philadelphia
- Journal of Scientology, all written by Ron, or “Tom Esterbrook”



# GETTING RELIGIOUS

- ✿ “In February 1954 the first Church of Scientology was founded”
- ✿ They got the date wrong but what do details like that matter in official biographies?



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- Actually it was December 1953
- Church of American Science, Church of Scientology, Church of Spiritual Engineering
- Ministers and reverends
- Ron told Scientologists to bring everyone under control and “utterly ruin” everyone who didn’t
- Came up with the idea of Causality Contacts”
- Developed Dianazene, protections you from radiation
- Seized and destroyed by the FDA (Food & Drug Administration)



# MERRY OLD ENGLAND

- ✿ “I won the Maharajah’s Sussex estate in a poker game”
- ✿ Well if by “won” you mean bought
- ✿ And if by “poker game” you mean not a poker game



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- By this point Hubbard was firmly established in the UK
- Local newspaper reported Dr Hubbard, a nuclear scientist was going to revolutionise gardening
- Really big tomatoes by attaching an e-meter
- His son quit the church, or “blew”
- His mother died, he didn’t stay for the funeral
- Sec checks were introduced
- Get into politics by the back door – secretaries or bodyguards
- In 1961 sexual deviancy and bad thoughts questions were introduced
- August 1962, wrote to president Kennedy re: astronauts



# BUMPS IN THE ROAD

- ✿ In 1963 the FDA raided the Scientology office in Washington
- ✿ Australia outlawed Scientology
- ✿ He was kicked out of Rhodesia



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- Standard FDA raid, like Waco
- It emerged Ron had been to heaven, twice
- Conditions, ethics officers and fair game policy
- Public Investigation Section
- John McMaster became the first clear
- They had their own journal, The Auditor
- Tried to set up on Rhodesia
- He start "The Sea Project"



# THE SEA ORG

- ✿ In 1967 Hubbard founded “Sea Org” and appointed himself Commodore
- ✿ To distance himself from the church he also resigned as the head of the Church of Scientology



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- Committee worked out the church owed him \$13 million
- Which he never claimed
- Renounced his PhD, Daily Mail joke
- He once again carried the Explorer's Club flag
- Discovered OT3, sailed up the down the coast looking for treasure from past lives
- Introduced the billion year contract



# MESSENGERS

- ✿ Hubbard became paranoid, checking everyone's mail and create fake companies for people to travel under
- ✿ But that's to be expected when you have your own private navy



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- Commodore's Messenger Organisation, pubescent girls
- Didn't really know what to do for this photo
- Commodore's Staff Aids, senior management
- People were banned from leaving, passports locked away
- Susan Meister shot herself in June 1971
- Fled from place to place including Morocco



# FRAUD & FEAR

- ✿ The French Church of Scientology was indicted for fraud
- ✿ Hubbard fled to New York and the CIA began to give chase



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- Fled to New York with two assistants
- Started Operation Snow White
- Returned to the ship in September 1973
- Started Rehabilitation Project Force
- Messengers now dressed in hot pants and halter tops
- After getting ill Ron decided to move back to land
- Went via the Caribbean because the CIA were waiting for him



# BACK ON DRY LAND

- ✿ The Sea Org moved back to land and established a new headquarters in Clearwater, Florida
- ✿ From here Ron's paranoia spread to outright madness



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- Neptune Motel, soon they found a permanent base
- Ron moved 5 miles north to keep a low profile
- Ron was discovered and fled to Washington with Kim and her husband
- Someone was arrested so they fled to LA instead
- They found a ranch near Palm Springs



# MAKING MOVIES

- ✱ In 1977 he launched “Purification Rundown” to rid the world of drugs
- ✱ He then wrote a film script about an alien named “Xenu” and formed Cine Org



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- Made enquiries about getting a Nobel prize
- FBI raided Los Angeles and Washington offices
- Became really ill, audited by David Mayo, stories didn't add up
- Founded Cine Org and shouted at a lot of people



# ONE LAST ROADTRIP

- ✿ Hubbard was incredibly paranoid by this point
- ✿ When someone was seen taking photos of the ranch Hubbard fled once again and came to the sleepy mountain town of Hemet



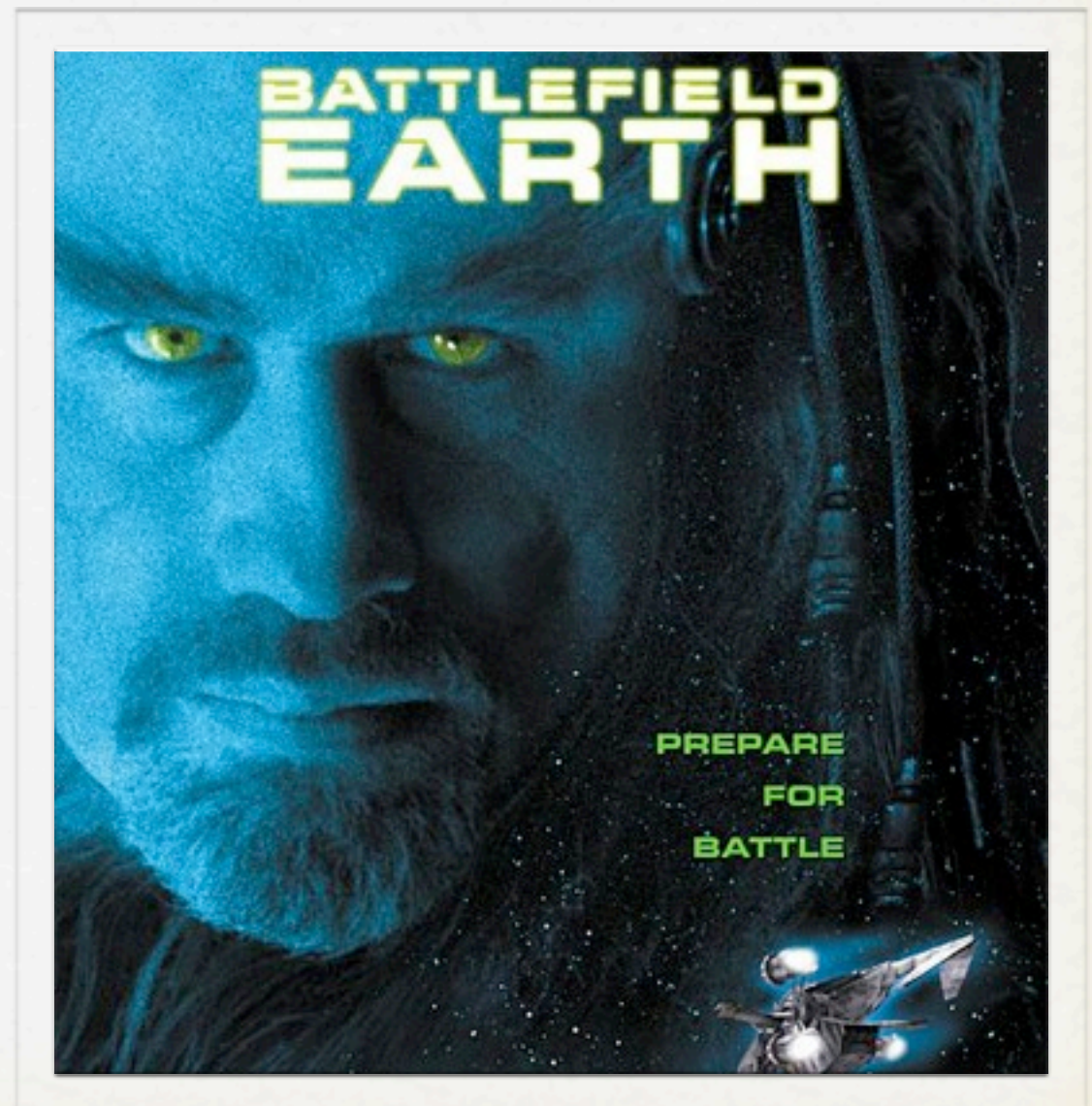
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- He would go out, but only in disguise
- Mary Sue was jailed for Operation Snow White
- Documents were made public
- Kima and Mike Douglas “blew the org”
- He married a messenger, Annie
- In February 1980 he disappeared with Annie and Pat and was never seen again



# END OF DAYS

- ✿ Even after his disappearance he released a novel “Battlefield Earth”
- ✿ Then on 19 January 1986 he sent his last communication ever - promoting himself to Admiral



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- Scientologists were told to buy several copies
- Ron was soon dead
- David Miscavige ousted Mary Sue and became head of the church



# CONCLUSIONS

- ✿ L. Ron Hubbard may not match up to the legends of the Church's official biographies
- ✿ But he was without a doubt one of the greatest bullshitters in human history



Sunday, 27 June 2010

– He didn't die, he'll be back