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Sex, Magic, and the Police: The Saga of Guru Jára

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ABSTRACT: The Guru Jára Path is a Czech new religious movement, founded in 1995 by Jaroslav (Jára) Dobeš and teaching an esoteric system mostly based on Shivaite Tantrism. Although teachings on sexuality are but a part of the Path's doctrine, rituals involving sexual practices led to slander by anti-cultists and police action. The movement's two leaders, Jára and Barbora Plášková, were sentenced to jail penalties (although a recourse to the Czech Constitutional Court is pending), and are currently detained in the Philippines, awaiting a final decision on their requests for asylum. What the Czech media describe as a legitimate police action against sexual abuse is denounced by the Path as systematic religious persecution.

KEYWORDS: Guru Jára Path, Guru Jára, Jaroslav Dobeš, Barbora Plášková, Sex Magic, Anti-Cult Movements in the Czech Republic, New Religious Movements in the Czech Republic, Neo-Tantrism.

The Making of a Guru

On June 23, 2019, I was trying the tofoiegras (a tofu meat-free foie gras) at Lehká hlava (Clear Head), the esoteric-themed vegetarian restaurant in Prague, and listening to the incredible stories told by members of the Guru Jára Path, a Czech new religious movement. They were professionals, and one of them was an academic. They reported they had been systematically harassed by the police and discriminated in their workplaces because of their faith. Their leaders were detained in the Philippines, in rat-infested detention centers for immigrants and refugees. The media would not leave them alone, and they keep being described as members of a perverted sex cult. They were quite surprised to learn that sex magic had in fact been seriously studied by scholars, including myself, that I understood their cultural background, and was willing to listen to their story

without prejudices. Although there were no academic sources about their movement, they generously shared their internal documents, and were willing to be interviewed even about very personal details. They also shared with me the most relevant hostile sources, including lurid articles published by the Czech media. Slowly, an extraordinary tale emerged, involving Tantra, sex magic, and the police.

Jaroslav (Jára) Dobeš was born on January 4, 1971, in Příbram, Czechoslovakia (present-day Czech Republic). As he later reported, he started seeing ghosts and experiencing other supernatural phenomena at age 5. At age 9, he decided to record his paranormal experiences in a journal, which was discovered by his parents. They believed he was suffering of some form of mental illness, and doctors prescribed heavy medications, which had a devastating effect on the young Jára. In November 1982, he tried to hang himself on a tree, but was saved by his best friend and taken to the hospital. There, he went through what he later described as a near-death experience, which oriented his life towards spirituality.

After the incident, he escaped from what he perceived as the oppressive, materialistic domestic atmosphere by devoting his time to rock climbing, in which he soon became quite proficient. In 1989, a few months before the fall of Communism in Czechoslovakia, Dobeš escaped to Italy, where he studied Roman Catholicism and monastic traditions. He also became acquainted with several esoteric teachings, from Kabbalah to Feng Shui, and met disciples of Julius Evola (1898–1974), whose teachings on Tantra “inspired him immensely” (Plášková 2019). He spent time in Rome and in climbing areas and natural hermitages in Italy, including Porto Venere, on the Ligurian coast, Lumignano, near Vicenza, Sperlonga, located between Rome and Naples, and Arco, in the Province of Trento.

Arco was both an important spiritual center, with a famed Marian shrine and esoteric legends connected with its castle, and a place where Jára could cultivate his passion for rock climbing. In 1991, he started working as a professional rock climber and instructor in Italy, Spain, and France. He claimed he met in Italy, in 1992, a mysterious spiritual teacher he referred to as “Cagliostro the Second,” under whose guidance he spent four months studying “seals, symbols, and evocations,” and was introduced to magical texts of the Renaissance (Guru Jára 2016a; Guru Jára 2018; Plášková 2019; for the story of the movement, I also rely

on Manek 2015 and on interviews I conducted with mentors and students of the Path in Prague in June 2019).

His spiritual interests, however, led Jára to seek the ancient wisdom in what he regarded as the spiritual centers of the world, although followers later claimed he had already reached enlightenment in 1991 in Arco, at the fountain in the village of San Martino when he was returning from weeks spent in the caves of the famous rock climbing area of Massone. In 1995, on the Dune of Pilat, in the French Arcachon Bay, he received a revelation commanding him to go to Jerusalem, where another revelation sent him to Egypt. There, he reported that he received his higher initiation, in 1995, from a spiritual entity, while spending a night inside the Pyramid of Menkaure, the smallest of the three pyramids of Giza, realizing his own status was divine. In the same year 1995, he started offering his professional services as an astrologer and gathering the first disciples, and taught his first summer school in Fontainebleau, France.

After his initiation in Egypt, he received again “instructions in form of an apparition” that he should go to India, where he would meet his guru. He also traveled around Asia and in South America. In India, he spent time in the ashram of Swami Nagananda (1951–2006) in Bukkapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. He performed austerities and pilgrimages, and developed a special connection with the Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, one of the twelve Jyotirlinga shrines honoring the generative power of Shiva.

Nagananda recommended that he continued the study of Tantric Shivaism, his main interest, under Guru Anahdan (?–2005) in Haridwar, Uttarakhand. This part of the story has been disputed by critics, who suspect that Anahdan (unlike Nagananda, a well-known historical figure with followers also in the West) may be a figment of Jára’s imagination, the more so because Jára signed some of his own texts with the name of Anahdan, both to claim his heritage and for more subtle “energetic, karmic reasons” (Guru Jára 2016a). However, I interviewed in Prague, in June 2019, early members of Jára’s organization who claimed to have been to India and met Anahdan in Arunachala, before he died in 2005.

Jára claims to have been initiated as a *sadhu* in India, and to have experienced (and later solved) some problems with Anahdan, who did not approve of his teaching Westerners hopelessly immersed in a consumerist culture. In 1996, upon his return to the Czech Republic, Jára started teaching regularly a group of disciples, who later formed the Guru Jára Path. The first meetings took place in

the home of Dr. Mila Plášková, a well-known astrologer, in Zlín, whose two daughters Barbora and Kristýna will later play an important role in Jára's movement.

On May 30, 1996, Jára offered his first public lecture in the Czech Republic, also in Zlín. He took some followers to a pilgrimage to India, and offered a second summer school in Tatranská Lomnica, Slovakia. Evening meetings in clubs and tea houses were conducted around Czechia, together with more ambitious seminars and festivals.

The festival entitled "Days of Spiritual Activities," held on 15 and 16 September 1997 in the Museum of Natural History of Olomouc, attracted considerable attention and was later regarded as a crucial step towards the formation of the Path as an institutionalized spiritual organization (Manek 2015, 10–1). 1997 also saw the first seminars, in the Beskids Mountains, where the themes of Tantric sexuality and reincarnation were openly discussed and formed the basis of spiritual practices.

Among the early disciples was Dr. Eva Bučková, then a judge at the Zlín branch of the Regional Court of Brno. She displayed remarkable telepathic powers, and became a lecturer and a close associate of Jára, before turning against him in the 2007 crisis. By 1998, the courses and seminars had already proved so successful that, after a new successful pilgrimage to India, a monastery was inaugurated in the village of Odrlice, near Olomouc. Other smaller centers called *kitakus* or *tao ki tak* (playing on both the Japanese word for "place of welcome" and the Czech expression "tak i tak," meaning "either way") followed, in 1999 in Zlín and Olomouc, Czech Republic, in Dharamshala, India, and in the village of Horní Bečva in the Beskids Mountains, the latter a smaller, secluded branch of the Odrlice monastery.

This was the tolerant Czech Republic of President Václav Havel (1936–2011) and Jára's Tantric teachings about sexuality were not regarded as scandalous, or at least were permitted within a general framework of tolerance. Jára launched projects that resonated with the liberal, alternative subculture of the post-Communist students and professionals, including the *čajodárné putování* (tea wanderings), which visited and mapped some hundred Czech teahouses, which had become a preferred place for free discussions about politics and culture. The project was favorably reviewed by the Czech media.

Some disciples started coming from other countries, and in January 1999, Jára organized his first international seminar in the island of Mindoro in the Philippines. Pilgrimages continued—in 1999, to Egypt—as well as seminars and lectures. Even some Czech universities invited Jára to speak about Tantrism and alternative spirituality.

In 1999, Jára published his first book, *Pilgrims to Immortality*, edited by Barbora Plášková, who had emerged in the meantime as his closest disciple. The book will be followed by many others, one of the most important being *Casanova Sútra* (2011), an esoteric novel including Jára's main teachings. In 2000, the movement launched its first Web site and in 2001, its own magazine, *Poetrie*. Seminars and festivals around the Czech Republic gathered thousands of followers. They were organized from 2002 by a foundation called The Little Prince, and after 2004, on a smaller scale, by the newly established Poetrie Esoteric Institute, which functioned more like a university with classes in various esoteric disciplines. In each year 2000 and 2001, four festivals lasted for several days in Zlín, Olomouc, and Prague, generating considerable attention.

With the new millennium came the founding of the Czech Telepathic Association, devoted to study parapsychological phenomena in the Czech Republic. The Association became well-known for the championships of telepathy it organized every year. The tea wanderings extended to Slovakia. Books were supplemented with CDs including music and guided meditations. Jára also founded the Ateliers of Soul (for men) and the Ateliers of Women's Souls (for women), to prepare “mentors,” i.e. teachers authorized to deliver his teachings to a growing number of students.

The Time of the Trials

Jára's activities did not go unnoticed from the Czech anti-cult movement. The political climate was changing, and the Czech society was becoming more conservative. Tantric teachings about sexuality were interpreted by anti-cultists and the media as sexual license and orgies. Although anti-cultists had started targeting the movement in 1999, the year 2001 marked the starting point of a massive campaign against the Guru Jára Path that extended from the anti-cult movement and some media to the police, and eventually led to the arrest of Jára

and a significant reduction of the number of the movement's members. These incidents are discussed below, in the concluding paragraph.

While the media had reported the festivals favorably in 2000, as the pressure from the anti-cult movement mounted, they remained largely silent about Jára's initiatives in 2001 and beyond. The activities, however, continued. In 2002, a set of Tarot cards designed by Jára was put on sale and became a bestseller. In the same year, a new form of festival known as the Symposium of Esoteric Science was inaugurated in the Olomouc area. Another *kitaku* was opened in Hampi, Karnataka, India.

In 2003, in part because of the new, less favorable political climate at home and the attacks of the Czech anti-cult movement, Jára moved to Asia (Thailand, then Nepal), but until 2007 he still returned periodically to the Czech Republic to teach and to introduce his books and artistic photographs. It is also reported that Jára interpreted the election of conservative Václav Klaus as President of the Czech Republic in 2003 as an omen of persecution for alternative spirituality and worldviews. "It's over. We are not going home," he said when he learned of the election while he was in Malaysia (Manek 2015, 74). Klaus will remain President for ten years, until 2013, and gain international notoriety for his criticism of the European Union, praise of the repressive policies of Russian President, Vladimir Putin, and opposition to the Prague Gay Pride.

Under media pressure, the Path decided to cancel the larger festivals and to focus on the preparation of mentors, the internal activities, and the pilgrimages, with Jára leading personally the members to discover the mystical heritage of France, Spain, and Morocco as well as Thailand, Laos, Nepal, and Japan. A new center was open, the first in Prague, in 2003, to be followed by one in Brno, but the monastery in Odrlice was closed in 2005 and sold, and plans to build another national center in the Czech Republic had to be postponed indefinitely.

Even after 2007, Jára continued teaching Czech students via the Internet, and many went to visit him in Asia and participated in further pilgrimages organized and led by the master. Meanwhile, in the Czech Republic and elsewhere, successful exhibitions of Jára's art works continued to be organized, some of them in 2011 in connection with the promotion of his novel *Casanova Sútra*.

Some of the Asian retreats were organized in the Philippines, where in 2011, Jára and his main co-worker, Barbora Plášková, opened an ashram in remote

Siargao, a part of the island group of Mindanao. The ashram offered a variety of spiritual and sport activities, and became the center of the movement. It continued in this role even after 2015, when Jára and Plášková were arrested and detained in the Immigration Detention Center of Bagong Diwa, near Manila, where they remain at the time of this writing. Retreats still take place in Siargao, and courses are taught in the Czech Republic under the leadership of seven senior mentors. However, police and media pressure have reduced the number of members from 4,000 in the early 2000s to less than 500 in 2019.

A Tantric System

The main source of the teachings of Guru Jára is Shivaite Tantrism, although his books also include references to Egyptian, Tibetan, Christian, and Kabbalistic teachings. In Jára's books, the readers meet a plethora of Christian mystics, some regarded as orthodox and some as heretic by the mainline Christian churches, as well as such classic Tantric masters as Padmasambhava (8th century), Tilopa (988–1069), and Tilopa's disciple, Naropa (11th century). Some of the more recent authors mentioned are Julius Evola, Aleister Crowley (1875–1947), Wilhelm Reich (1897–1957), Paul Brunton (1898–1981), and Theos Casimir Bernard (1908–1947?), the American “White Lama” whose uncle was Pierre Arnold Bernard, aka “Oom the Omnipotent” (1875–1955), the flamboyant founder of the Tantrik Order of America who had nonetheless an important role in introducing postural yoga to the West (Laycock 2013). Theos Bernard disappeared in Punjab in 1947, and was reported killed during the riots connected with the Partition between India and Pakistan. His body, however, was never found. The novel *Casanova Sútra* argues that perhaps the “White Lama” did not die in 1947 and was living in the Himalayas in the 1990s—or perhaps not, as the story is told in a way to leave room for doubt.

While he quotes several authors and masters, Jára believes that all genuine esoteric teachings can be traced to one source, which started being spread throughout the world during the reign of pharaoh Nyuserre Ini, the sixth ruler of the Egyptian Fifth Dynasty, who lived in the second half of the 25th century BCE. Jára discusses how the Sun Temple of Nyuserre Ini included hieroglyphs with a penis penetrating a triangle, an allusion to what would be later known as Tantric

teachings. From Nyuserre Ini proceeds a line of initiates, the “last historically documented” of whom was Pythagoras (569–495 BCE).

Crowley is an important reference for Jára. He believes that, as Crowley taught, we are living since 1904 in a qualitatively new time, the Aeon of Horus, and that Crowley was actually the reincarnation of Sir Edward Kelley (1555–1597 or 1598), the co-worker of British magus John Dee (1527–1608 or 1609). Both Dee and Kelley lived for several years in Bohemia. Jára claims that John Dee saw Nyuserre Ini in a magical mirror, and was commanded to establish the Eight League, a first attempt at reuniting the esoteric teachings scattered through Asia, Europe, and the newly discovered America (Guru Jára 2011, 265). Dee’s attempt was left unfinished, but was completed by Crowley in Cairo in 1904, when he received through his wife *The Book of the Law*, the holy scripture for the new aeon. Jára claims that the “inspiration of Crowley” played a role in his own mystical experience in Egypt in 1995 (Plášková 2019).

Jára’s magical system includes doctrines similar to Crowley’s about incubi, succubi, and “magical children,” as well as the repeated use of the word “Abrahadabra” to produce specific magical effects. More important for the Path, however, is the mantra “AleluJahRa,” which both includes the name of Jára, and celebrates him as a spiritually accomplished master, and refers to the Egyptian god Ra, as it can be translated as “Praised be the Holy Ra.” Since “já” in Czech means “me,” the mantra also remembers the initiates that God is inside them, and every human being is the center and co-creator of his or her own universe.

Just like Jára, all the teachers he mentions were controversial. Those who heard about Jára from the Czech media only, may easily believe that his teachings deal exclusively, or at least mostly, with sexuality. However, the majority of the Path’s courses are not about sex. Among the members I interviewed in June 2019, some had been attracted to the Path by the teachings on sexuality and couple relationship, but the majority mentioned courses on personal self-awareness, Tarots, Feng Shui and astrology as more important in motivating their decision to join the group. Astrology, in fact, emerged as the single most important factor.

Jára’s system of astrology is called “Astrofocus,” and incorporates Egyptian and Indian elements. According to the Path,

Astrology serves as a system of mutual communication between humans and the divine. All astronomical phenomena—the movement and cycles of planets and stars represent the visible dimension of divine forces. The particular planetary constellations at an

individual's time of birth form a divine time map for one's life. Knowledge of this cosmic resonance becomes a tool for maintaining the perpetual interaction between heaven and earth (Guru Jára Samadhi 2018).

Astrofocus is presented as a technique that can identify and transfer relevant information about the constellations directly into the student's subconscious.

Eventually, Astrofocus art emerged as an important part of Jára's teachings and public image. Jára himself produced collages built around his artistic photographs of women (and occasionally men), both naked and dressed, capturing their astrological personality and at the same time their "essence" or "soul." Jára claims that,

these collages can speak [to] and heal not only the woman they mirror, but also individuals who deal (in their profoundly different lives) with similar feelings, moods, inner restrictions or life situations (Dobeš 2007a, 2).

He has produced hundreds of Astrofocus portraits (Dobeš 2007b), and the course teaching how to express themselves through Astrofocus art is one of the most popular among the Path's students.

A parallel development is Astrofashion, which teaches students how to select clothing in harmony with their astrological identity. The Astrofashion faculty developed its own collections in Nepal and Bali, and popular female magazines such as *Elle* noticed the novel idea of women dressing according to astrology.

As mentioned earlier, in 2002, Jára offered for sale to the general public his own set of Tarot cards, built on three symbolic layers and including references to Tantra, Taoism, and the *I Ching*. They were appreciated by collectors for their artistic value, but within the Path, as one mentor told me in my interviews, they "are used for everything," from reading the flow of energies to assess the situation of each student (and of non-students, who also ask for readings) on the karmic journey through multiple reincarnations. Curiously, some of the cards depict vampires. In fact, Jára considers psychic vampires as a threat, and teaches techniques aimed at strengthening the aura, thus creating a magical protection against them.

Another subject attracting students to the Guru Jára Path is Feng Shui. The original variation of this classic Chinese art or science taught by Jára is known as ARTantra. It teaches that the five elements of the Taoist tradition—water, wood, fire, earth, and metal—are the basic components of both the human microcosm

and the universal macrocosm. The harmony of the five elements guides how homes and workplaces should be properly arranged but goes beyond that. Even relationships, romantic and others, can be properly arranged and harmoniously lived by applying the principles of ARTantra.

Tantra Yoga, also known as Aurarela and culminating in what Jára calls Surftantra, is the third main part of the Czech master's teachings. Based on Indian Tantra and other sources, Jára teaches that the material world is guided by energy. Energy, in turn, is guided by the human mind. And the human mind is guided by human will, faith, emotions, and the soul.

Contrary to popular preconceptions, Tantrism is a complex system that does not deal with sexuality only. Jára's Tantric teachings include meditation, visualization, physical exercises, and Tantric healing. In 2012, for example, Jára taught his European followers from the Philippines a technique of "bungee jumping meditation," to be practiced during a pilgrimage to the mountains of Switzerland. Meditating during the bungee jumping was supposed to teach "meditative calm of normal practice in stressful situations" (Manek 2015, 118–19). Bungee jumping meditation is part of a wider set of techniques, devised by Jára to customize traditional meditation methods in a way understandable by contemporary Western disciples.

Meditation is part of the "dry path" in Tantrism, while sexual techniques and rituals are part of the "wet path." Jára is a master of both paths, but the wet path is not about sexuality only. As Jára explains,

Tantra is unique in that, unlike in Vedanta or Buddhism which consider the world and the body as an illusion (*maya*), Tantra considers these as expressions of the Mother Goddess, Shakti impregnated by the reflection of Shiva (Guru Jára 2016b [English transl.], 39).

In the wet path, the material world is not "the irreconcilable enemy" but a tool that, aptly used, may lead to enlightenment (Guru Jára 2016b [English transl.], 39).

Although they were not in the majority, some of the students I interviewed did report that they joined the Path trusting that its teachings on love and sexuality may rescue a relationship that was going downhill, or improve the quality of their sexual life. Tantric sex is different from recreational sex: "in sex, you want to see even more sex, but in tantra you want to turn sex into divine light" (Guru Jára 2011, 411).

According to Jára, several problems in these fields are due to “hooks” and “thorns.” These concepts have not been invented by Jára. They have a venerable tradition in both Tantrism and esoteric Buddhism and Taoism, and are present in the teachings of other contemporary neo-Tantric groups. Jára mentions a quote attributed to Kūkai (Kōbō-Daishi, 774–835), the Japanese monk who founded esoteric Shingon Buddhism:

When you visit your former mistresses, you will see white worms eating through the vagina and blue flies flying in her mouth. This scene will give you deep regret and unspeakable shame.

Jára’s interpretation is that,

in cases where new life was not conceived during sex, the “living” remnants of this union of the two bodies will remain in the mistresses through a life-giving act. Only those who have attained at least a degree of samadhi through meditation can see it (Jára 2013).

The Path also quotes comments by Taisha Abelar, a former associate of Carlos Castaneda (1925–1998), who argues that male lovers leave “energy filaments” or “larvae” inside the women’s bodies, to be cleansed by respecting chastity for at least seven years (Hlavinka 2019). Simply explained, hooks (for women) and thorns (for men) are invisible marks left by previous sexual relationships. These marks are different, and the Path warns against considering and treating them as if thorns and hooks were of the same nature—they aren’t.

Even after the relationship has ended, the previous partners, consciously or unconsciously, may still exert an influence through the hooks and thorns and, in the worst cases, act as psychic vampires, drain the victim of her energy, and poison her present sexual and romantic life. In these cases, rituals of “unhooking” and “cleaning up of thorns” are needed. They are the most controversial aspect of the teachings of the Guru Jára Path and are discussed in the following section.

Unlike in other Tantric paths or movements, such as the Romanian MISA, coitus reservatus or karezza (sexual intercourse without ejaculation) is taught but not prescribed as mandatory. One feature immediately noticed by the observers of the Guru Jára Path is the presence of many children. Conception is at the center of several esoteric teachings. Depending on the sexual positions during the intercourse (so that students of the Path may be able to ascertain from their horoscope in which positions their parents produced them, the most favorable being the one with woman on top) and other factors, the energy of the couple’s

Tantric connection may attract spiritual beings (incubi and succubi), or “aliens who live near a certain star,” who will either simply “pay a visit” or incarnate on earth (Guru Jára 2011, 410). In fact, if a human child is conceived, the incubus or succubus return to the astral world, their mission fulfilled. If there is no conception, these beings create a hook, around which they start building an “astral nest,” their “home,” which can manifest itself physically, creating problems for the woman, or cause her to be “fertilized by astral forces” (Guru Jára 2011, 422–41).

These teachings should be understood through the Buddhist doctrine of the four different types of conception, of which Jára finds hints in the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, a text attributed to Buddha Shakyamuni himself. A soul could enter the uterus “completely unconsciously, blindly, animally.” These are souls who were in a previous life on Planet Earth animals or low-level humans. In the second case, the souls enter the uterus consciously, although they often believe it is “a cave or some kind of shelter,” but lose their memories. Half of these souls are of aliens from other worlds. The third group are souls that “enter the uterus consciously, are aware of everything throughout pregnancy and often tell the mother about the world they came from.” The fourth category includes the avatars, who consciously control all the process of incarnation (Guru Jára 2011, 415–17).

Periods of celibacy are also important tools for the Tantric disciple. Jára teaches that,

Paradoxically a fundamental tantric exercise is celibacy for four months, during which men wait for a first nocturnal emission. If they occur regularly, between twenty-seven and thirty-three days, the lunar phase in which the ejaculation occurs should be noted. ... If the emission is more often ..., it means everything is healthy, though the energy is a little erratic, like a thunderbolt...The worst diagnosis is if the emission doesn't arrive until the thirty-fourth day or beyond, because it means that the chi energy is weak or the kundalini is blocked (Guru Jára 2016b [English ed.], 39).

Hooks and thorns do not exhaust Jára's teachings on sexuality, which are deeply connected with astrology. Saturn corresponds to the “Don Juan type,” and Jupiter to the “Casanova type.” The first is named after the literary character of Don Juan, based on the historical Spanish aristocrat Miguel Mañara (1627–1679), although at the end of the opera of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) Don Juan is taken to Hell by the Devil, while in fact the real-life Mañara converted to a strict Catholicism, devoted his last years to charity, and is even

being considered by the Catholic Church for beatification. The second refers to the Venetian adventurer Giacomo Casanova (1725–1798), who was also interested in alchemy and spent the last part of his life in present-day Czech Republic. Simply speaking, the sexuality of the Don Juan type centers on penetration, and of the Casanova type on orgasm. Women may also belong to the Casanova or Don Juan types, and determining a person's type is crucial for examining his or her relationships, sexual life, and Tantric exercises best suitable for each student.

Jára believes that Tantric teachings, no matter under what name, secretly exists also in Christianity, and include both the dry and the wet paths. He suggests that, although Christian scholars normally attribute connections between Roman martyr St Valentine (226–269) and love to legends created several centuries after he died, in fact the saint deserves his popular fame as the saint of love, since he secretly taught his disciples both the dry and the wet path, with practices similar to the later Indian Tantrism (Hlavinka 2019).

Confidential teachings of the Path also concern the divine status of Jára and Plášková. They are proposed as hypotheses rather than as dogmatic teachings. Most students believe that Jára is an avatar of Shiva, in the same position of Jesus, who was also a manifestation of Shiva. Guru Jára is thus “divine” but is part of a hierarchy reminiscent of Theosophy, which includes higher entities. He volunteered to incarnate in a Communist country, Czechoslovakia, which he describes as one of the most materialistic countries in the world, and to understand gradually his own divine status, answering a call from some unidentified Higher Powers in the spiritual world. Plášková is regarded in turn as a manifestation of the fierce Hindu goddess Durga.

Rituals—and How the Path Got in Trouble

Every Friday, members of the Path engage in meditation. Friday was chosen in 2010 at the times of the police raid, as Friday evening is the quietest time in Czech jails. Members can visit a center but can also meditate at home, spiritually united with the mentors and other students. The first Friday of each month, the Path proposes the “Star Meditation,” a collective ritual offered in the movement's centers. Gatherings are organized to celebrate dates relevant in the master's life or of astrological significance.

As mentioned earlier, the mantra “AleluJahRa” has a special position in the Path, and its recitation is recommended daily. Many students learned the Satva sunrise ritual (short yoga and meditation session, followed by prayer) in the Philippines, and keep performing it every day. Tantric rituals for individuals and couples are performed for days of full moon, new moon, eclipses, or spiritual feasts. Additional sets of exercises are prescribed for long-term retreats. Some form of daily spiritual practice is recommended to all students, but each can choose a personalized formula.

The festivals and public events of the early 2000s are organized on a smaller scale, usually twice a year, due to the media campaigns and the reduction in the number of members. The average attendance dwindled from several thousands to 150–180.

Students, however, regularly gather in the Philippines, where most Czech members go at least once a year, and several more than once. There, collective events and festivals can still be organized.

Although no longer personally led by Jára, pilgrimages, a key feature in the life of the Path, also continue to destinations such as Egypt, Jerusalem, Santiago de Compostela, India, and Nepal. Another important teaching in the Path is the “spiritual trekking.” Spiritual trekking is regarded as the original spiritual teaching of Jára, who was a professional climber in his youth. It refers to the symbolic climbing of the ten highest mountains on the earth, i.e. the ten major chakras of the world. “Spiritual trekking” may refer to an individual journey through life, but is also the name of one of the most popular courses offered by the Path and open to everybody, including non-members and even atheists. “Spiritual trekking” may also be learned through actual trekking, preferably in areas where the energy of the environment may interact with the student’s own energy in a special way—holy mountains, forests, traditional pilgrimage sites.

The Path is known, and controversial, for its teachings and rituals of sacred sexuality, particularly the “unhooking” of women. All kind of physical sexual relations create hooks, the strongest coming from intercourse with ejaculation (see AuraRelax.com 2011, a rare complete description of the unhooking of one particular woman), but not all hooks are negative. And not all women have hooks damaging their normal life. In its heydays, the Path had some 3,000 female members. Only some 300 of them, or 10%, were counseled, or they asked, to go through the unhooking ritual.

The ritual first requests that horns be detected. Jára claim to have

studied the “diagnostic divination” of the state of *vasanas* (hooks, thorns), e.g. from a shape that herbs thrown on the chest creates or water spilled in the area of the abdomen, both of which are energetically charged and “incandescent” for many hours. Herbs and water then not only show problems of spiritual energy in the body, but also heal them (Hlavinka 2019, quoting words from Jára during an interview he gave in the detention center in the Philippines).

For clairvoyant persons, as Chinese and Japanese esoteric masters had already mentioned some one thousand years ago,

“hooks” look like luminous worms, which take the best life energy from the woman’s womb and transfer it towards her former partners (Hlavinka 2019).

Unhooking involved the sexual penetration of the woman by Jára, with sacred energy thus flowing in, without orgasm or ejaculation by the master, preceded by breathing exercises performed by the woman. Objections that this was simply a way for Jára to enjoy the company of many women are dismissed by a Czech academic who is himself a member of the movement, Pavel Hlavinka, by arguing that, first, by definition in an enlightened master “there is no residue of human ego bound to bodily desires.” Second, for him,

it is certainly no kind of fun because all negative energies from the former partners of the concerned woman are being passed onto the Guru and he must subsequently undergo a lot of cleansing lasting for many days (Hlavinka 2019; see also AuraRelax.com 2011).

In addition,

fourteen is the maximum number of hooks that the initiated tantric can remove during one session. A large number could kill him. His karma would get “over-burnt” and he would have an accident, or another fatal event would happen to him (Guru Jára 2011, 63).

Women with more than fourteen “bad” hooks (i.e. who had more than fourteen partners, as each partner creates one hook only, no matter how many intercourses he had with the woman) should go through the ritual more than once. In some cases, Jára decided to remove only the worst hooks, leaving the others (AuraRelax.com 2011).

Based on my interviews, it is true that Barbora Plášková, as reported by the dissidents to the police, often attended the rituals (although some of the unhooked women I interviewed reported she looked to the other side, to avoid

any potential embarrassment), her role, as a high-level Tantric initiate, being to concentrate the energy and keep the magic circle sealed.

I interviewed several women who went through the unhooking. They described their experience as exhilarating, but in the sense of a “spiritual orgasm” rather than in common sexual terms. Some reported that this status persisted for several weeks. Some requested to be “unhooked” because of problems in their lives. Others simply wanted to speed up their spiritual progress.

Unhooking has been stopped in the Path, since only Jára is authorized to perform the ritual and he is in a detention center in the Philippines. Before being arrested, he was taking steps to teach advanced Tantra to other mentors, which may have enabled them to unhook female students, but the severe and difficult training could not be completed because of the events in the Philippines. The devotees hope that Jára’s legal problems may be solved and he may both teach other male mentors the unhooking techniques and perhaps start performing again the ritual himself. On what would happen otherwise, or after Jára’s death, members can only speculate, as the master has not yet offered clear indications. It is also important to note that unhooking is not an essential part of the Path’s doctrine, neither a mandatory part of the spiritual activities. In fact, as some of my interviewees pointed out to me, the Path has now survived for several years without any unhooking ritual taking place.

If women have hooks, men have thorns. As mentioned earlier, they have a different nature from hooks. They are invisible, but can be seen by adequately trained female Tantric initiates. Thorns are located at the level of the first chakra of the Hindu tradition, i.e. between the anus and the penis. Female initiates can help men by locating the thorns and “cleaning up” them with their hands or tongues.

Perhaps because male students represented only 25% of the Path’s membership, the cleaning up of thorns was somewhat less controversial than the unhooking, and largely eluded the attention of the anti-cultists and the police.

A Struggling Community

In its heydays, the Path had 4,000 students, some 3,000 of them women. As mentioned earlier, persecutions reduced the number to circa 450. Most of them

are in the Czech Republic, but there is also a functioning community in Japan, and members in Australia, Germany, the United States, Italy, France, Spain, Bulgaria, and other countries.

Guru Jára is considered the source and the leader of the movement. He continues to write books and to give instructions from the detention center where he is detained in the Philippines. There are two main centers of the movement, in the Czech Republic and in the Philippines. In Czechia, there are functioning centers in Prague, Brno, and Ostrava, under the national leadership of a body of seven members, known as the Lodge of the 12 Ra Initiations, under which operate a lesser directional body of 24 members. In the Philippines, the ashram has four permanently resident nuns, and “temporary monks” (and nuns) coming from other countries to stay in Siargao for some weeks or months. Most Czech members visit Siargao once or twice a year.

In 2011, in view of the controversies, an extraordinary measure (which was later repealed) was taken. For Czech (and Bulgarian) women participating in the Spiritual Trekking pilgrimage to Asia (that year, to Thailand), in addition to having attended the Path’s courses where the nature of the movement’s Tantric rituals was clearly explained, it was required “the written permission of their senator (each senator has an office in its [sic] district, where he/she regularly officiates),” authorizing the female devotee to participate in a pilgrimage where a Tantric ritual involving sexual intercourse “may happen” (Manek 2015, 109). Indeed, Czech senators *were* approached: some were sympathetic and four or five even signed the statements for multiple female students, others reacted with hostility or did not even understand what exactly was going on.

An important part of the Path’s activity is promoting the books and the Astrofocus artistic works of Jára. Even after the police action against the movement and its leaders, new books were regularly published and art exhibitions organized, and some media distinguished between the controversy surrounding Jára as a spiritual leader and his praiseworthy artistic achievements. After the police had raided the movement in 2010 (see below, under “Issues/Challenges”), the devotees were able to organize nine Astrofocus exhibitions throughout the Czech Republic in 2011, followed by one at the University Library in Olomouc in 2012, one in Stockholm, Sweden, in 2013, and a yearly one in the Castle of Letovice from 2012 to 2015. Two exhibitions had been previously organized in Athens, Greece, in 2009 and 2010.

The settings of these exhibitions are also significant. In 2010, photographs by Jára were exhibited in conjunction with a seminar in the Castle of Litomyšl, a few blocks from the Portmoneum, the extraordinary home of art collector Josef Portman (1893–1968) that Czech esoteric artist Josef Váchal (1884–1969) decorated with murals depicting demons, Theosophical masters, and Christian images (Introvigne 2018, 218–20). In 2011, Astrofocus collages were exhibited at Duchcov Castle, where Casanova spent the last thirteen years of his life between 1785 and 1798.

Two exhibitions, at the Rock Café in Prague in 2011 and in the city of Jablonec nad Nisou in 2013, were cancelled by the local organizers due to media attacks, but in general at least a part of the art community remained willing to celebrate Jára's artistic achievements even after he was convicted for sexual abuse in Zlín and detained in the Philippines.

In 2011, the Path organized a workshop in the island of Siargao in the Philippines. Echoing other religious leaders of the past, Jára expressed his opinion that “this was the place,” and that the search for a spiritual center of the Path outside of the Czech Republic had ended. Land was acquired, and a swampy jungle was gradually transformed into the Rishikesh Retreat Center, thanks to the voluntary labor of the devotees. Retreats and spiritual activities went initially through a “Vivaldi period” (2012–Winter 2014), as they followed a rhythm inspired by the group of violin concerti *The Four Seasons* by Italian composer Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741), and a “Sengai period” (2014–2015), when Jára explored the various elements of the painting *Universe*, by Japanese Zen monk and artist Sengai Gibon (1750–1837).

After 2015, for reasons explained in the next paragraphs, the activities in Siargao should continue without Jára and Plášková. But other mentors direct the retreats, and Path members from the Czech Republic and other countries continue to visit the island regularly.

A Never-Ending Legal Saga

As mentioned earlier, the first massive attacks against the Guru Jára Path by the Czech anti-cult movement date back to 2001, although the Path had already attracted the malevolent attention of the quite active Czech anti-cultists a couple

of years earlier. In the same year 2001, the branch monastery in the Beskids Mountains was burned to the ground by arsonists. Those responsible were never identified. Another branch monastery, called B7, was quietly opened to replace it in 2002; it was eventually sold in 2011, to finance the construction of the ashram in the Philippines. In 2004, arsonists attacked the main monastery in Odrlice. The devotees managed to save the building, but the property of a neighbor was destroyed. Physical violence continued to be a feature of the anti-cult campaign. Jára himself barely escaped two attempts to assault him in 2005, which he regarded as consequences of the campaign.

This is hardly understandable in the heart of the European Union, but relates to a narrative that the very active Czech anti-cult movement managed to sell to most local media and ultimately to the police as well. Rituals such as the unhooking were presented as simple pretexts to satisfy the lust of Jára. What for the Path was a Tantric ritual became for the anti-cultists and the media simply glorified rape. Jára was depicted as a pervert and predator, and the women in the movement as either accomplices or “vulnerable,” brainwashed victims. Jára had noted himself that certain Tantric rituals with a century-old tradition he witnessed in India “may appear to an uninitiated person like a sexual orgy” (Guru Jára 2016a). His own rituals encountered the same fate.

The anti-cult movement had put the police on the track of the Guru Jára Path since the early 2000s, but the situation precipitated after Jára and Plášková announced that they were leaving Europe definitively in 2007. A preliminary investigation of Jára had been started based on the complaint of a woman who had been unhooked but, rather than to the ritual, objected to Jára’s alleged misrepresentation of his own Tantric qualifications and initiations. Although before their departure Jára and Plášková had been interrogated, but no charges had been filed at the end of the preliminary investigation, the police placed both Jára in 2007 and Plášková in the 2009 in their wanted list since their whereabouts were unknown. Only later (2010) the police claimed Jára and Plášková had fled abroad to escape arrests. In the case of Plášková, the police wanted to interrogate her about a defamation charge filed by a female doctor, who had been accused in an article published by the Path of willingly killing her patients. Although it was unclear whether Plášková was in fact the author of the article, Jára later claimed that the ghosts of the victims had asked him to make the

case public, thus preventing further homicides. Be it as it may be, nobody was indicted in the defamation case.

Realizing that the leaders will not come back to the Czech Republic, some dissidents tried to take control of the movement, with the purpose of converting it into a milder for-profit New Age school. Their efforts were defeated by Jára loyalists, but the conflict determined the end of the Poetrie Esoteric Institute, whose students had been contacted one by one and harassed by the ex-members. The latter also supplied the list of the students to the police, although they did not file any complaint—perhaps because, if there had been illegal activities, the dissidents had been very much part of them.

The police started identifying and interrogating all the women who had been unhooked, trying to find evidence of sexual abuse. For whatever reasons, men whose thorns had been cleaned up by female mentors were left alone. Some 300 women had been unhooked. More than half of them were interviewed, some in person and some by phone only, by the police, which found eight cases of women claiming that the unhooking had been an unpleasant experience. Six of them, however, never testified in subsequent court cases. Hlavinka claims that it is possible that some really experimented bad consequences of the unhooking, but this often happens to women who do not respect the prescription of living in chastity for 40 days after the ritual (Hlavinka 2019). Women I interviewed also remember the treatment they were subjected to by the police, and believe the eight women finally gave up under heavy pressure,

Prosecutors eventually regarded the case of L. N. as the more promising. She was the daughter of a senior police officer, told her story to the police, and successfully resisted further attempts by Jára's and Plášková's defense asking that she testifies in court, claiming post-traumatic stress and finally leaving the Czech Republic. Ultimately, the Zlín branch of the Regional Court of Brno argued that her presence in the trial was not necessary, as her story can be reconstructed on the basis of the police records. Police documents argue that L. N., before participating in the ritual, had not understood what the unhooking was all about (although it was clearly described in the Path's publications), tried to stop the process, and was forced to conclude it by Jára and Plášková. The latter, she said, even kept molesting her after the ritual had concluded. Plášková's and Jára's attorneys objected, offering photographic evidence, that, after the first

unhooking, she came back for a second session the next week, which would be strange if she had felt raped.

On October 19, 2010, the elite security force of the Czech Police (SROC), in cooperation with the Zlín branch of the Regional Court of Brno, raided the premises of the movement and the homes of senior members in the Czech Republic. 13 female mentors were detained. Over 200,000 euros were confiscated and not given back to the movement until this day. The involvement of the media and the fact that the raids were carried out in the early hours of the morning by elite police corps, as if they were dealing with terrorists, are similar to what happened in other “cult” cases. As Wright and Palmer (2015) have argued, the raids are a sort of baroque theater and mostly serve a propaganda purpose. They show to the public opinion that the authorities are ready to punish “cults” and that religious deviance would not be tolerated. The movement believes that it was no coincidence that the raids followed a successful seminar on “Spiritual Trekking” held in Brno on 25–26 September. For the anti-cult “experts” who were advising the police, the Path argues, it was inconceivable that a movement they believed they had successfully liquidated through massive media slander was still able to organize successful events (Manek 2015, 107–08).

On May 28, 2012, the Zlín branch of the Regional Court of Brno issued an international arrest warrant against Jára and Plášková, for all the eight rapes allegedly committed between 2004 and 2006. On October 7, 2014, the same Zlín branch of the Regional Court of Brno sentenced Jára and Plášková, in absentia, to jail terms respectively of 10 and 9 and a half years. Consequently, under pressure from the Czech authorities, Plášková and Jára were arrested in the Philippines, respectively on April 14 and May 15, 2015. They applied for political asylum, claiming they were persecuted in the Czech Republic because of their religion. Their first requests were denied in 2015, based on negative information the Czech Embassy forwarded to the local Ministry of Justice, and, pending appeals, they remain detained to this day in the Immigration Detention Center of Bagong Diwa, near Manila, in circumstances international NGOs have described as unsanitary and dangerous, separated from children they both have in the Philippines (Human Rights Without Frontiers 2017; Fautré 2017). On June 10, 2015, the Czech police even tried to forcibly deport Jára back to Prague from the Philippines, while his asylum case was pending. Paradoxically, the failed attempt, which had obviously been programmed before, occurred a few days after,

on May 21, the High Court of Olomouc had cancelled the Zlín decision of 2014 and remanded the case to the Zlín branch court.

After a long delay, on January 26, 2018, the Zlín branch of the Regional Court of Brno ruled on the case of eight women, and sentenced again both Jára and Plášková, to a slightly reduced jail penalty of seven and a half years.

On October 10, 2018, on appeal, the High Court of Olomouc divided the case into two separate branches. It ruled about the alleged rape of one woman, L. N., sentencing Jára and Plášková respectively to jail penalties of five and a half and five years. The case of the other seven women was sent back to the Zlín branch of the Regional Court of Brno.

On March 27, 2019, the Czech Supreme Court confirmed the appeal verdict of Olomouc in the L. N. case and the jail penalties for the accused. Jára and Plášková filed a recourse with the Czech Constitutional Court, claiming that their right to defense had been violated, as they were not served with proper notices of the trials in the Philippines, and their lawyers were not able to interrogate L. N. and confront her with what they believed were her contradictions. The recourse is pending at the time of this writing.

The Zlín court realized that the evidence on the case of the other seven women was very weak, yet it did not want to withdraw the original accusations. Instead, it decided to “freeze” the case of the seven women, and the prosecutor did not appeal this decision, while the defense of Jára and Plášková asked for a new trial, hoping it would clearly establish their clients’ innocence. The case of the seven women will be reopened in Zlín in Fall 2019. The lawyers for Jára and Plášková believe that the decision on this case, at any rate, would mostly have a moral value since, in their opinion, not having contested the “freezing” of the case when he might have done so, the prosecutor in Zlín would not be in a position to obtain from the court further jail penalties against Jára and Plášková, even if they would be found guilty.

In retrospect, anti-cultists basically succeeded in stopping the growth of the Guru Jára Path and almost destroying the movement. After the police action and the court cases, members were discriminated in their workplaces and disavowed by their families. Some were physically assaulted. Most got scared and left, and the Path lost between 80 and 90% of its members. Many reported severe

psychological problems as a consequence of the police raids. Kristýna Tomanova, née Plášková and Barbora's sister, reported that,

Since the raid, I have been on antidepressants for 5 years. I wanted to die... I was in a dreadful psychological state ... and I began thinking about suicide... I would say that the police raids and the media campaign succeeded. They disemboweled me being alive (Guru Jára Path 2017, 17–9).

That anti-cultists enjoy a privileged relationship with Czech authorities was confirmed when, in 2015, the Guru Jára Path applied for registration as a religion in the Czech Republic with the Ministry of Culture, which appointed as an expert Zdeněk Vojtíšek, a professor in the Hussite Faculty of Theology of Prague, who is both the most famous Czech anti-cultist and Jára's arch-nemesis. Not surprisingly, registration was denied on January 26, 2017. In the process, Vojtíšek had obtained the confidential list of the members of the Path, enclosed with the request for registration, which allowed his anti-cult organization to contact and intimidate them.

However, the movement did not disappear. Some 450 members remain, and many who would not participate openly in activities of the Path do follow its teachings via the Internet. For example, some 20,000 are part of the Internet community discussing the Path's Feng Shui teachings, although the name of Guru Jára is not used and some may not know about the connection. As for Jára, he continues to write intensively and spread his teachings even in his difficult conditions and has published a journal about his life in the detention center, where apparently trivial incidents serve as opportunities for esoteric meditations, in an ascetic environment of sort (Guru Jára 2016b).

APPENDIX: A CHRONOLOGY OF THE GURU JÁRA PATH

1971 (January 4): Jaroslav (Jára) Dobeš was born in Příbram, Czechoslovakia (now Czech Republic).

1976: At age 5, as he later reported, Jára first experienced visions of ghosts and other supernatural phenomena.

- 1980: Jára started recording his supernatural experiences in a journal. Believing he was suffering of mental illness, doctors put him under heavy medication.
- 1982 (November): Jára tried to hang himself on a tree but was saved by his best friend and taken to the hospital. There, he went through what he later described as a near-death experience, which oriented his life towards spirituality.
- 1985: Jára became a proficient rock climber.
- 1989: Jára escaped to Italy, where he studied Roman Catholicism and monastic traditions, as well as Kabbalah and other esoteric teachings.
- 1991: Jára started working as a professional rock climber and instructor, and spending time in natural hermitages. According to his disciples, he achieved enlightenment in Arco, Italy.
- 1995: Jára started offering his services as a professional astrologer and spiritual master. In the same year, he claimed to have received the highest initiation, from a spiritual entity, inside the Pyramid of Menkaure in Giza, Egypt, and instructions to go to India, where he would find his guru.
- 1990s: Jára traveled repeatedly to India, where he studied under Swami Nagananda and Guru Anahdan.
- 1996: Jaroslav Dobeš, now known as Guru Jára, started teaching in the Czech Republic and gathered his first followers, with whom he will eventually establish the Guru Jára Path.
- 1997 (September 15–16): Jára organized the festival “Days of Spiritual Activities” in the Museum of Natural History of Olomouc, Czech Republic.
- 1998: Jára and his followers established a monastery in Odrlice, Czech Republic.
- 1999: Jára published his first book, *Pilgrims to Immortality*. Centers were inaugurated in Olomouc and Zlín, Czech Republic, and Dharamshala, India. A small branch monastery was opened in Horní Bečva, in the Beskids Mountains, Czech Republic. The first international seminar was held in the island of Mindoro, Philippines.
- 2000: Jára established the Czech Telepathic Association.
- 2000–2001: Large festivals organized by the Path in the main Czech cities attracted widespread attention.

- 2001: Jára launched the magazine *Poetrie*. His Tarot cards deck was offered for sale to the general Czech public and became a best seller.
- 2001: First massive attacks against the Guru Jára Path by the Czech anti-cult movement. The Path's branch monastery in the Beskids Mountains was burned to the ground by arsonists who were never identified.
- 2002 (November 22–24): The Symposium of Esoteric Science was organized in Olomouc.
- 2002: A new center was opened in Hampi, Karnataka, India.
- 2003: Jára moved to Thailand, then to Nepal, while his followers in the Czech Republic numbered in the thousands. The Prague center was opened.
- 2004: The Poetrie Esoteric Institute was established, with Barbora Plášková as co-director.
- 2005: Anti-cult campaigns and violent assaults against Jára and his students. The monastery in Odrlice was closed.
- 2007: Last seminar taught by Jára in the Czech Republic. Jára and, later, Plášková permanently left Europe for Asia.
- 2007 (May 14): After a preliminary police investigation against Jára had been started, based on a complaint by a female member, he was put in the wanted list because his residence was unknown to the Czech police.
- 2009 (February 18): Authorities in the Philippines admitted Jára into the country. Plášková will follow in March, and will in turn be put in the wanted list by Czech authorities in October, since the police wanted to question her about a defamation case and her residence was unknown.
- 2009: In the absence of Jára and Plášková, some dissident students tried to take control of the movement. As a result, the Poetrie Esoteric Institute was closed, and the ex-members supplied the list of students to the Czech police.
- 2010 (October 19): The elite security force of the Czech Police (SROC), in cooperation with the Zlín branch of the Regional Court of Brno, raided the premises of the movement and the homes of senior members in the Czech Republic. 13 female leaders were detained and over 200,000 euros confiscated. Hundreds of female members of the Path were interrogated, some in person and some by phone only.

2011: Jára founded his ashram in the island of Siargao, Philippines.

2011: Jára published *Casanova Sútra*, an initiatory novel including his key teachings. Several exhibitions introduced his Astrofocus collages in the Czech Republic.

2012–Winter 2014: “Vivaldi Period” in the Siargao ashram.

2012 (May 28): The Zlín branch of the Regional Court of Brno issued an international arrest warrant against Jára and Plášková, for eight rapes allegedly committed between 2004 and 2006.

2014–2015: “Sengai Period” in the Siargao ashram.

2014 (October 7): The Zlín branch of the Regional Court of Brno sentenced Jára and Plášková, in absentia, to jail terms respectively of 10 and 9 and a half years.

2015 (April 14): Plášková was arrested in the Philippines, following a request by Czech authorities, who had cancelled her valid passport.

2015 (May 15): Jára was also arrested in the Philippines. He and Plášková requested asylum in the Philippines, claiming they were persecuted in the Czech Republic for their religious beliefs.

2015 (May 21): The High Court of Olomouc cancelled the decision of 2014 and remanded the case to the Zlín branch of the Regional Court of Brno.

2015 (June 10): Czech police attempted to forcibly deport Jára from the Philippines back to the Czech Republic, but the attempt failed.

2015 (June 15 and 16): The asylum requests of Jára and Plášková in the Philippines were denied for the first time. Pending appeals, they remained in detention centers for immigrants.

2018 (January 26): The Zlín branch of the Regional Court of Brno ruled again in the case, and reduced the sentences for both Jára and Plášková to seven and a half years.

2018 (October 10): On appeal, the High Court of Olomouc divided the case into two separate branches. It ruled about the alleged rape of one woman, L. N., sentencing Jára and Plášková to jail penalties respectively of five and a half and five years. The case of the other seven women was sent back to the Zlín branch of the Regional Court of Brno.

2018 (December): The Zlín court decided to not to rule on the case of the seven women, but rather “froze” it. The attorneys of Jára and Plášková appealed this decision, hoping for total acquittal.

2019 (March 27): The Czech Supreme Court confirmed the appeal verdict of Olomouc in the L. N. case. Jára and Plášková filed a recourse with the Czech Constitutional Court. The case of the remaining seven women was scheduled to be re-opened in Zlín in Fall 2019.

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**Degrees of Truth: Sequoia University and
Doctor L. Ron Hubbard, PhD, D. Scn, D.D.**

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ABSTRACT: The various conflicting claims about Sequoia University, from which L. Ron Hubbard received an honorary PhD, result from incomplete and faulty research by critics of Hubbard and Scientology. Although unaccredited, Sequoia University was not a degree mill. Sequoia neither operated from a post office box, nor solely from one man's home. There were several departments, locations, ceremonies and courses with real coursework required to obtain various degrees, which even a California state inquiry confirmed upon its investigation into the school. Several successful and prominent graduates received degrees from Sequoia for their work, while others received honorary degrees. Hubbard neither founded nor acquired Sequoia University, nor did he buy or self-award his honorary PhD. In fact, Hubbard was reticent to become involved with Sequoia University and never reclaimed the honorary PhD once he formally renounced it. Sequoia University appeared well-intentioned from all accounts, and although unaccredited there was more to its background than previously realized.

KEYWORDS: Dianetics, Joseph W. Hough, Forrest J. Ackerman, L. Ron Hubbard, L. Ron Hubbard's Academic Degrees, Richard de Mille, Scientology, Sequoia University.

Introduction

Sequoia University is famous for awarding Dianetics and Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard (1911–1986) an honorary Doctorate of Philosophy. As such, critics and scholars have depicted Sequoia as a diploma mill, including Hugh B. Urban (Urban 2011, 32 and 2015, 138), Christopher Evans (1931–1979: Evans 1973, 21), George Malko (Malko 1970, 31), Russell Miller (Miller 1987, 211–12), Graham Smith quoting John McMaster (Smith 2009), Alan C. Walter (1935–2009) and James R. Phelan (1912–1997) as quoted by Janet Reitman

(Reitman 2011, 52 and 60), Jon Atack (Atack 1990, 138–42), Virginia McClaughry (McClaughry 2016a; McClaughry 2016b) and Paulette Cooper (Cooper 1971, 163–64).

Furthermore, they have created eleven contradicting claims: (1) L. Ron Hubbard and others all knew that Sequoia University was a degree mill; (2) Sequoia was forced to close in 1957; (3) Sequoia was forced to close in 1971; (4) Sequoia was forced to close in 1984; (5) Sequoia University ran from a post office box; (6) Sequoia University ran from a residential home; (7) Hubbard founded Sequoia University; (8) Hubbard acquired Sequoia University; (9) Hubbard awarded himself a degree from Sequoia University; (10) Hubbard bought his diploma from Sequoia University; and (11) Hubbard used Sequoia University for intelligence purposes. Despite these conflicting narratives, however, none of these claimants have thoroughly investigated Sequoia University's history, let alone differentiated between the honorary PhD (Doctor of Philosophy), J.D. (Doctor of Laws), D.Sc. (Doctor of Scientology) and D.D. (Doctor of Divinity). This article not only provides a much more comprehensive history of Sequoia University than material previously published, but also analyzes and challenges these various and incomplete narratives.

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the University of Oklahoma Libraries Western History Collections provided the copy of the honorary diploma for Governor Johnston Murray (1902–1971). Dr. Stephen A. Kent of the Sociology Department at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada provided a rare copy of *Expand*. Authors Paulette Cooper and John Bear both gave insights on various claims in their books. Steven Baskin was very helpful in gathering information about his father Mercein's honorary degree and also provided the information that he was a graduation speaker. Andreas Groß of *Scientology: Original 1972*, Max Hauri of *The True Source Scientology Foundation*, Margaret Lake of *Scientology Myths*, and Michel Snoeck of *The Wise Old Goat* websites all contributed immensely. Randy Smith, Kay Christenson and my lovely wife Olga all provided valuable feedback and edits. I also thank the anonymous peer reviewers of *The Journal of CESNUR* for their valuable comments.

The Current Narrative

Religious scholar Hugh B. Urban claimed that Hubbard's honorary PhD was foundational to his hagiography:

Skeptics have pointed out, for example, that most of Hubbard's academic credentials are fictional [...] his PhD turned out to be the product of a sham diploma mill called Sequoia University [...] Thus Hubbard's autobiography is perhaps best understood not as an accurate historical chronicle but rather as a kind of "hagiographic mythology"—that is, an idealized narrative composed self-consciously of mythic themes (Urban 2015, 138).

Urban primarily cited Graham Smith's *Daily Mail* article, itself based on ex-Scientologist John McMaster's claims:

[Hubbard's] claim to a Doctor of Philosophy degree turned out to have been the product of a sham diploma mill called Sequoia University (which was never recognized by the state of California). And yet, if we accept the Hubbard story not as an accurate historical document but as an intentionally constructed "hagiographic mythology," it then begins to resemble the familiar counters of the "hero's journey" so frequently encountered in other mythological traditions [...] Perhaps the one truly unique feature of Hubbard's biography is that *he was himself a prolific author of science fiction and fantasy tales and thus had an unusually creative hand in the elaboration of his own narrative* (Urban 2011, 32).

Scholar Kjersti Hellesøy copied Urban's conclusions almost verbatim:

Hugh Urban characterizes that official biography of Hubbard, as presented by the CoS, as a kind of hagiography, an idealized narrative built around mythic themes [...] According to the hagiographic account, Hubbard was an engineer and an astrophysicist, and held a PhD. Critical investigation has demonstrated that he never even finished any of his degrees, and that his PhD came from a diploma-mill university, never recognized by the state of California (Hellesøy 2015, 257–58).

Dorthe Refslund Christensen even used Urban's conclusion as her essay title and subject: "Inventing L. Ron Hubbard: On the Construction and Maintenance of the Hagiographic Mythology of Scientology's Founder" (Christensen 2005, 227). Other critics of Hubbard have made similar assertions:

In later years, in addition to the "C.E." which he allowed to appear after his name, he added a "Ph.D." It eventually came out that the degree had been "granted" by Sequoia University, a nonaccredited California institution with the reputation of being something of a diploma mill (Malko 1970, 31).

Yet, their research into Sequoia University was superficial and incorrect, despite their claims. For example, neither Hubbard nor his followers claimed that he was an astrophysicist. That this research was neglected suggests that various other assertions about Sequoia University required further examination.

Diploma Mills Defined

Though the phrase "diploma mill" is used cavalierly regarding Hubbard's honorary degree, it is important to define what is actually meant by "diploma mill" as well as "honorary degree." One source describes a diploma mill as: "an organization claiming to be an institution of higher learning but existing for profit only and granting degrees without demanding proper qualifications of the recipients" (Dictionary.com 2019). Another source lists it as: "A usually unregulated institution of higher education granting degrees with few or no academic requirements" (Merriam-Webster.com 2019). Nevertheless, former FBI agent and expert on diploma mills John Bear conceded: "It would be wonderful to have an infallible and undisputed test of what a [diploma] mill is and isn't, but clearly there is no perfect definition that works for every person in every case" (Bear and Ezell 2005, 21). Bear also summarized the attributes of an honorary degree:

[It] is, purely and simply, a title that some institutions (and some scoundrels) have chosen to bestow from time to time, and for a wide variety of reasons, upon certain

people. These reasons often have to do with the donation of money or with attracting celebrities to a commencement ceremony [...] [t]he honorary doctorate has no academic standing whatsoever and yet, because it carries with it the same title, “Doctor,” that is used for the earned degree, it has become an extremely desirable commodity for those who covet titles and the prestige they bring [...] [m]ore than one thousand traditional colleges and universities award honorary doctorates (anywhere from 1 to 50 per year each), and a great many Bible schools, spurious schools, and degree mills hand them out with wild abandon to almost anyone willing to pay the price (Bear 2001, 9).

Thus, both legitimate and fraudulent schools offer honorary doctorates that have no academic standing, often for money. That Sequoia University handed out honorary doctorates did not make it a diploma mill, however, its awarding of them did raise questions about its accreditation.

Nobody Expects the Scammish Inquisition!

Needless to say, some groups felt threatened by Sequoia University. The California Medical Association took credit for spearheading the inquiry into Fremont College, affiliated with Sequoia:

California possesses, in our opinion, inadequate laws controlling private schools that purport to furnish a medical education without bothering to comply with any of the necessary standards. Under our laws, just about anyone can incorporate a school and purport to furnish a professional education. Several years ago we submitted to a legislative committee a complete documented report on a so-called school of physical therapy, that actually provided a completely inadequate course of instruction and maintained hardly the semblance of minimum standards. Yet this school was legally permitted to exist.

Within the past month there has come to our attention the activities of Fremont College, which is “affiliated with Sequoia University,” and which maintains a “School of Medicine.” The literature published by Fremont College states that its school of medicine furnishes a “senior medical program,” and that the school has been graded “by the American Homeopathic Medical Association, Intercollegiate Committee, as a Grade A Medical School, which entitles its graduates to apply to the National Board of Medical Examiners (Homeopathic) for final professional examinations.”

In order to enroll in the senior medical program a student must have completed three years of work “in basic medical and clinical sciences.” Just where, the literature saith not. The senior medical program consists of a course of forty-eight weeks and the school’s literature states “successful completion of this program leads to the degree of Doctor of Medicine (M.D.).” [...]

Its School of Medicine is not approved by the Board of Medical Examiners or the Board of Osteopathic Examiners. Its graduates will not qualify for examination for licensing in California. Yet the school will turn out graduates who will call themselves Doctors of Medicine and who will confuse the public.

Some means must be found to distinguish between the excellent private schools that are doing a worthwhile teaching job and the “phonies” that deceive both student and public alike. As long as such schools are permitted to flourish cultists will be with us (Hassard 1957, 58–9).

The California State Assembly attempted to resolve these concerns in an inquiry that soon followed. Despite the investigation, however, Sequoia University was considered a non-profit organization before, during, and even well after it (IRS 1955, 325; IRS 1958, 229; IRS 1959, 248; and IRS 1969, 485). Additionally, Richard de Mille (1922–2009) confirmed this much in a phone interview with Russell Miller: “Sequoia was not exactly a diploma mill, since no money changed hands [...] It did not have much to do with money. It was one of those fringe unconformist outfits” (de Mille 1986, 1). These factors alone would disqualify it as a diploma mill. The fact that owner Joseph W. Hough (1902–1990) pled the Fifth Amendment—in which an individual cannot be compelled to be a witness against themselves in an investigation—between twelve (Los Angeles Times 1957a, 6) and twenty-two times at the hearing, however, left the impression that Sequoia University was hiding something (Hill 1957, 56; Hill 1958, 6; Los Angeles Times 1957b, B1 and B3). Ultimately, the State Assembly decided that Sequoia was “a borderline case where some instruction is given for the degree, but that it does not measure up to the standards of the accredited schools” (Assembly of the State of California 1957, 58). Sequoia, however, was not considered a diploma mill because consequent legislation closed schools declared as such.



Figure 1. Hough at the 1957 inquiry.

An Attack on Sequoia and Hubbard

Ex-Scientologist Jon Attack claimed that Sequoia University had issued numerous Scientology diplomas although it is unclear from where he got his data:

A variety of degrees were offered to students, including ‘Bachelor of Scientology,’ ‘Doctor of Scientology,’ ‘Freudian Psycho-analyst,’ and ‘Doctor of Divinity’ to be issued by the ‘University of Sequoia,’ [sic] an American diploma mill [...] Hubbard had already received an ‘honorary doctorate’ in philosophy from Sequoia (Attack 1990, 138).

Sequoia University only offered the Doctor of Divinity, which was not even available for Scientology studies. In fact, the January 1953 *Journal of Scientology* stated: “[O]nly the Bachelor of Scientology degree, leading to a doctorate after graduation and proven work in the field, will be granted students, and these will come from the Hubbard Professional College in Phoenix, the Hubbard Foundation in Philadelphia, and the London School. Associate schools, which have been authorized to certify auditors after a prescribed curriculum, henceforth will issue only Basic Course certificates” (Hart 1953a, 1).

Attack also suggested that Hubbard had used the pseudonym “Medicus” to appear as a medical doctor (Attack 1990, 142). Indeed, *All About Radiation* stated that it was “By a NUCLEAR PHYSICIST and a MEDICAL DOCTOR” with the dust jacket referring to a “Dr. L. Ron Hubbard” (HASI 1957, Cover and Dust Jacket). Nevertheless, the author of the first half, titled “Book One: The Facts About the Atomic Bomb” was Dr. Farley Richard Spink, a Scientologist

with a D. Scn. from Surrey, England (HCO 1955a, 6). Spink was an experienced homeopathic doctor who had served in the British Royal Navy as a Surgeon Lieutenant with the distinctions “MB, BChir.” The MB means Bachelor of Medicine and the CHB signifies Baccalaureus Chirurgiae (a Bachelor of Surgery) as he graduated from Cambridge in 1954 (J. & A. Churchill 1961, 2235).



PHOENIX STUDENTS

This group photograph was taken at the opening of the third unit of the Advanced Indoctrination Course in Clinical Procedures (held in Phoenix from January 4 to February 12, 1954.)

Seated left to right: Jonathan Kenworthy, Peggy Conway, Jeanette Barieau, Lula Exleton, Pearl Strafello, George Seidler, Farley Spink. Middle row Charles Simpson, Elizabeth Williams, Idella Stone Dick Steves, Lee Burgess, Tam Owen, Margaret Scholtz. Back row: Carroll Hennick, Alpha Hart, John McCormick, Donald Breeding, Bob Sutton, Ross Lamoreaux. Not present: Virginia Lane and Julia Lewis.

Figure 2. Farley Spink with Phoenix Students, 1954.

The 1989 edition of *All About Radiation* eventually revealed that Spink was the coauthor: “Farley R. Spink Master of Arts, Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery” (Hubbard 1989, 21). Scientology critic Chris Owen nearly described Spink correctly, even pointing out that Attack had incorrectly assigned authorship to Hubbard:

The medical doctor writes pseudonymously as “Medicus,” but the Library of Congress listing for that edition gives his real name as Richard Farley [sic]. The latest edition, published in 1989, gives his name as Dr. Farley R. Spink, allegedly of the University of Cambridge, England. Jon Attack suggests that Farley/Spink is actually a Hubbard pseudonym [Attack, *A Piece of Blue Sky*, 1992, p. 142]. However, the section of the book written by Farley/Spink, “The Facts about the Atomic Bomb,” is reasonably

accurate in terms of scientific veracity and is written in a very different style to Hubbard's usual bombastic tone. It concludes with a declaration of support for some of Hubbard's ideas on vitamin treatments but has few stylistic similarities with known works by Hubbard. It is most likely, therefore, to have been written by a medically aware Scientologist (Owen 1997).

Needless to say, Attack made other incorrect statements about Sequoia.

School's Out Forever

Attack also claimed that Sequoia "was closed down by the California Department of Education in 1958" (Attack 1990, 138). Graham Smith of *The Daily Mail* contradicted Attack by citing the British Consulate General of Los Angeles' report:

The British government had sent an urgent telegram to its consulate in Los Angeles asking officials there to find out as much information about Hubbard and Scientology as possible. A reply on April 26 1977 said: 'After exhaustive enquiries we have now tracked down [an] organisation named [Sequoia University] which was closed down by state authorities in 1971 and all documents impounded' (Smith 2009).

Conversely, John Bear wrote "In 1984, a judge in Los Angeles issued a permanent injunction against Sequoia University and its president to cease operations until it complies with the state education laws" (Bear 1988, 291). When interviewed about the source of this information, Bear responded, "I'm sorry, Mr. Camacho, but my last involvement with Bear's Guide was in 2003, and I no longer have any of the raw materials on which the 15th edition, my last, was based. Further, I have no relevant memories on this matter beyond what is in the book; I was dealing with more than 3,000 schools at that time" (John Bear, e-mail message to author, 14 July 2018). Therefore, at least two of these claims must be incorrect.

In fact, all three statements are false: Joseph W. Hough legally changed Sequoia University to The Combinathics Institute of America on 4 December 1979 in Chula Vista, California (Hough 1979, 1–2). Furthermore, no record of injunction against Sequoia University or The Combinathics Institute appeared in the Los Angeles Archives and Records Center, the Los Angeles Law Library or at the UCLA Special Collections Department. The Combinathics Institute of America, neé Sequoia University, survived through at least 11 September 1986

when it last filed a statement of notice in California. Additionally, a 22 March 1982 court case mentioned Sequoia University, in which osteopath Alex E. Szabo sued the Board of Osteopathic Examiners, stating that “In or about 1973, I received a degree of Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from Sequoia University in Inglewood, California.” Although Szabo lost the case, the judge issued no injunction (Kingsley and Woods 1982, 962).

Furthermore, Joseph W. Hough opened another chapter of Sequoia University in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on 8 July 1952, which still operates to this very day.

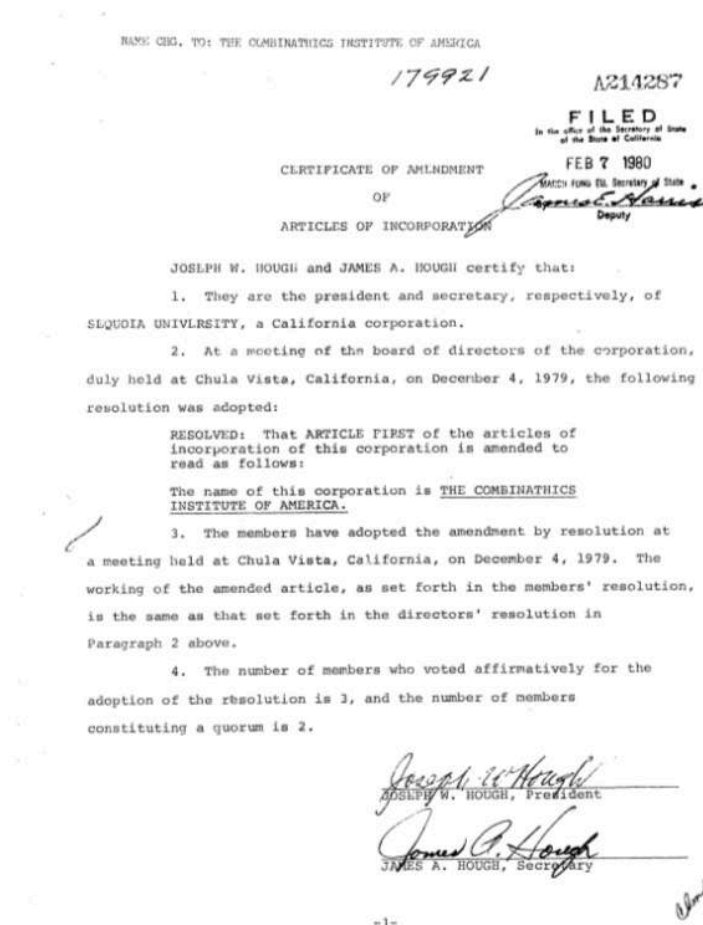


Figure 3. Sequoia University’s name change to Combinathics Institute of America in 1979.



Figure 4. Certificate of Incorporation for Sequoia University in Oklahoma.

Mental Faculty

Chris Evans forwarded another narrative: “[Sequoia] used to be well known to quacks on the West Coast as a degree mill where ‘qualifications’ could be bought for suitable sums” (Evans 1973, 21). Janet Reitman echoed his sentiment, quoting Alan C. Walter, an ex-Scientologist and founder of a spinoff known as Knowledgism:

Hubbard claimed to be a doctor of philosophy, having earned a degree from Sequoia University. “Everybody knew that had come out of a diploma mill. But that was accepted. Don’t forget, we’d come of the 1950s when everything was thought to be a façade. Just about everyone was pretending to be someone they weren’t.” Hubbard’s academic bona fides may have been suspect, but his focus on the technology and its results struck Walter as admirable (Reitman 2011, 52).

With repeated claims that Sequoia University was a widely known diploma mill, then one must assume similar motives for all of its faculty, students and outlets that published their credentials. Otherwise their claims appear inconsistent and biased.

During the California State Assembly inquiry, Mrs. Gladys M. Hough (1908–1971) stated under oath that she did not know how many students were at Sequoia University in 1957. She mentioned that the board was “contemplating different programs in Sequoia, principally we wanted to expand the post-graduate school [...] an M.D. degree was to be given.” Additionally, she mentioned that five students were finishing up their work in the medical division at Fremont College, its partner school, with “numbers of active students in the letters, arts and science division or rather school” (Assembly of the State of California 1957, 61). While her answers were mostly about Fremont College, she noted that there were students in both colleges which had different departments and that there was coursework with an intent to expand.

Similarly, Dr. Willoughby W. Sherwood (1881–1967), a 1908 Harvard Medical College graduate, taught until he resigned a few months before the inquiry. He stated: “The presumption that I had from things that were told me was that it [Fremont] was an accredited school.” He later answered: “[A]s far as our teaching medication that the charter of Fremont College was granted by the State of California, it specifically states that the degree of doctor of medicine may be given, but it does not state when, how, or how long a person should have to be in college to get it. I say from what I have been told there may be a legal right to give such a degree but I don’t believe there is a moral right in doing it” (Assembly of the State of California 1957, 58–9).

Jack Lang alias Paul R. Pitts (1930–2015) worked at Fremont where he also received both his bachelor of science and medical degrees. He stated that Fremont’s courses in the undergraduate school were entirely by correspondence, but did not state how postgraduate degrees were done. Regarding his own bachelor’s degree, he said “This too[k] approximately four years, one of which was at Fremont College, the other three years of which were with the United States Air Force Technical School [...] I took that senior year through the correspondence program and took my final examination.” Regarding his medical degree, “I had some credit toward my medical degree that I had earned prior to even starting my work for the bachelor’s degree. This was under the Air Force [...] it was approximately 2,800 to 3,000 hours.” Lang confirmed that he had done about 1,000 hours at Fremont College towards the M.D. (Assembly of the State of California 1957, 60). Due to the fact that the inquiry dealt almost exclusively with Fremont College, determining the number of Sequoia faculty and

staff was difficult. It became clear, however, that there was overlap between schools and that the staff believed that it was accredited as per all of their testimonies.

Furthermore, three years after the well-publicized California State Assembly inquiry, the University of Southern California accepted Roman Novins (1902–1981) as a lecturer (University of Southern California 1960, 46 and 197). Shortly after, California Institute of Technology presented a Professor Roman Novins as a “Russian lecturer” with an M.A. (Master of Arts) from Sequoia University where “he taught in the Slavic studies department” (California Institute of Technology 1962, 28). Indeed, a Sequoia University Extension advertisement stated that it had “native accredited professors” that taught “Russian, Spanish or other language for government or military future” (Los Angeles Times 1951a, 14). Thirteen years after the inquiry and four after Hubbard publicly renounced his honorary PhD, the school listed “Roman Novins, M.A., Lecturer in Russian—M.A., Sequoia University, 1952, Staff Member, Department of Slavic Studies, University of Southern California, 1960–. California Institute of Technology, 1962–” (California Institute of Technology 1970, 64). If Sequoia University were a well-known degree mill, as so often claimed, then Caltech and the University of Southern California needlessly risked their reputations accepting an unaccredited Novins, let alone mentioning Sequoia.

Dr. William R. Boorman (1892–1957) had also given various lectures on *Dianetics* while working with Sequoia. He gave one to the Masonic Temple of Long Beach, California, in July 1950, before Hubbard was awarded his honorary degree (*Long Beach Independent* 1950a, 29). Boorman also wrote bulletins discussing the impact and feasibility of *Dianetics* (Boorman 1950, 1–4). He was not a Scientologist, however, nor did he remain with Sequoia once the Hough family acquired it in 1952.

There was also an interest in *Dianetics* from the psychology community at the time, such as by Dorcas Palmer, the Dean of Seabury University, which in 1950 was “an affiliate of Sequoia University” (Los Angeles Times 1950, 20; *Long Beach Independent* 1950b, 7). Likewise, a Dr. Robert Walter Deobler (1925–2007), who had a bachelor of science degree from the University of Illinois and a doctor of philosophy one in clinical psychology from St. Andrew University, also held “the chair of clinical psychology and psychotherapy at Sequoia university

[sic] as well as maintaining his private practice in Hollywood” (McDonnell 1955, 8). Manager, design engineer and co-inventor of the Rife Machine, John Francis Crane (1915–1995) was a graduate in September 1972 and became a professor sometime shortly thereafter (Herschel 2007).

Additionally, Dr. “Nota” William Walter Nichols (1911–1994), was the Professor of Mathematics and Basic Sciences at Sequoia as of 1963 per his letter to the California Secretary of State (TNA FCO 26/1796). Nichols also had an ND (Doctor of Naturopathy) since at least 17 November 1945 from the College of Drugless Healing, Naturopathy, which was Sequoia University’s prior name (Keating 2016, 11–2).

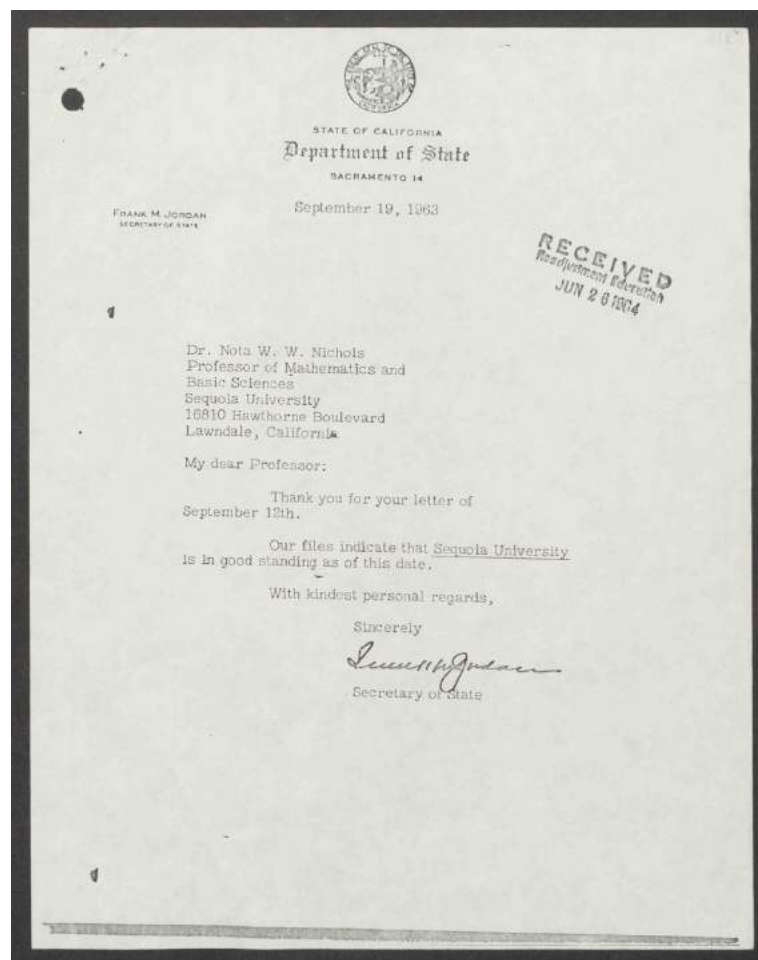


Figure 5. CA Secretary of State 19 September 1963 response to Professor and Dr. “Nota” W.W. Nichols’ question about Sequoia University’s standing.

This is not to say that no Scientologists taught at Sequoia University. Scientology Council members taught within various departments. Hardin D. Walsh (1905–1987) was Dean of the Department of Scientology. His wife Joanna was the Director and Registrar, Richard de Mille was an Associate Professor, Ricardo Estrada was the Associate Director, and Gina Cerminara (1914–1984) was an Associate Professor. Likewise, a William Wood worked in public relations within the department of Family Development alongside Frank Bannister who worked in the Children’s Department and taught Applied Scientology. Richard Steves, Edward Romero and José Otero all worked in the Research Department. Hough was also a Scientology Council member and worked in the Medical Department as a clinical examiner (Scientology Council 1952, 14; Scientology Council 1953, 2). Mark L. Gallert, a Scientologist with an M.Sc., M.D. and author of several books, was an “extension instructor” in the “department of psychology, Los Angeles” (*Tampa Bay Times* 1957, 27). For the most part, however, these Scientology Council members primarily taught various Scientology methods.

Alma Matters

Only a few alumni were discovered to have had Scientology ties. There was a Russell A. Meyers (1901–1998) who was an “electropsychometrist-educator” with an A.S. from Sequoia in 1953; Meyers was the President and Director of Holly Acres Training School, a school for special needs children, and was also trained in using an e-meter (Armstrong 1960, 161; Armstrong 1963, 97). The 1953 Scientology course flier called it “the Holly Acres School for Retarded Children, Placer County, California” and claimed that Meyers was also the founder and was successful in applying Scientology techniques with the children (Scientology Council 1953, 9). Meyers had attended Sequoia for a degree in psychology, with his subject being child study, both “of normal and subnormal children” (Auburn Journal 1953, 8). Thus far, only Meyers, Richard de Mille and L. Ron Hubbard were confirmed to have honorary degrees from Sequoia and Scientology ties.

On the other hand, there were several non-Scientologists that received honorary degrees from Sequoia University. The civil engineering journal *The American Engineer* noted that acclaimed structural engineer David B. Steinman

(1886–1960) received an honorary doctorate from Sequoia University on 15 April 1952 as a Doctor of Science in Engineering (Tremblay 1953, 182). After the 1957 inquiry, however, Steinman only mentioned honorary PhDs from other schools in his autobiography, likely distancing himself (Steinman 1959). Nevertheless, mentions of Sequoia continued in *Who's Who* volumes up until his death (*Marquis Who's Who* 1960, 2766). No claims that Steinman bought his honorary doctorate from Sequoia University have yet surfaced.



Figure 6. David B. Steinman, honorary Doctor of Science in Engineering.

Nicholas V. Feodoroff (1901–2003) was another honorary Doctor of Civil Engineering recipient. An associate professor of civil engineering at Manhattan College who had worked at Columbia University and had numerous publications, he received his honorary Doctor of Civil Engineering from Sequoia in 1953 (Downs and Dodge 1954, 772). He had also received honors from the Sequoia Research Institute, an affiliate of Sequoia University, that same year (Downs and Dodge 1954, 772; Asbury Park Press 2003, 10).



Figure 7. Nicholas V. Feodoroff, honorary Doctor of Civil Engineering.



Figure 8. David Seabury, founder and former President of Sequoia University.

Bestselling author and Centralist School of Psychology founder David Seabury (1885–1960) not only had an honorary PhD from Sequoia University, but was its president and apparently founded it unofficially in 1950 (*Marquis Who's Who* 1952, 2164; *Marquis Who's Who* 1954a, 2387; *Marquis Who's Who* 1951, 589). Nevertheless, Seabury later hid his ties with Sequoia University, having

claimed that he had worked at and obtained a degree from Pacific International University, a now defunct private residence (*Marquis Who's Who* 1954b, 622; *Marquis Who's Who* 1958, 691–92; Guidestar 2019). Despite this, no diploma mill investigations occurred with Pacific International University or The David Seabury School of Psychology, although the latter was at least duly registered as a nonprofit organization (IRS 1955, 324; IRS 1958, 228; and IRS 1959, 247).

National Republic showed author Frank Cunningham (1911–1972) with an “M.A. and Litt. D. degrees from Sequoia University” (Cunningham 1952, 13). *The Author and Journalist* described Cunningham as “a graduate of Washington and Lee University [in Virginia], he holds an M.A. and Litt. D. degrees from Sequoia University” (Cunningham 1953, 16). Incidentally, Cunningham was “associate director 1952–1955, director 1955–1958, assistant to the president [Joseph W. Hough] 1953, v.p. 1955–58” (Armstrong 1960, 194). He also oversaw Sequoia University Press, likely in part due to his publishing credentials.



Figure 9. Frank Cunningham, Sequoia University Vice-President, with California Senator and Sequoia University honorary doctorate Jack B. Tenney in 1953.

Twice published author Alan Weaver Hazelton (1903–1974) received his “LL.D” (Doctor of Laws) in 1950. He was Sequoia University’s Vice-President from 1953–1955 where he worked alongside Hough and Cunningham (*Marquis Who's Who* 1965, 574).

Erik Larsen (1911–2006), an Austrian Professor Emeritus at Lawrence University and renowned historian of Flemish art and the Dutch Golden Age, as

well as author of several art texts, received a “Litt. D. (Hon.)” from Sequoia University (Gilbert 1959, 323). This occurred sometime before June 1955, when he appended a “Litt. D.” to his articles (Larsen 1955, 172–77).

Sequoia University Press also pictured California Senator Jack B. Tenney (1898–1970) “at the university’s 1953 graduation ceremonies. Following his commencement address, Senator Tenney was honored with a Doctor of Humanities degree” alongside President Joseph W. Hough (Barham and Cunningham 1953, 312). Hubbard even may have been awarded his honorary degree in absentia at this ceremony. Tenney later ran unsuccessfully for the House of Representatives but never mentioned his honorary degree.

Likewise, *The Association*, *The Journal* wrote “[attorney] W.[illiam] E. Green of Tulsa, Oklahoma and Governor Johnston Murray Oklahoma City, Oklahoma received honorary doctor of laws degrees from Sequoia University” (McMillan 1952, 1286). The award ceremony was held “in the Blue room in the capitol” with Hough who “flew to Oklahoma from Los Angeles to make the presentation. Allen Green Oliphant [1889–1967], a ‘Tulsa oil man,’ also received a doctor of science in petroleum engineering” (*Daily Oklahoman* 1952, 123). Apparently, Sequoia University awarded the politicians of both California and Oklahoma from where its chapters operated. Indeed, Murray received his degree on 7 July 1952, the day before the Oklahoma charter ratified (The University of Oklahoma Libraries 2019, 30). Others, such as Dr. George Orington MacGregor (1889–1961), also received an honorary Doctor of Law (*Berkshire Eagle* 1952, 13) and later Mercein “Jack” Baskin (b. 1931) received an honorary Doctor of Law in 1973 (*Marquis Who’s Who* 1975a, 34). Additionally, Baskin was the 1973 graduation speaker for Sequoia University (Steven Baskin, phone interview with author, 17 July 2019).



Figure 10. Erik Larsen.



Figure 11. Tenney and Hough at the 1953 Sequoia University graduation.

A Canadian university report stated that author and professor “Dr. D[avendra] P. Varma [1923–1994] of Dalhousie University has received a ‘distinction of honor’ from the State of California and a fellowship of the Sequoia Research Institute for ‘outstanding ability and signal evidence of scholarship and proficiency in research’” (Canadian University & College 1968, 60). Sequoia Research Institute was a subsidiary of Sequoia University and Varma received his fellowship a decade after the 1957 inquiry.

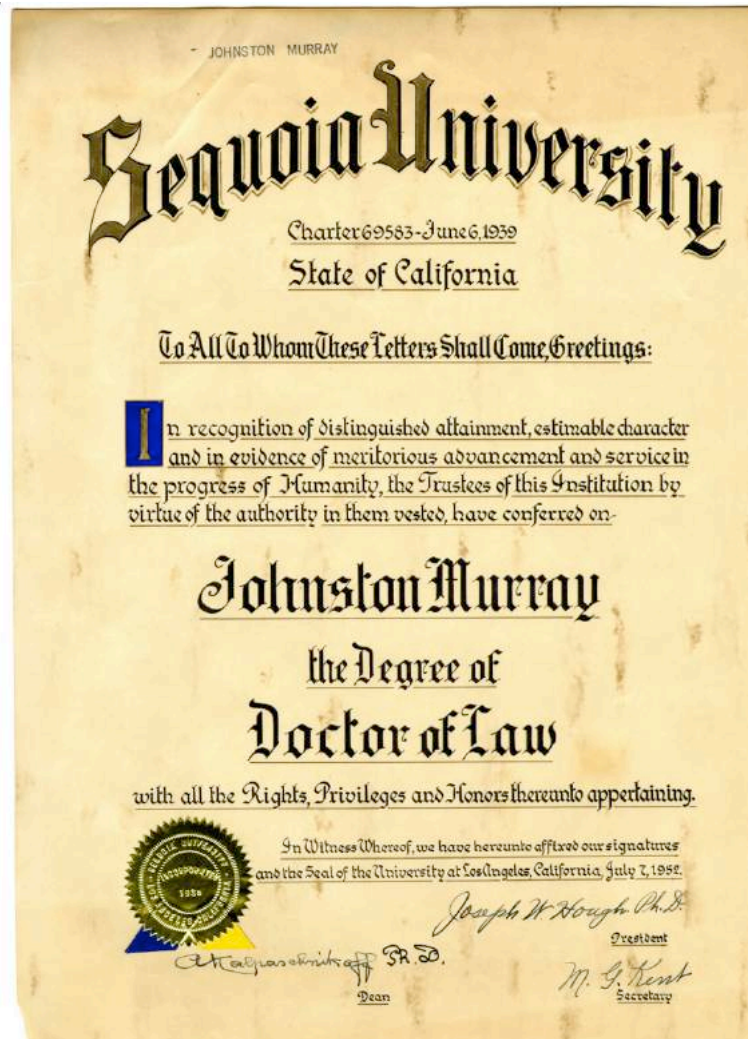


Figure 12. Governor Johnston Murray’s honorary Doctor of Laws from Sequoia University.

Sequoia Research Institute of Sequoia University had also issued an honorary diploma to science fiction author and Hubbard’s longtime literary agent Forrest J. Ackerman (1916–2008). It named him as a fellow of the Sequoia Research Institute in April 1969 (Premiere Props 2011). This degree was awarded three years after Hubbard renounced his honorary PhD, yet Ackerman accepted his degree without any resultant controversy nor were there references to Hubbard.



Figure 13. Author Davendra Varma, Sequoia Research Institute alumni.

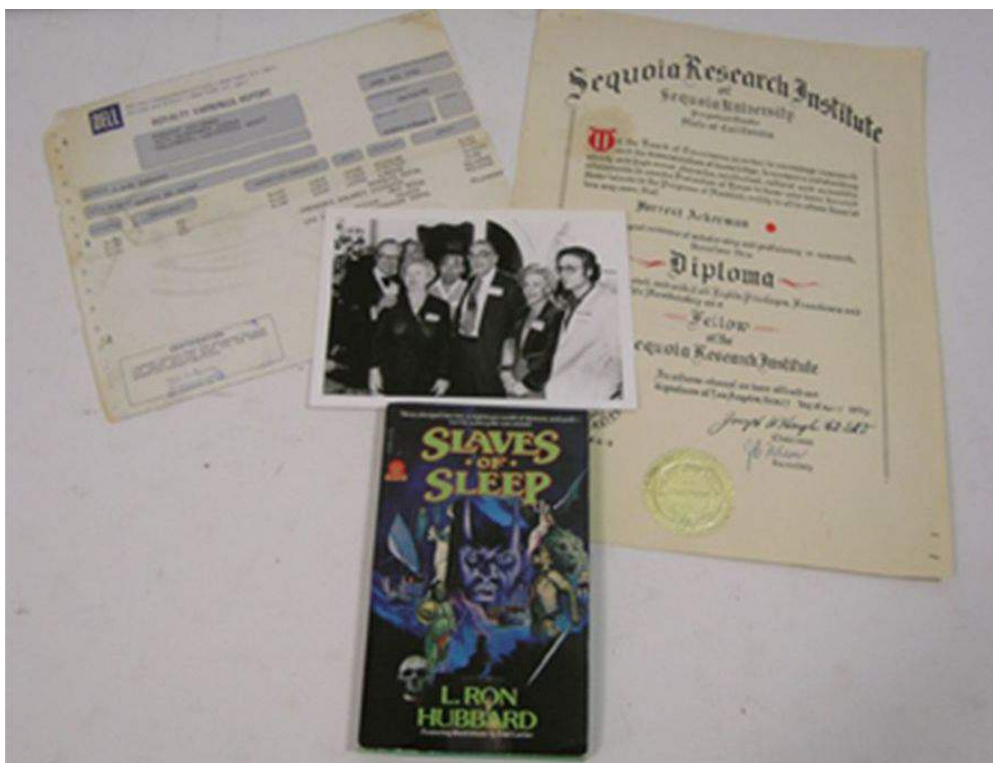


Figure 14. Forrest J. Ackerman's Sequoia Research Institute degree.

Like any press, Sequoia University Press also published books for up-and-coming authors and to people related to the staff. It published the book of Frank Cunningham's mother, Ruby Lawrence Cunningham (1892–1990), titled

Momo's Christmas Party and Little Sisters (Cunningham 1955). Additionally, it published the second book of American Zen poet Paul Reps (1895–1990) titled *Unknot The World In You* on 16 February 1951 (Reps Playshop 2008; Library of Congress 1951, 260). His book won the “1951 Sequoia University Award,” which suggested that Sequoia University had other students (Reps 1951, Title Page). Reps may or may not have received an honorary degree, but had no qualms publishing with a purportedly well-known diploma mill.



Figure 15. Paul Reps, one of Sequoia University Press’ earliest published authors.

Hollywood psychoanalyst Mason H. Rose, IV (1915–2008) was an “M.S. Sequoia Univ., 1948; Ph.D., *ibid.*, 1951” (Cook 1963, 588). As Rose’s M.S. came before Sequoia University’s unofficial 1950 founding by Seabury, evidently Rose studied under its original name, the College of Drugless Healing. Given that he was a psychoanalyst, this seems plausible.

Other healers and doctors had graduated from Sequoia, primarily naturopaths, which is unsurprising given that the school was originally the College of Drugless Healing and later added “Naturopathy” to the end of its title. A Dr. Sydney V. Golinsky (1919–2002) had graduated from the Sequoia University School of Homeopathic Medicine with a Doctor of Medicine in 1959 (Hamilton et al 2002, 9). Dr. Golinsky held also a Doctorate in Pharmacy from University of California Berkeley and in Philosophy from Lincoln University San Francisco California.



Figure 16. Mason H. Rose, IV, Hollywood psychoanalyst and Sequoia University graduate.

Sequoia also gave honorary religious degrees, however, none were traced to Scientologists. For example, both Reverend H. Waldo Manley (1902–1981) and Reverend Howard E. Mather (1896–1964) received honorary Doctorates of Divinity from Sequoia University in 1956 (*Elmira Advertiser* 1956, 2; *Pittsburgh Press* 1956, 5). Kelly Lee Segraves of the Creation Science Research Center also received an honorary diploma from Sequoia University in 1972 (*Marquis Who's Who* 1980, 652). Fred Theodore Kolosick (1918–1996) received his honorary Masters of Religious Education in 1972 (*Marquis Who's Who* 1975b, 319). A Robert Gerald “Gerry” Craft (b. 1935) received his honorary D.R.E.—Doctorate of Religious Education—in 1973 (*Marquis Who's Who* 1975c, 127). Reverend Dr. Marion Tripp (1926–2018) referenced “Sequaia [sic] University” with “the University of South Carolina, Lee College in Tennessee, Azusa Pacific College, and University [sic] Bible Institute of Texas” in his books up to as recently as 2014 (Tripp 2011; Tripp 2014a, Back Cover; Tripp 2014b, About the Author).



Figure 17. Rev. Dr. Marion Tripp, a Sequoia University alumnus.

Other miscellaneous degrees were awarded as well, including to a Joseph Colburn Smith who received a Masters of Science and Doctor of Science in 1952 which were “based on academic excellence” and because he had recently received a patent on a product which alleviated tobacco addiction (*Feather River Bulletin* 1952, 1). Likewise, a George Atkinson received a degree in business administration (presumably through an extension course) while working as an admissions counselor at Culver-Stockton College (*Hammond Times* 1955, 84). Even the famous Hollywood actor Mickey Rooney (1920–2014) had received an honorary degree, which the papers reported without dismissals of it as a diploma mill: “Now it’s Dr. Mickey Rooney—The little guy got an honorary fine arts degree from Fremont College and Sequoia University for his work in [sic] entertainment field” (Hopper 1956, 17).

Indeed, a few graduates had run-ins with the law or were infamous, as with any university which has several alumni. Carl Lovelace Clement (1913–1999) was a graduate with a Mechanical Engineering degree (Lapsley 1966, 45). He worked as an engineering manager of the Escoa Corporation (*Los Angeles Times* 1966, 27). Although the award date was not discovered, when arrested in 1966 due to his involvement with using an illegal device to make calls through the phone company Ma Bell, the FBI noted that his degree was from Sequoia University in Los Angeles in its arrest records. George Cook Lyon (1904–1996) was convicted in August 1983 of issuing degrees for Sequoia University of Oklahoma by mail from Arkansas, meaning that he had no connection to Sequoia University but issued entirely bogus degrees and he was not a recipient nor alumnus (*Daily Oklahoman* 1984, 17). Dr. Lawrence Mitchel Weinberg had a Doctor of

Medicine granted on an unknown date from the Oklahoma chapter of Sequoia University. His diploma was based on a transfer of 4,400 class hours from the Cleveland Chiropractic College in Los Angeles, which had awarded him a Doctor of Chiropractic, and the Anglo-American Institute of Drugless Therapy in England, which awarded him a “Diploma of Naturopath” (Barrett 2004, 2 and 5). Weinberg was later himself convicted in December 1981 for issuing degrees from nonexistent schools (*Daily Oklahoman* 1984, 17). Sequoia University Press had also published *False Freedom* by American Nazi propagandist Edward L. Delaney (1885–1972). A guilt-by-association charge against Hubbard ensued:

Delaney was a failed actor-turned-communist agitator who was tried in absentia for treason for broadcasting Nazi propaganda overseas at the beginning of WWII (what he referred to as “fact-finding travels and reports”[sic]). The charges were later dropped and he spent the rest of his life lecturing and writing on the Communist menace. The publisher, Sequoia University, was an unaccredited university and degree mill, best known for issuing an “honorary doctorate” to L. Ron Hubbard, who was later forced to publicly renounce it. A perfect fit for Delaney’s book (Anthem 2018).

Likewise, Roderick J. Wilson (1910–1985) a former press agent, private detective and failed Democrat candidate for California governor, received an honorary Doctorate of Laws in 1953 for “a thesis on procedure before government bureaus” (*Petaluma Argus-Courier* 1954, 1). Critic Virginia McClaughry incorrectly attributed his honorary degree to Chief Justice Earl Warren (1891–1974), mistakenly believing that the investigation into Sequoia had somehow uncovered secret ties to Chief Warren, which was why Hubbard later disavowed the degree as it related to a government cover-up: “In 1954, Chief Court Justice Warren was caught having an ‘honorary’ degree from the very same Sequoia University that Hubbard had been just given a degree by” (McClaughry 2016a). Expanding on her theory, McClaughry argued that “[Hubbard] also claims he ‘tried’ to stop using it in the late 1950’s as well, which would have been right after the investigations into Chief Justice Warren’s diploma mill degree that was also from Joseph William Hough’s Sequoia University” (McClaughry 2016b). This was of course wrong since it was Wilson who had the degree, not Warren. Similar to associating Delaney with Hubbard and none else, however, McClaughry’s conclusion reveals the cherry-picking methodology of Scientology critics that ignore the large number of graduates and professors from all walks of life.

Although by no means an exhaustive list, Sequoia University's honorary diplomas went to professors, historians, engineers, poets, lawyers, psychoanalysts, ministers, politicians, inventors, businessmen, administrators, educators, actors, fiction and non-fiction authors, few of whom had Scientology connections. While the majority were successful and reputable members of society, a handful were con men and criminals, on whom critics of Hubbard and Scientology have focused exclusively. Several reputable publications and universities also recognized its degrees before and decades after the 1957 inquiry without disparaging the school until Hubbard's name was involved. Although the number and quality of award recipients do not make a university more accredited, when considering their credentials, achievements and reputations both before and after the honorary awards, the claim that the school was a well-known diploma mill, which gave out degrees in exchange for large sums of money, does not hold up when more alumni are examined. After all, even former Scientologist and Sequoia associate professor Richard de Mille explained to Miller that "Sequoia was not exactly a diploma mill, since no money changed hands [...] It did not have much to do with money. It was one of those fringe unconformist outfits" (de Mille 1986, 1). While likely that Hubbard brought the school more attention than it originally warranted, the majority of its alumni, professors and honorary award recipients were not conspiring to defraud others through the school.

A.P.O. Box Office Hit Job

Hubbard's critics also claim that Sequoia University operated from either a residential home or a post office box; either way it offered no classes. Russell Miller asserted that it was run by "Dr Joseph Hough, a chiropracteur [sic] and naturopath who ran a successful practice from a large house in downtown Los Angeles and conferred 'degrees' on whoever he thought merited them" (Miller 1987, 211–12). Janet Reitman echoed Miller, quoting former *Saturday Evening Post* reporter and Food & Drug Administration covert agent James Phelan (DiEugenio 2003, 316–18):

[Phelan] made fun of Scientology's teachings and noted that Hubbard lacked credentials. "Records show that he enrolled [at George Washington University] in 1930 but never received a degree of any kind. Today, besides his 'Doctor of Scientology,' he appends a Ph.D. to his name. He got it, he says, from Sequoia University. This was a Los Angeles

establishment, once housed in a residential dwelling, whose degrees are not recognized by any accredited college or university” (Reitman 2011, 60).

Paulette Cooper expanded on Miller’s and Phelan’s claims, stating that Sequoia operated from a post office box:

Hubbard also claims to have a Ph.D. from Sequoia University. Sequoia was originally called the College of Drugless Healing, and might have been called the College of Instant Learning, since it has been traced by the United States government to a residential dwelling in Los Angeles which operated through a post office box and delivered mail order doctorates without the formality of exams, or for that matter, of classroom attendance (Cooper 1971, 163).

All three authors were incorrect: Sequoia University *Press* shipped from P.O. Box 4007, Village Station, Los Angeles [900]24 (Gallery of History 2018). The *Office of Admissions* operated from P.O. Box 269, Venice, CA 90291 (TNA FCO 26/1796). Likewise, Sequoia Clerkship Training for Osteopaths, a three-year program, operated from Mt. Helix General Hospital in La Mesa, California (McClaghry 2016a).

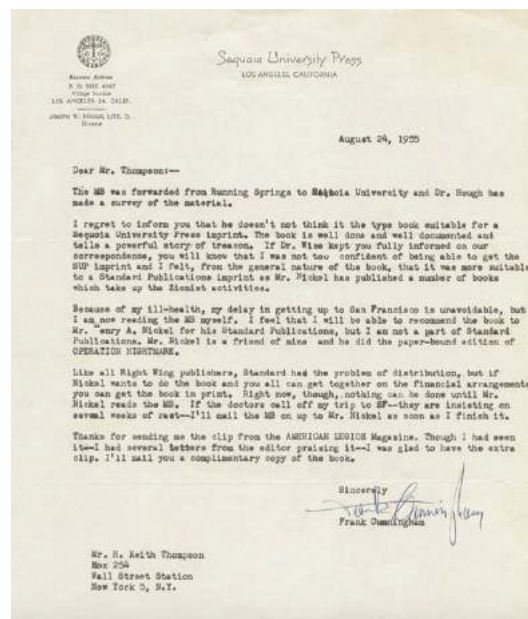


Figure 18. 24 August 1955 Frank Cunningham letter from Sequoia University Press to Mr. H. Keith Thompson.

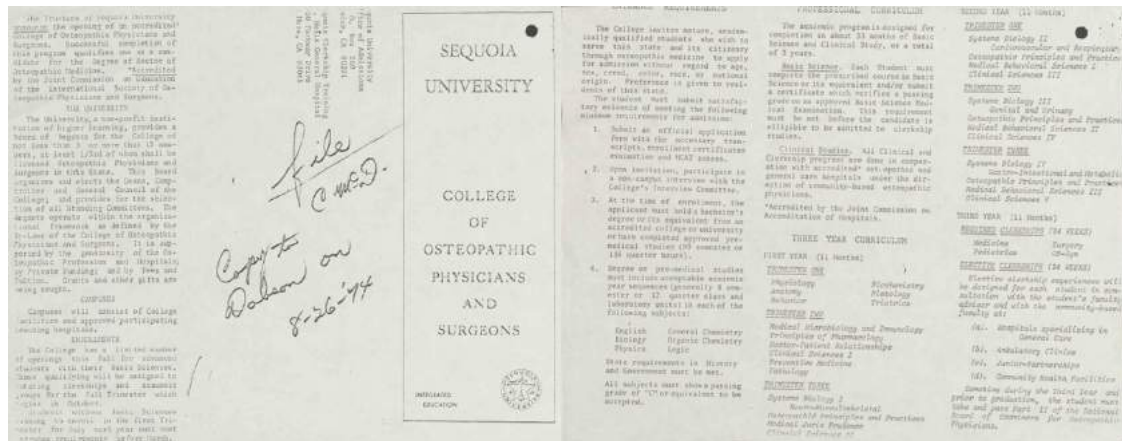


Figure 19. Sequoia University College of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons pamphlet.

Is There a Doctor in the House?

Several physical addresses were also registered to Sequoia University besides Hough's residence. The first known address was the Sequoia University Administrative Office at 5617 Hollywood Boulevard as per a 17 June 1950 letter to Sequoia University psychology students inviting them to a luncheon with Dr. Clarence A. Lamb (1894–1975) and Dr. William R. Boorman. An award ceremony on 12 August 1950 was held at this same address as per Lamb's telegram to Hubbard on behalf of founder and president David Seabury (Lamb 1950). That November, Sequoia University operated in combination with Seabury University at 535 S. Hoover, Room 426 (Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1950, 334). By June 1951, Sequoia had three addresses: the combination with Seabury University at 535 S. Hoover, Room 426, the earlier ceremony location of 5617 Hollywood Blvd, Room 103 and also 2610 W. 8th, Room 3 (Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1951, 324, 334 and 816). Likewise, two academic studies about reading methods mentioned a "Flash Reader," which was published by Sequoia University Press at 5617 Hollywood Blvd. This material had published sometime between 1950 and 1951 when Sequoia resided at that address, indicating that Sequoia University Press operated concurrently with the university (Spache 1963, 271 and 459; Hodder 1965, A–24).

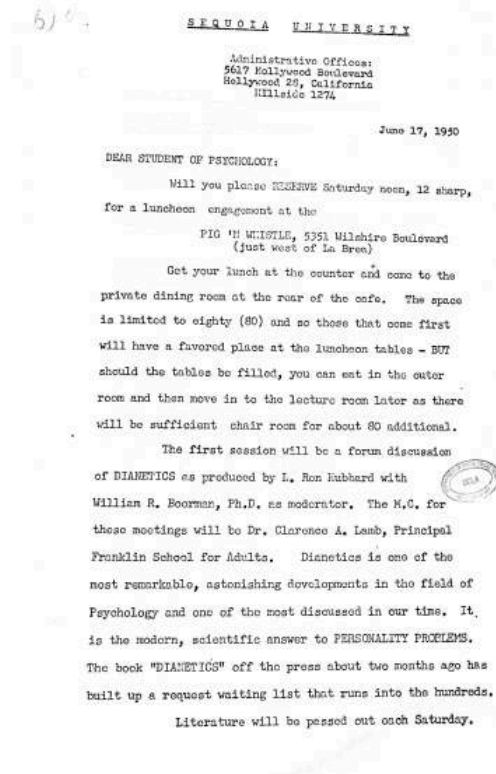


Figure 20. 17 June 1950 Sequoia University invitation for Dianetics luncheon.

By January 1952, Sequoia combined with Seabury University at 920 S. Grandview St. (Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1952, 281). Joseph W. Hough later ratified Sequoia University in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on 8 July 1952 while Seabury still owned the California school (Conner 1952). On 20 August 1952, Hough formally converted the College of Drugless Healing into the Sequoia University of California at his home on 915 S. Grandview (Hough 1952a, 6). The California location of Sequoia University thus resided at Hough's home on 915 S. Grandview and Seabury University at 920 S. Grandview until June 1953 when it operated exclusively at 915 S. Grandview (Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1953b, 297). Sequoia University, Fremont College and Joseph Hough shared the space until July 1956, when the schools moved to another location four miles away at 5625 Melrose Avenue (Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1956, 317 and 506).

Additionally, Sequoia University had no less than nine departments. The preface to Cunningham's *Knight of the Confederacy: Gen. Turner Ashby* thanked "the library departments of [...] Sequoia University, Fremont University" indicating more than one library (Cunningham 1960, xiii). Roman Novins had

“taught in the Slavic studies department” at Sequoia (California Institute of Technology 1962, 28). Dr. “Nota” William Walter Nichols described himself as the Professor of Mathematics and Basic Sciences per his 12 September 1963 letter to the California Secretary of State (TNA FCO 26/1796). Dr. Robert Deobler held “the chair of clinical psychology and psychotherapy at Sequoia university [sic]” (McDonnell 1955, 8) while Mark L. Gallert was an “extension instructor” in the “department of psychology, Los Angeles” (*Tampa Bay Times* 1957, 27). Former Scientologist Richard de Mille was also an associate professor and taught at the Department of Scientology in 1953 (Hart 1953b, 2). There was also a Children’s Department which worked with the Family Development Department, where William Wood worked with Frank Bannister. Likewise, Richard Steves, Edward Romero and Jose Otero all worked in the Research Department. Hough himself even worked in the Medical Department as a clinical examiner (Scientology Council 1952, 14; Scientology Council 1953, 2). The Scientology Council members’ classes and departments were likely at 621 S. Oxford Ave. in Los Angeles.

Sequoia not only had teaching premises with at least nine departments, but also had graduations and some formality beyond merely mailing out diplomas. Richard de Mille’s recollection was incorrect in his interview with Miller: “Hough was very sincere and well meaning man, but there was no university. Doesn’t think cap and gown ceremony cld hv taken place” (de Mille 1986, 1). In fact, Sequoia had at least four graduation ceremonies: 12 August 1950 in Los Angeles, 7 August 1952 in Oklahoma, 1953 in Los Angeles in which Senator Tenney was pictured and gave the commencement address, and 1973 where Mercein “Jack” Baskin was the graduation speaker in the California chapter and later awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws. Given that there were graduation ceremonies, this indicates that there were formalities and courses needed to graduate.

Indeed, a Scientology flier detailed eight to sixteen-week courses at Sequoia which included examinations and hours required (Scientology Council 1953, 6). It indicated in-person courses and gave degree requirements. Furthermore, Sequoia University only offered a Scientology Associate of Science degree—not a Bachelor, Master or Doctor of Scientology or Freudian Psychoanalyst, as Attack claimed (Attack 1990, 138). Rather, credit in the Scientology Department could be used toward other degrees, as per the early edition of the pamphlet: “Graduate

study and seminars are restricted to students holding the Bachelor of Arts degree, or equivalent. Students, in addition, must have completed specific training required by the department whose guidance is sought. GRADUATE STUDENTS, properly qualified and having fulfilled the requirements, may be granted the degrees of: MASTER OF ARTS (MA); MASTER OF SCIENCE (MS); DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD); DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY AND LETTERS (Lit. D.)” (Scientology Council 1952, 12). The later pamphlet made this more explicit “CREDIT toward standard [non-Scientology] DEGREES (Associate in Science, BS, BA, MS, MA, PhD) is given at the satisfactory completion of these courses” (Scientology Council 1953, 3).

There were, however, four steps towards a degree and corresponding certificates: *Scientology I: Basic* (Unit 900) totaling 56 hours, *Scientology II: HCA: Hubbard Certified Auditor* (Unit 905) totaling 280 hours, *Scientology III: HGA: Hubbard Graduate Auditor* (Unit 906) totaling 280 hours and *Scientology IV: Scientology Associate in Science Degree: SAS* (Unit 907) totaling 280 hours. Following these, one was required to take a 300-hour internship or externship in order to have 1,080 classroom hours. The alternative for “students with the necessary credentials” was to complete “seven comprehensive examinations” after Scientology I and II in the areas of English Composition, Biological Sciences, Humanities, Physical Sciences, Social Sciences, Scientology and an elective from the following: Art, Anatomy, Chemistry, Geology, Geography, Paleontology, Zoology, Astronomy, Genetics, Mathematics, Music, Philosophy or a Foreign Language (Scientology Council 1953, 8–9). Alternatively, one could take *Scientology I-A: Basic: External Study* (Unit 901–904) which was the same material as *Scientology I* for those that could not attend in residence. Furthermore, de Mille had sent Hubbard the course work plan:

We [Hough and de Mille] see our goals as two: (1) to teach a university course which has high standards and stiff requirements, (2) to follow your work to the letter, just as you have made it, weeding out all foreign elements and squirrely [arbitrary, altered and weird] notions which may try to creep in [...] As far as I can tell, Sequoia U. has a charter which is just as good as UCLA or USC. It is a genuine university which gives genuine degrees. Hough is, by my estimate, a white wizard [...] *By the way, at Sequoia we do not intend to give degrees of B. Scn, M. Scn and D. Scn. That is your department* [emphasis added]—and should remain so, I think—unless you think otherwise. We expect to give Associate in Science (2 yrs), B. Sc. [Bachelor of Science], M. Sc. [Master of Science], and Ph.D. in ‘Clinical Psychology, Counselling, etc.’ Scientology will be the subject

matter—but no degree will be given in Scientology, according to present plans (de Mille 1953a).

De Mille's letter indicated that he thought Sequoia University gave legitimate degrees and taught good courses. Indeed, the university mission was later stated explicitly: "SEQUOIA UNIVERSITY is an independent organization, whose motive is: EDUCATION FOR ALL WHO SEARCH FOR KNOWLEDGE. DEGREES and HONORS are not the main goal at SEQUOIA UNIVERSITY" (Scientology Council 1952, 5). Thus, there did not appear to be any devious intentions at the outset.

CURRICULUM: DEPARTMENT OF SCIENTOLOGY SEQUOIA UNIVERSITY	
SCIENTOLOGY I: BASIC (900)	
ONE HALF TERM: 8 Weeks	3.5 College hours 56 Class hrs.
TUE	1.75 SCIENTOLOGY and DIANETICS
FRI	1.75 Demonstrations: Group Processing
Students successfully completing SCIENTOLOGY I receive an accreditation CERTIFICATE for SCIENTOLOGY I and become eligible for SCIENTOLOGY II which is the PROFESSIONAL COURSE basic work in this science.	
SCIENTOLOGY II candidates or those desiring the PROFESSIONAL COURSE must present credentials in SCIENTOLOGY I, or its equivalent. HDA's or advanced students may challenge the SCIENTOLOGY I examinations. Case histories and past SCIENTOLOGY and DIANETIC work are evaluated.	
SCIENTOLOGY II: HCA: HUBBARD CERTIFIED AUDITOR (905)	
FIRST TERM - 16 weeks	20 College hrs. 280 class hrs.
MON, WED, THU	12 SCIENTOLOGY II
TUE	2 English: Terminology: Semantics
TUE	2 English: Public Speaking
FRI	4 General Psychology
Students successfully completing SCIENTOLOGY II are eligible to receive the HCA Certificate: HUBBARD CERTIFIED AUDITOR. Holders of the HCA CERTIFICATE become eligible for an EDUCATION CREDENTIAL from SEQUOIA UNIVERSITY which enables them to teach SCIENTOLOGY as an auditor.	
SCIENTOLOGY III: HGA: HUBBARD GRADUATE AUDITOR (906)	
SECOND TERM - 16 weeks (280 hrs)	20 College hrs. 560 Class hrs. total
MON, WED, THU	12 SCIENTOLOGY III
TUE	2 English: Scientific Procedure
TUE	2 English: Logic and Reasoning
FRI	2 Abnormal Psychology
This course leads to a HUBBARD GRADUATE AUDITOR CERTIFICATE (HGA) and the student becomes eligible for SCIENTOLOGY IV.	
SCIENTOLOGY IV: SCIENTOLOGY ASSOCIATE IN SCIENCE DEGREE: SAS (907)	
THIRD TERM - 16 weeks (280 hrs)	20 College hrs. 840 Class hrs total
MON	4 SCIENTOLOGY IV: Lab Research
TUE	4 Psychosomatic Medicine
WED	4 Anatomy - Neurology
THU	2 Philosophy of Science
THU	2 SCIENTOLOGY: Preventive
FRI	4 Clinical Neurology
This term closes with a conference of 20 class hours.	
Case history discussion; business and professional practices; finances; promotion; ethics; advertising and personal behavior.	
Following completion of formal class work, students undergo a CLINICAL INTERNSHIP or EXTERNSHIP of 200 hrs before being awarded a SCIENTOLOGY ASSOCIATE IN SCIENCE DEGREE: SAS. Total 1080 Class hrs.	
ADVANCED STANDING BY EXAMINATIONS:	
Students with the necessary credentials, after taking SCIENTOLOGY I and II, may meet the requirements for the SAS DEGREE in terms of seven comprehensive examinations: designed primarily to test general education. Particular emphasis is placed upon laboratory training and professional experience. Examinations are as follows:	
1. English Composition	5. Social Sciences
2. Biological Sciences	6. SCIENTOLOGY
3. Humanities	7. An elective from the following courses:
4. Physical Sciences	ART, ANATOMY, CHEMISTRY, GEOLOGY, GEOGRAPHY, PALEONTOLOGY, ZOOLOGY, ASTRONOMY, GENETICS, MATHEMATICS, MUSIC, PHILOSOPHY, or a FOREIGN LANGUAGE.
SCIENTOLOGY I-A: BASIC: EXTERNAL STUDY	
This covers the same material as SCIENTOLOGY I. It is available for those who cannot attend classes in residence. It is furnished in EXTERNAL STUDY UNITS #901, 902, 903, and 904. Each contains the same basic material, but progressively more texts and equipment are added in each succeeding unit, to meet the individual's educational and financial needs. Write for information on these units, so that you may choose the one which best satisfies your own needs.	

Figure 21. Sequoia University Courses Pamphlet by Scientology Council.

The Church of Sequoia-logy?

Ex-Scientologist John McMaster claimed that Hubbard and other Scientologists acquired a property, then called it Sequoia University in order to seem legitimate. Graham Smith wrote: “The position is L. Ron Hubbard [and others] acquired premises somewhere in Los Angeles which they had registered as a university called Sequoia and immediately awarded each other doctorates” (Smith 2009). As McMaster did not state when this occurred and due to the somewhat uncertain nature of Sequoia’s exact origin, full authentication became difficult. However, it is certain that Hubbard and Scientology neither founded nor purchased Sequoia.

McMaster’s claim likely originated from the January 1953 official notice of affiliation by Scientology Council in *The Journal of Scientology*, which predated Hubbard’s honorary PhD by one month (Hart 1953c, 5). The next issue revealed that de Mille taught on staff at the Scientology Council, sometimes under the pseudonyms Richard Folgere, Dick Folgere and D. Folgere (Hart 1953b, 2). The affiliation existed between Sequoia and associate group Scientology Council, however, not Hubbard. It is worth distinguishing an affiliate from an associate: *affiliate* means that a formal relationship exists between two entities, whereas *associate* means that two entities are informally related. In his letter to Hubbard, de Mille clarified this stance:

The Walsh’s [Joanna and Hardin] and I have affiliated with Sequoia University. I do not think this is a bad thing. But if it turns out to be, I will un-affiliate so fast, they will think light has slowed down.[...] Scientology Council is known as a place of good feeling generally and loyalty to Hubbard in particular (de Mille 1953b).

SCIENTOLOGY COUNCIL
Announces Its Affiliation with
SEQUOIA UNIVERSITY
of Los Angeles, California

The Department of Scientology of Sequoia University offers an opportunity for those wishing to operate professionally and legally anywhere in the MEST universe.
L. Ron Hubbard's advanced methods applied in processing and teaching.

Previous Scientology, Dianetics, and Academic work will be evaluated toward standard degrees. Enroll now for the Basic Course, 350 hours.
Professional Course: 1, 2, 3, 4 years.

For Particulars, Write, Phone, or Wire
Joanna Walsh, SCIENTOLOGY COUNCIL
7070 Hollywood Blvd. Phone HI-0257 Hollywood 28, Calif.

Figure 22. 1953 Scientology Council Affiliation Announcement with Sequoia University.

Nevertheless, Hubbard publicly expressed reticence to Scientology University associates teaching at Sequoia in a May 1953 letter to Scientologists. Per the letter, Sequoia approached the Scientologists, not the other way around. This was evident since 1950, when Lamb and Seabury had offered Hubbard a degree and held lectures on psychology and *Dianetics*. Hubbard's letter also raised concerns including potential legal issues, the integrity of Scientology methods, and whether the money paid for fees could be better used to prepare Scientology materials. If Hubbard owned a stake in Sequoia, then his hesitation and publicly expressed concerns would have undermined his financial interests:

Germane to funds, I am recently in receipt of material from George Seidler [1923–2016] suggesting an alternative in certifications and carrying with it the news that Sequoia University would like to authorize associates to give certain courses. With all due respect to Sequoia University and the project, I have to hand legal opinion that this protection will not stay the heavy threat when levelled. I think we have a better idea and I think Sequoia University has its role and will eventually be woven through the woof and warp of what we are doing. It happens that I have under preparation summaries of psychology, psychoanalysis and so forth which your certification fees are going to finance. Now why a large portion of these certification fees should go to Sequoia, I am not quite sure. I do know that if a large portion of them do go to Sequoia University, I will be strapped down financially in the preparation of this material and, believe me, material costs money. I estimate that the tapes you play cost about \$800 an hour [\$7,573.81 in 2019]. That might be a shock to you, but it is a sober fact. It isn't because I spend money like water, it's because those tapes are made only after a great deal of outlay in terms of testing and in terms of organization and material; and, even then, it is very cheap investigation. If this condensation of general semantics, psychoanalysis, psychology, electronic brains, etc. were being done by Sequoia University, I could see some point in this (Hubbard 1953a, 6–7).

Additionally, former Dianeticist Donald H. Rogers (1912–2003) had stated, “The story of his [Hubbard] buying Sequoia with other people, in order to get degrees, is new to me, and I'm not sure why they would need to. As I understood it, all you needed to get a degree from Sequoia University was a little publicity to bring you to their attention” (Ortega 2018). In fact, Hubbard had previously written an irate private letter to de Mille warning about Scientology Council and its affiliation with Sequoia University:

I wonder if you know how much time and trouble it cost to put these tapes on record, transcribe them and send the data to you in California? I wonder if you know how must [sic] it cost to print the professional course booklets? And yet here you are, coming out with the same material for \$3.00 [\$28.40 in 2019] which still cost \$10.00 [\$94.67 in

2019] from the HAS [Hubbard Association of Scientologists]. These professional course booklets sell \$500 worth [\$4,733.63 in 2019] per week from the HAS. Now do you think I should stand by while somebody, who has already been paid for writing them, simply takes the material and blandly publishes it [...] I realize my sudden reversal of attitude here, after offering the group there [Scientology Council] to be part of the show with the [Philadelphia] doctorate course, seems very strange and inexplicable. Perhaps it is best explained by looking around and finding out that everybody's name is on the bridge but that of L. Ron Hubbard. I know how operations go like this, Richard. Also I look around and I find that that group in Los Angeles [Scientology Council] has absolutely no intentions whatsoever of paying me a lousy dime for any work I have ever done and they are using their kudos as attached to and affiliated with the HAS to issue phony degrees which have no reality and which don't have to be paid for. And don't think I'm kidded: the only reason those degrees exist is because they don't have to pay for them (Hubbard 1953b, 1–2).

Hubbard's comments about "phony degrees which have no reality and which don't have to be paid for" referred to the Philadelphia Doctorate Course. This is clear from his statement "after offering the group there to be part of the show with the doctorate course." After all, neither he nor Scientology itself were yet Sequoia University associates; only Scientology Council was an affiliate which was going rogue per Hubbard. Indeed, Hubbard wrote a letter that same day to Hardin Walsh and canceled his franchise:

It is my regrettable duty to inform you that any franchise you hold from me for the issuance of certificates or the authorized circulation of data on the subjects of Dianetics and Scientology is suspended.

The issuance of unauthorized certificate designations such as Scientology Councilor, and Associate in Scientology, when measured against an accounting of your activities as received from Phoenix, are an obvious effort to escape payment of proper percentages.

At such time as you suspend and desist from issuing unauthorized degrees [...] The HAS will not condone unauthorized use of material, nor will it advertise favourably organizations which pretend to assist in the general Scientology programs and yet which do not. The cost of HAS materials, research and investigation is borne by the HAS and these may not be used without special authorization (Hubbard 1953c, 1).

Hubbard eventually associated with Sequoia University in August 1953, however, when its standards improved. The degree, a Scientology Associate in Science, had required two years of training, similar to a bachelor's degree, although it was changed to four for Hubbard's approval yet still was considered an associate's degree. Any alliances and fees were to be paid to Scientology for correspondence courses:

Hardin [Walsh, of Scientology Council] and Sequoia have received a go-ahead on a four-year training program which includes some 'residence training.' We are now seeking to work out a schedule whereby he can use the Sequoia Correspondence Courses in various subjects to supplement associate training through the associate. These are apparently good courses Sequoia has. I have asked [Ray] Ross [Lamoreaux (1915–1975), Director of Doctorate School at Phoenix] to look into using the purely correspondence material on philosophy, etc. in a general program for associates. This doesn't, by the way, put anybody under Sequoia (Hubbard 1953d, 2).

Once approved, the August 1953 *Journal of Scientology* stated that the Scientology Council affiliated with Sequoia University and listed L. Ron Hubbard as an associate (Walsh 1953, 2).

This is also evident in the 26 June 1953 copyright entry for Richard de Mille's *An Introduction to scientology; an introductory survey and evaluation of thirty years' work in the field of thought by L. Ron Hubbard, C.E., PH.D., D.SCN., with special attention to technical publications dealing with dianetics and scientology* which showed Hubbard with a "PH.D." Neither Scientology Council was listed as an affiliate nor Hubbard as an associate because these occurred later in August (Library of Congress 1953, 173).

DE MILLE, RICHARD.
Introduction to scientology; an
introductory survey and evaluation
of thirty years' work in the field
of human thought by L. Ron Hubbard,
C. E., PH. D., D. SCN., with
special attention to technical
publications dealing with dianetics
and scientology. Scientology
Council. 116 l. © Richard De
Mille; 26Jun53; A97201.

Figure 23. Copyright entry for Introduction to Scientology by Richard De Mille.

Richard de Mille's book cover also stated that both he and Hubbard had a PhD. Here Russell Miller assumed that "Richard deMille [sic] was awarded a PhD from Sequoia, somewhat to his surprise, for a slim volume he had written under the title *An Introduction to Scientology*" (Miller 1987, 212). As de Mille already had the PhD per the title page, this meant that Sequoia awarded the degree to him in either March or April before the June publication, just as de Mille outlined in his 28 January letter to Hubbard (de Mille 1953a). The front cover also stated that Scientology *Council* was affiliated, which was true since January 1953 upon its

announcement, although Sequoia University was not yet officially Scientology-affiliated until August 1953 when Hubbard agreed to an associate program. Likewise, its back cover showed Hubbard as an associate, but this was in relation to Scientology Council, not to Sequoia University.

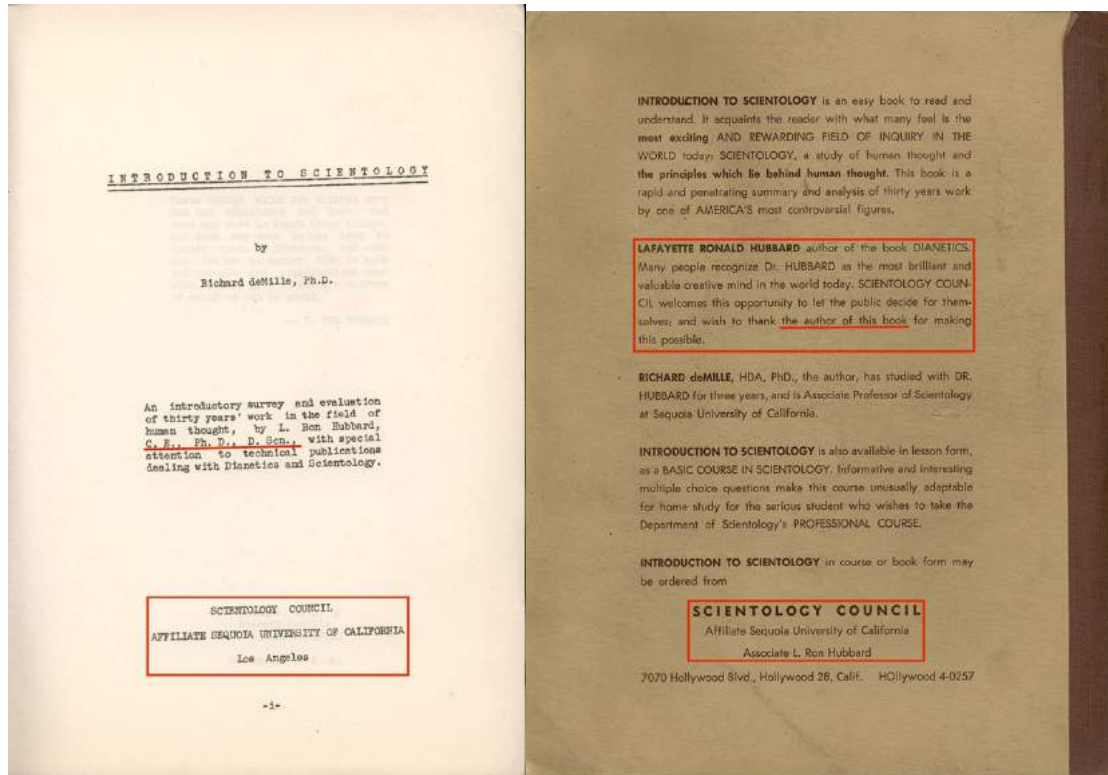


Figure 24. Frontispiece and Back Cover to first edition of *Introduction to Scientology* by Richard de Mille.

That Sequoia University and Scientology Council affiliated before Hubbard was an associate is further evidenced by the 26 September 1953 US Copyright record for de Mille's book *Scientology I-A; an introductory course in scientology, based upon eight books by L. Ron Hubbard and upon the text, Introduction to Scientology, by Richard deMille*. The entry showed "Scientology Council, affiliate Sequoia University of California." This was the first copyright notice to mention any Sequoia affiliation after Hubbard approved it in August. As this also occurred eight months after the *Journal of Scientology* announcement in January, it further demonstrated that Hubbard neither founded nor owned Sequoia University (Library of Congress 1953, 173). Therefore, Hubbard not only received his degree by February 1953 before de Mille did in June 1953, but

Hubbard also did not associate with Sequoia until at least six months after his honorary PhD.

Scientology I-A; an introductory
course in scientology, based upon
eight books by L. Ron Hubbard and
upon the text, Introduction to
scientology, by Richard deMille.
Scientology Council, affiliate
Sequoia University of California.
68 1. © Richard deMille; 26Sep53;
A108307.

Figure 25. Copyright entry for Scientology I–A by Richard de Mille.

I'm Also a Member

Meanwhile, Graham Smith repeated John McMaster's other claim that Hubbard acquired Sequoia: "The science-fiction writer, who invented the religion now followed by celebrities including Tom Cruise and John Travolta, awarded himself a PhD from a sham 'diploma mill' college he had acquired in California" (Smith 2009). Paulette Cooper forwarded another claim without evidence: "A Harvard student discovered that Hubbard was also on the staff of the school; might Sequoia be another name for one of Hubbard's own establishments?" (Cooper 1971, 163). When asked from whom or where she obtained this information, Cooper responded:

Hi—before I looked up my book I went to wikipedia—which did not exist when I was writing "the Scandal of Scientology"—and looked up Sequoia University. It talks about it being a degree mill and says Hubbard may have owned it and gives a citation from a British newspaper [Smith's article]. So that's your answer. (Don't recall where I got my info from.) If you need more, there are three books about Hubbard (look them up at amazon) and you may find it there (Paulette Cooper, e-mail message to author, 3 June 2018).

When informed that her book was the only one to claim that an unnamed Harvard student found the information that Hubbard was on the staff and when asked if she had any memory of either the student or of Hubbard being on the faculty to substantiate her claim, Cooper replied "It was 50 years ago when I researched my book so alas, no, I have no recollection that could help you" (Paulette Cooper, e-mail message to author, 6 June 2018). She also claimed that there were no records to substantiate her claim: "I've written 24 non-fiction

books (plus articles) in the last 50 years... I would have to move out of my place if I kept all my notes on all of them!" (Paulette Cooper, e-mail message to author, 7 June 2018). Much like Bear, Cooper could not recall or provide one record or name to support her claims. Even Miller found Cooper's claim so bizarre that he emphasized this in his own notes on her book: "a Harvard student discovered LRH was on the staff (???) (Miller 1986a, 1).

Cooper, p.159: In a number of biographies, LRH claims to have bn descended from Count de Loup, to be part French and part Scots and to have a branch of his family coming from Little Clacton, Essex. He claims to have graduated in mathematics and engineering from Columbian University, to have graduated in civil engineering from George Washington University, to have attended Princeton, and to have a PhD fm Sequoia University.

Many of these things are true - his family does come from Little Clacton, Essex (CHECK!!!).

In his Brief Biography, LRH claims to have excelled in atomic and molecular phenomena, mathematics and huamnities. In truth his grades were appallingly low; he was placed on probation after first year and did not return for second. He was at Princeton School of Military Government for three months, possibly as part of a war service course. And Sequoia University was traced to a residential dwelling in LA (CHECK ADDRESS!!!) operating through a PO Box and offering mail order doctorates. Was formerly College of Drugless Healing and might hv bn Hubbard establishment - a Harvard student discovered LRH ws on t staff (???)

Figure 26. Miller's typed notes indicating confusion on Cooper's unfounded claim.

Cooper had also provided some background about the school's history on the same page, stating "Sequoia was originally called the College of Drugless Healing" (Cooper 1971, 163). Her knowledge of this fact indicated that she willfully ignored Hubbard's absence in the original 1939 articles of incorporation as well as the 1952 and 1953 Scientology promotional fliers which had the only reference to the 1939 incorporation date: "The original charter for SEQUOIA UNIVERSITY was secured in 1939 in the State of California" (Scientology Council 1953, 4). No founders of the College of Drugless Healing had degrees from Sequoia, but some had degrees from their own College of Drugless Healing, including George Floden (1893–1975) (Keating 1998, 6) and Marguerite Brown (Olsson 1941, 5). Indeed, the school ran from 1939–1942 (Ferguson and Wiese 1988, 32) and renamed to the College of Drugless Healing, Naturopathy by 1945 (Keating 1998, 12). One of its own students, Dr. "Nota" William Walter Nichols, later taught at Sequoia, while others went on to work as naturopaths, such as Dr. Charles Keawe (1886–1955) who earned his Doctor of Naturopathy at the College of Drugless Healing (Allen and Ewing 1951, 25).

Regardless, the 1957 California State Assembly investigation testimony disproved Smith's, McMaster's and Cooper's statements about Hubbard's ownership. Mrs. Gladys M. Hough testified under oath in 1957 that only she, her husband Joseph, their daughter, mother-in-law and son-in-law were on the board of trustees and were the sole owners of both Fremont College and Sequoia University (Assembly of the State of California 1957, 60–1). Indeed, the 1952 articles of incorporation also showed only five board members: Joseph W. and Gladys M. Hough, their daughter J[ean] C. Nelson (1930–2009), daughter-in-law M[aire] J[ean] Shaw (1911–2007), and Hough's mother, M[argaret] G. Kent (1921–2003) (Hough 1952, 5). These board members had renamed the College of Drugless Healing to Sequoia University on 20 August 1952 and ratified the document a week later on 27 August without any mention of Hubbard (Hough 1952a, 6; Hough 1952b, 5). Joseph W. Hough even opened another charter of Sequoia University in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on 8 July 1952, again without mentioning Hubbard. Thus, David Seabury unofficially owned and ran Sequoia University from 1950–52, whereas the Hough family formally owned Sequoia University from 1952 onwards. Former Dianeticist Donald H. Rogers confirmed this in his already mentioned letter, “The story of his [Hubbard] buying Sequoia with other people, in order to get degrees, is new to me, and I'm not sure why they would need to. As I understood it, all you needed to get a degree from Sequoia University was a little publicity to bring you to their attention” (Ortega 2018). There was no evidence that Hubbard founded the school or owned a stake in it.

Department of State
Corporation No. 175321

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF
COLLEGE OF DRUGLESS HEALING

FILED
In the Office of the Secretary of State
OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
JUN 6 - 1938
FRANK C. JORDAN
CLERK

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

That we, the undersigned, have this day voluntarily associated ourselves together for the purpose of forming a non-profit corporation under the provisions of Title XVII, Part IV, Division First, of the Civil Code of the State of California:

AND WE DO HEREBY CERTIFY:

FIRST: That the name of this corporation is:

COLLEGE OF DRUGLESS HEALING.

SECOND: That the purposes for which this corporation is formed are:

To establish, conduct, and maintain a college of learning; to conduct classes and give instruction in the art, science, and principles of all phases and methods of drugless healing, naturopathy, chiropractic, physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, osteopathy, electro-therapy, obstetrics, Swedish massage, psycho-therapy, metaphysics, and psychology;

To establish, conduct, and operate such clinics or clinic as may be necessary, advisable, or expedient in connection with the purposes of the corporation;

To establish such subsidiary and subordinate organizations as may be necessary, expedient, or proper in order to carry out and into effect the above aims and purposes; and generally to do and perform any and all acts, matters, and things, necessary, expedient, or proper to carry out the purposes and business of the corporation in the State of California, in other states, territories, and dependencies of the United States, as authorized or permitted by law;

This corporation does not contemplate pecuniary gains, profits, or dividends to any of the members thereof; shall be non-profit, and shall have no capital stock.

THIRD: The place where the college is to be conducted is Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles, State of California.

FOURTH: The number of trustees of this corporation shall be five (5), and the names and residences of the trustees are as follows, to wit:

Names:	Residences:
George Fieden	Los Angeles, California
Ether B. Fieden	Los Angeles, California
Clark Browner	Alhambra, California
Marguerite Brown	Los Angeles, California
Stuart Bjornberg	Pasadena, California.

-1-

Figure 27. 1939 Articles of Incorporation of The College of Drugless Healing.

EXHIBIT "A"

NOTICE OF CALL OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS and members of College of Drugless Healing, a non-profit corporation of California, and waiver of notice of said meeting.

WE, the undersigned, being all of the Directors of College of Drugless Healing, a non-profit corporation of California, and all of the members of said corporation, DO HEREBY CALL a joint meeting of the Board of Directors of our said corporation and of the members thereof, to be held at the office of the corporation at 915 So. Grandview St, in the City of Los Angeles, California, at 10:00 o'clock A.M. on the 20th day of August, 1952, for the purpose of adopting a resolution and taking all such actions and proceeding as may be necessary and proper to change the name of this corporation from College of Drugless Healing to Sequoia University. And we do hereby waive all statutory or by-law requirements as to notice of the time, or place and objects of said meeting, and consent to the transactions thereto of any and all business pertaining to the affairs of the corporation.

Joseph M. Hough
J. M. Hough
J. C. Miller
M. G. Bente

STATE OF CALIFORNIA } ss.
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES }
JOSEPH M. HOUGH and C. M. MOORE
being duly and severally sworn, depose and say that they are now and have been at all times in said Certificate mentioned the President and Secretary respectively of the College of Drugless Healing mentioned in the foregoing Certificate of Amendment of Articles of Incorporation and are familiar with the contents thereof and that the statements therein made are true of their own knowledge.

Joseph M. Hough
C. M. Moore

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 20th day of August, 1952.
Notary Public in and for the said County and State of California
My Commission Expires Aug. 2nd, 1954.

FILED
In the Office of the Secretary of State
of the State of California
OCT 8 - 1952
FRANK C. JORDAN
CLERK

Figure 28. 1952 Articles of Incorporation of Sequoia University in California.

Awarded in 1950 ... or 1953?

John McMaster signed a statement that read:

I understand it is asserted that L Ron Hubbard was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Sequoia University on February 10 1953, in recognition of his outstanding work in the fields of Dianetics and Scientology and that the said degree was recorded with the Department of Education of the State of California (Smith 2009).

Additionally, Sequoia University owner Joseph W. Hough had also signed an affidavit, which stated that Hubbard received his honorary degree on 10 February 1953 (Hough 1968, 1).

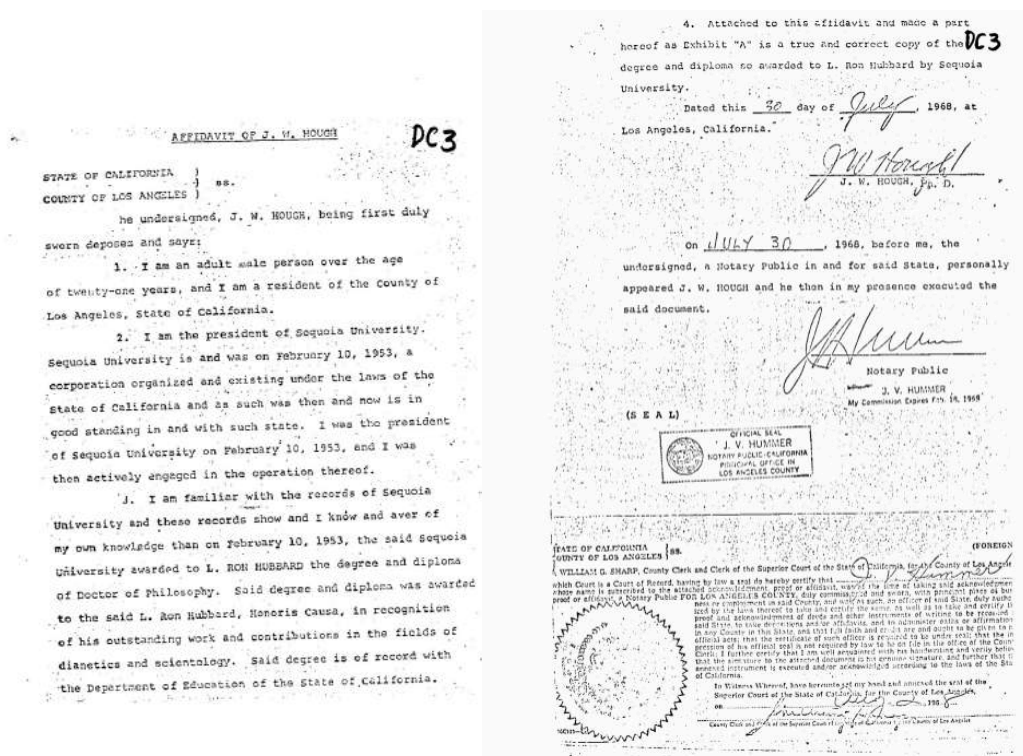


Figure 29. 1968 Signed Affidavit by Joseph W. Hough regarding L. Ron Hubbard's Sequoia University Degree.

In contrast, the 1959 *A Brief Biography of L. Ron Hubbard* in *Ability* 111 and its primary source the 1959 *Who's Who In The East* were the only publications that listed Hubbard's honorary PhD as having been awarded in 1950; *Who's Who* copies from 1950–1958 showed Hubbard without any honorary degrees. Likewise, a 1964 letter to Peter Williams of the Australian Board of Inquiry into Scientology stated that “the Ph.D. degree was awarded to me in 1950, by Sequoia

University, California” (Hubbard 1964). Finally, a telegram dated 2 August 1950 from Sequoia University Vice President Dr. Clarence Lamb and President Dr. David Seabury showed that they were to award Hubbard the honorary degrees of both Doctor of Philosophy and a Doctor of Laws on Saturday, 12 August 1950 in Los Angeles (Lamb 1950). As such, these items created a massive discrepancy with McMaster’s and Hough’s affidavits (Hough 1968, 1).

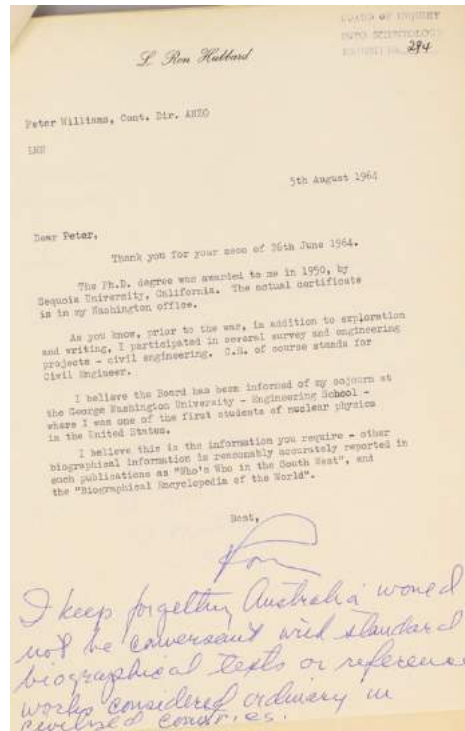


Figure 30. 1964 Letter purportedly from L. Ron Hubbard to Peter Williams, Item 294 in Australian Board of Inquiry into Scientology.

Indeed, the 1950 telegram was unusual for many reasons. First, while Sequoia University had an official 501(c)3 non-profit status under Joseph Hough, it was not listed as such under Seabury (IRS 1950). Second, the telegram appears to have been sent 2 August, when Hubbard lived in Elizabeth, New Jersey. Hubbard lectured there until 4 August and later at Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles on 10 August, possibly even prompting his trip to California (L. Ron Hubbard Library 1994a, 647; L. Ron Hubbard Library 1994b, 1; Camacho 2019, 18–52). Third, despite the telegram’s reference to a recent feature in *Time*, the magazine never mentioned Sequoia University, Seabury, Lamb, or even Hough in any articles, photos, advertisements or captions from December 1949 to 10 August 1950. Sequoia University was, however, listed in *The Los Angeles Times*

in an advertisement (*Los Angeles Times* 1950, 20). All the more bizarre was that in the handwritten notes from Miller's interview with Hough, the former university owner had stated: "Dr. Hough thinks telegram is phony. Seabury was never even connected with [Sequoia] University. Lamb was most likely not connected with University [...] The telegram is spurious" (Miller 1986b). In any case, the memories and affidavits contradicted with other printed evidence.

Hough's claim that Seabury was not connected with Sequoia was false for several reasons: there was a 1950 advertisement which mentioned that The David Seabury School of Psychology was "an affiliate of Sequoia University" (*Los Angeles Times* 1950, 20). Sequoia started under Seabury's name unofficially until it spun off under Hough's control, and the two shared a space at 535 S. Hoover, Rm. 426 as early as November 1950 (Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1950, 334). In fact, Lamb had even spoken with Hough at a writer's meeting in 1951 where they were credited as "Dr. Clarence Lamb, chancellor of Sequoia College in Visala, and Dr. Joseph W. Hough, president of Sequoia" (*Los Angeles Times* 1951b, 70). Furthermore, there appeared to be genuine interest from Los Angeles academics as Dr. Clarence A. Lamb and Dr. William R. Boorman hosted a luncheon for Sequoia University students with *Dianetics* as the topic in June 1950 (Sequoia University 1950, 1). Lamb was a real person, having worked in the Army Air Force and became Principal of the Franklin School for Adults, and President of the Belmont Evening High School in Los Angeles (*Los Angeles Times* 1943, 25; California State Department of Education 1951, 66). He also helped originate the Los Angeles evening school system (*Los Angeles Times* 1975, 23). Likewise, Boorman was a University of Chicago graduate who taught general semantics to adult education classes in Los Angeles (ISGS 1957, 159).

Sequoia University also awarded honorary degrees to other non-Scientologists before even the 1950 issuance to Hubbard. Hollywood psychoanalyst Mason H. Rose, IV was perhaps the earliest record found in *Who's Who*: "M.S. Sequoia Univ., 1948; Ph.D., *ibid.*, 1951" (Cook 1963, 588). These would change in later editions to 1948–1953 and finally both being from 1953, which indicated a later reissuance (*Marquis Who's Who* 1970, 528; *Marquis Who's Who* 1987, 748). Likewise, Alan Weaver Hazelton received his honorary LL.D in 1950 (*Marquis Who's Who* 1965, 574). Not to mention President David Seabury held an honorary doctorate from Sequoia in 1950.

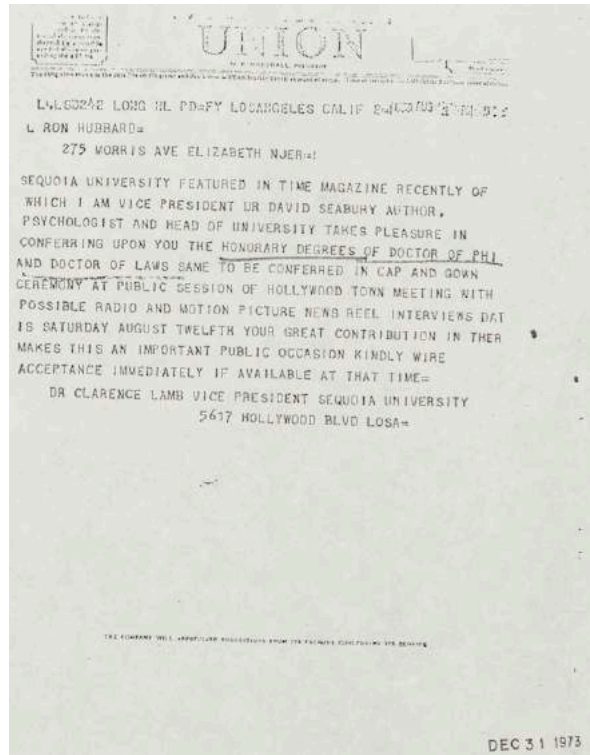


Figure 31. Telegram from Clarence Lamb to L. Ron Hubbard 2 August 1950.

Furthermore, Hubbard seemed wary of Hough and Sequoia University as per his 1953 correspondence with Richard de Mille. Additionally, a September 1950 article from the *Los Angeles Times* had also mentioned Hubbard had no academic degrees:

Hubbard confesses he finally tired of listening with half an ear to lectures repeating the dictums of authority while he was doing his own thinking on other planes, and he left the university sans degree [...] A note to critics here. So not expect any apology from Hubbard today for Hubbard's past. As for his lack of academic degrees or trappings, he regards higher education as now administered as mere surface scratchings (Clarke 1950).

Furthermore, former Dianeticist Donald H. Rogers had even commented in his letters to Jon Atack that “Ron was offered a PhD from Sequoia in 1950, I think it was, and turned it down because of their marginal odor” (Ortega 2018). If Hubbard had refused the degree then this may explain why one can find the Sequoia telegram from 1950 but not the diploma from that year.

If Hubbard did not receive it, then the question becomes why the 1950 mention appeared in two other locations. The *Who's Who* entry was not submitted by Hubbard, which Managing Editor Alison Perruso had previously

explained: “L. Ron Hubbard [...] did not voluntarily submit information” because “there is usually no submission from the individual themselves...as is the case here [with Hubbard]” (Alison Perruso, e-mail message to author, 1 September 2015; Alison Perruso, e-mail message to author, 19 August 2015). Rather, Perruso explained that because “information was all found publicly” then this suggests that either someone else submitted this title to them or that the award notice was printed somewhere not yet discovered.

It is also possible that Hubbard was to be awarded an honorary degree from Sequoia University on 12 August 1950, which he did not receive until it reissued on 10 February 1953 under the new owners. The school had apparently awarded degrees to past alumni, just as with Mason H. Rose, IV. As Hubbard was in Britain, however, he telegraphed Richard de Mille on 27 February 1953 for Hough to expedite a copy of the diploma (Hubbard 1953e). Needless to say, these discrepancies between the dates gave critics enough room to speculate whether Hubbard bought Sequoia and his degree. Given that Sequoia University awarded Hubbard a degree in absentia on 10 February 1953 and his telegram 17 days later requested that de Mille expedite it to him in Britain, then Hough and de Mille likely never knew about the 1950 diploma and thus “re-awarded” it. If true, then Hubbard left his degree unpublicized until its first mention in 1955.

Buyer Liar

Russell Miller, unaware of the honorary 1950 degree, insinuated that Hubbard bought his Sequoia University degree in order to appear legitimate:

In February 1953, Hubbard decided it was necessary to bolster his status with the phlegmatic British by acquiring some academic qualifications. He knew precisely where they were available—from Sequoia University in Los Angeles. The ‘university’ of Sequoia was owned by Dr Joseph Hough, a chiropracteur [sic] and naturopath who ran a successful practice from a large house in downtown Los Angeles and conferred ‘degrees’ on whoever he thought merited them. Richard deMille was awarded a PhD from Sequoia, somewhat to his surprise, for a slim volume he had written under the title *An* [sic] *Introduction to Scientology*. On 27 February, deMille, who was then living in Los Angeles, received an urgent telegram from Hubbard in London: ‘PLEASE INFORM DR HOUGH PHD VERY ACCEPTABLE. PRIVATELY TO YOU. FOR GOSH SAKES EXPEDITE. WORK HERE UTTERLY DEPENDANT [sic] ON IT. CABLE REPLY. RON.’ deMille found Hough thoroughly agreeable and replied the following day: ‘PHD GRANTED. HOUGH’S AIRMAIL LETTER OF CONFIRMATION FOLLOWS.’

GOOD LUCK.’ It was in this way that Hubbard acquired the distinction of appending letters to his name—a mysterious ‘Doctorate of Divinity’ would follow shortly, along with a ‘D. Scn’ (Miller 1987, 211–12; Hubbard 1953e).

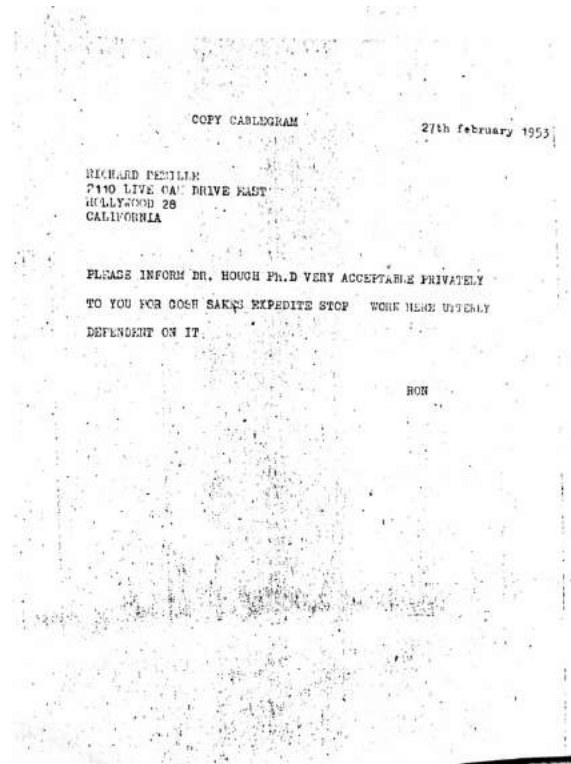


Figure 32. L. Ron Hubbard’s 27 February 1953 telegram to Richard de Mille.

According to Russell Miller, Hubbard telegraphed fellow Scientologist Richard de Mille on 27 February 1953 in order to get a bogus degree and trick the British because Hubbard knew that de Mille got a fake degree for his short book *Introduction to Scientology* from Joseph W. Hough, who ran a well-known diploma mill.

Miller was not the only one to make such a suggestion, as Donald H. Rogers gave a similar statement in his letter, claiming it cost thousands: “As I understood it, all you needed to get a degree from Sequoia University was a little publicity to bring you to their attention, and a few thousand dollars to cover their expenses in awarding it to you and printing a diploma” (Ortega 2018). Despite this persistent narrative, their stories have several flaws.

Firstly, Russell Miller ignored Hubbard’s use of “very acceptable,” indicating a prior communication. Even critic Virginia McClaughry noticed this error in

Miller's account: "the wording of the first telegram to Demille [sic] clearly indicates there was already earlier discussion about this degree" (McClaughry 2016a). Indeed, Hubbard was responding to Richard de Mille's 28 January letter: "Dr. Hough doesn't want me to mention this to you, but he still wants to give you a Ph.D. How would you feel about it?" (de Mille 1953a).

2110 live oak drive east
hollywood 28, california
28 January 53

Dearest Ron,

Since last week there have been some interesting developments -- though the arrival of your books was, unfortunately, not one of them.

My University credits have been evaluated by Dr Hough (Ph.D., Litt. D., D.O., Ed. M., 37 points short of a Ph.D. and that I can fulfill this requirement by writing a master's thesis and a doctor's thesis.

I am writing the master's thesis now. It's title is *INTRODUCTION TO SCIENTOLOGY*, and it is an overview of everything you have written from *DIATYPOS*, to *SSO*. The purpose of the book (about 50,000 words, I think) is to provide the student with a starting point, so that he will be able, after reading it to read any of your books without getting lost. Diagrams, emotion, the tone scale, energy flows and concepts are placed in chronology and their interrelationships are discussed. Psychology, psychiatry and psycho-analysis are suitably dealt with -- that is, they are destroyed, but from their smoking ruins their former adherents are shown a path to the new and higher ground of Scientology. Some of my notes on chapters include the following titles: *Scientology-Past Present and Future* (written), *The language of Scientology* (written), *The theta-NEUT theory* (written), *Self-determinism* (written), *The scale of being* (the tone scale ~~was~~ -- I use both names), *Thought emotion and effort*, *Attention (energy) flows*, *Black and white processing*, *mechanisms*, *Mechanical aids*, *Co-auditing and human relations*, *Existence without a body*, *The tone scale of motion*, *The auditor and society*, *Levels of treatment* (of the body), and so on.

This will be a university text book, introducing the student to the ~~new~~ world's newest and most important university course and ~~placing~~ placing in proper perspective the sole founder and inventor of its subject, namely L. Ron Hubbard -- who is said by the author to be greater than any of the men to whom he has given credit in *SCIENCE OF SURVIVAL*.

The Doctorate thesis will be a treatise on self-determinism in the sexual group -- *HOW TO BE HAPPY THROUGH MARRIAGE*.

I expect to publish *INTRODUCTION TO SCIENTOLOGY* as soon as it is written. It will probably have a (suitable) introduction by Dr Hough, telling why a university course is being offered -- "amongst developmental work having been done to make Scientology fully communicable, etc, etc" And I would like to have a Foreword by you, approving of the book. Also, I would like to bill myself as Richard deMille, Ph.D., D. Son., Professor of Scientology, Sequoia University -- therefore, it would be nice if you would make me a D. Son. honorary or otherwise.

There is a pretty good line up between me and Hough now, and I think that he is really okay. He has more good sense than anyone I have encountered for a long time. I am sure that I rate a lot higher in his opinion than the ~~Wahlees~~ Wahlees -- which speaks well for his opinion, doesn't it?

Our (my) plan is to teach a good basic course in everything you have written, introduced and coordinated by my book. Then, as you bring out further work, it can be worked into the course. This depends, at this time, upon the Wahlees as well as on me. Hardin is working hard and he has a lot to offer as a teacher. He tends to stray a little -- as so many do -- but he is better than most, and he has a lot of steam up. I think I can keep him in line as to theory. If not, I am sure Dr Hough will listen to me. He and I have alot in common. We see our goals as two: (1) to teach a university course which has high standards and stiff requirements, (2) to follow your work to the letter, just as you have made it, weeding out all foreign ~~Wahlees~~ elements and squirrely notions which may try to creep in.

I don't think anyone could do a better job than we can and will do -- anyone who is available, that is. I don't think a better opportunity could arise for you to invade the academic field, on your own ~~terms~~ terms, and establish a beachhead which will hold. Your work is bound to creep into the universities in one form or another. This is a chance to start it off right. To keep control of it. To use the authoritarian structure to your own advantage instead of having to buck it all the time.

Dr Hough doesn't want me to mention this to you, but he still wants to give you a Ph.D. How would you feel about it?

Figure 33. 28 January 1953 de Mille letter to Hubbard.

Secondly, the US Copyright Office records showed that Scientology Council published Richard de Mille's book *Introduction to Scientology* on 26 June 1953, four months after Hubbard telegraphed de Mille in February (Library of Congress 1953, 173). As its title page showed, de Mille had a PhD at publication. Both the copyright record and title page also showed Hubbard as "C.E., PH.D., D. SCN." which indicated that de Mille and Scientology Council knew of Hubbard's honorary PhD before it published. If Richard de Mille got his degree first as Russell Miller insinuated, then these records create an anachronism in Miller's narrative.

Thirdly, the same letter to Hubbard showed that de Mille did not yet qualify for a PhD:

My University credits have been evaluated by Dr. Hough (Ph.D., Litt. D., D.C., Ed. M., etc., etc., etc.). He has found that I am, by him, only 37 points short of a Ph.D. and that I can fulfill his requirement by writing a master's thesis and a doctor's thesis. I am writing the master's thesis now. It's [sic] title is INTRODUCTION TO SCIENTOLOGY (de Mille 1953a).

Richard de Mille did not complete the book until sometime in early to mid-March: "And now I wish to speak a little about my book. It is finished this two weeks [sic] and it is good. The university will publish it, nominally, but I will be the real publisher" (de Mille 1953c, 3). His description matched both the copyright information and *The Journal of Scientology*. Furthermore, in a 21 August 1986 phone interview with Russell Miller, de Mille even stated that he earned his degree in June 1953 (de Mille 1986, 1). Miller omitted this detail from his book. By this point, however, Hubbard had already received his honorary PhD.

Lastly, Miller's account conflicted with both Sequoia University owner Joseph Hough's signed affidavit and John McMaster's statement that Hubbard received his honorary degree on 10 February 1953 (Hough 1968, 1; Smith 2009). Both were correct that a diploma was awarded on this date, as a copy of Hubbard's diploma appeared in the British Consulate General of Los Angeles' files (TNA FCO 26/1796). Cooper even contradicted Miller: "In fact, Hubbard didn't even have to *pay* for that degree—it was an Honorary Degree for his work in Dianetics" (Cooper 1971, 163). Again, Miller omitted a quote from de Mille because it did not fit his narrative: "Sequoia was not exactly a diploma mill, since no money changed hands [...] It did not have much to do with money. It was one

of those fringe unconformist outfits. He [Hough] got interested in Dianetics and decided to confer a degree on Hubbard” (de Mille 1986, 1).

The book *Mission Into Time* gave the reasons for the honorary degree, presumably cribbed from Hough’s signed statement, an award letter, and possibly from the 1953 graduation ceremony speaker Senator Jack B. Tenney:

He did accept an honorary Doctor of Philosophy given in recognition of his outstanding work on Dianetics and, ‘as an inspiration to the many people ... who had been inspired by him to take up advanced studies in this field ...’ (Hubbard 1973a, 16).

Hubbard thus had no need to purchase a diploma on 27 February as Sequoia University President Joseph W. Hough and his daughter-in-law Secretary Maire J. Shaw awarded Hubbard an honorary Doctor of Philosophy degree in absentia seventeen days prior on 10 February (TNA FCO 26/1796). Hubbard thus telegraphed Richard de Mille to inform Hough to expedite the diploma.

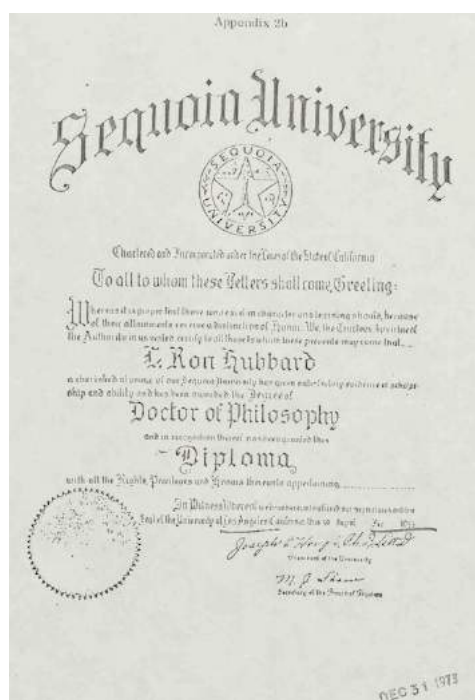
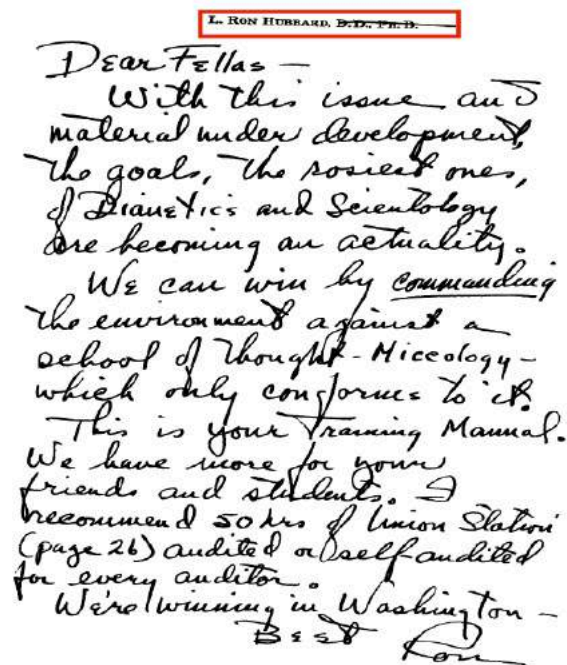


Figure 34. 10 February 1953 L. Ron Hubbard Honorary PhD from Sequoia University.

Russell Miller created further anachronisms regarding Hubbard’s title: “Hubbard acquired the distinction of appending letters to his name—a mysterious ‘Doctorate of Divinity’ would follow shortly, along with a ‘D. Scn’” (Miller 1987, 212). In fact, Hubbard’s “D. Scn.”—which meant Doctor of

Scientology—appeared on the first edition cover of *Scientology: 8-80* in 1952, before the PhD or the Doctor of Divinity (Hubbard 1952, Front Cover). The D. Scn. was an honorary title awarded for completing the 1952 Scientology Philadelphia Doctorate Course. Hubbard revealed his first use of D.D. in a June 1955 letter to Scientologists, which showed “D.D., PhD” on letterhead with a strikethrough and later to the FBI without one in letters dated on July and September 1955 (HCO 1955b; Hubbard 1955a; Hubbard 1955b). Although the D.D. followed the honorary PhD, it appeared between two to five years later, depending on which version of the diploma one uses, not shortly after.



L. RON HUBBARD, D.D., Ph.D.

Dear Fellas -
With this issue and
material under development
the goals, the societal ones,
of Dianetics and Scientology
are becoming an actuality.
We can win by commanding
the environment against a
school of thought - Hiccology -
which only conforms to it.
This is your Training Manual.
We have more for your
friends and students. I
recommend 50 hrs of Union Station
(page 26) audited or self audited
for every auditor.
Were winning in Washington -
Best Ron

Figure 35. June 1955 L. Ron Hubbard Letter in *Ability* with strikethrough on D.D. and Ph. D.

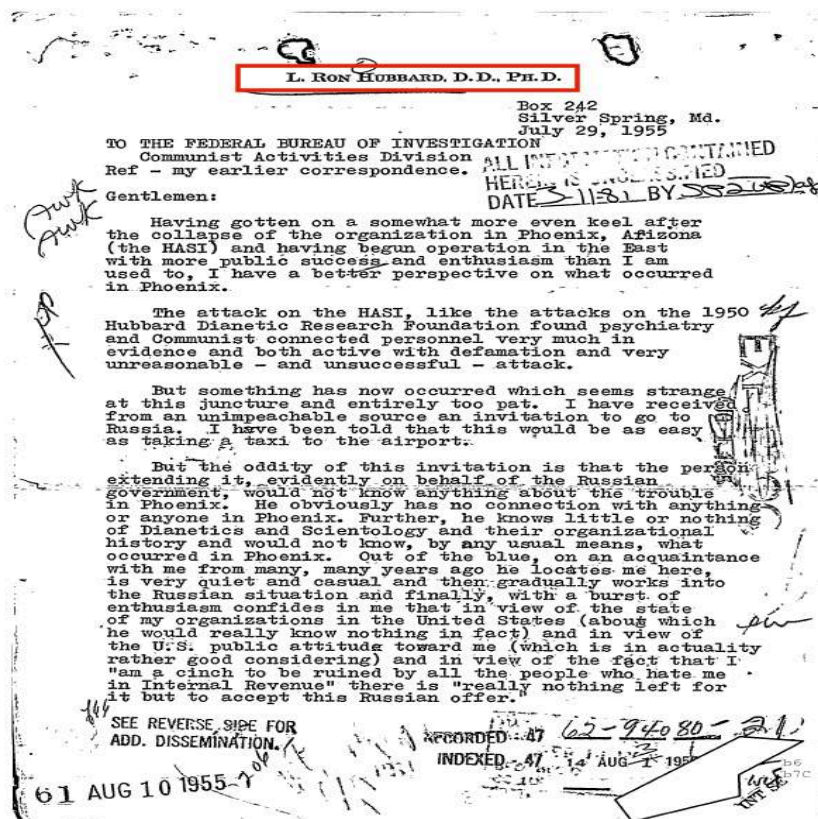


Figure 36. 29 July 1955 L. Ron Hubbard Letter to FBI without strikethrough on D.D. or Ph. D.

The actual order of Hubbard's honorary titles and awards was: (1) an honorary PhD and Doctorate of Laws offered from Sequoia University on 12 August 1950 from David Seabury and Clarence A. Lamb, (2) a D. Scn. first used on the cover of *Scientology* 8-80 in November 1952, but awarded in December 1952 from the Philadelphia Doctorate Course as Jack Horner got the first, (3) an honorary PhD on 10 February 1953 reissued from Sequoia University under Joseph Hough, and (4) an honorary D.D. in 1955, which was apparently self-titled, given that Hubbard explained that a D. Scn. was equal to a D.D. as he had originated the subject. Indeed, Hubbard asserted that "[t]he originator of a subject traditionally has the right to qualify persons in that subject and this is the chief source of any title of learning" (Hubbard 1974, 119). He apparently used Merriam-Webster's second definition, cited in *Ability*:

"Doctor: (ME. doctour, fr. OF. doctour, fr. L. doctor teacher, fr. docere to teach.) 1. A teacher; one skilled in a profession, or branch of knowledge; a learned man. 2. An academic title, orig. implying that its possessor was so well versed in a department of knowledge as to be qualified to teach. (The Merriam-Webster "Webster's New

International Dictionary, Second Edition” p. 763.)” (HASI 1958, 9; Neilson 1945, 763).

New Religious Movements scholar Professor J. Gordon Melton also noted, “Church of Eductivism [founder] Jack Horner (b. 1927[–1989]) worked from 1950 to 1965 with L. Ron Hubbard founder of the Church of Scientology. A prominent member of the church [of Scientology], he was awarded the first Doctor of Scientology degree” (Melton 2009, 1227). Scientology critic Bent Corydon even confirmed this in his own book: “Jack Horner [was] the first person to be awarded a ‘Doctor of Scientology’ certificate” (Corydon 1987, 312). Likewise, Hubbard awarded the first B. Scn. to Alphia Hart (1902–1973) in 1952 (Hart 1952a, 1). If Hubbard neither awarded himself the first Doctor of Scientology nor the first Bachelor of Scientology, then it is even less likely that he would award himself a degree from Sequoia University.

In any case, the honorary D. Scn. and D.D. titles were primarily used internally and often interchangeably within Scientology organizations. For example, William H. Young, Julia Lewis Salmen (1915–1979), L. Ron Hubbard, Jr. (1934–1991), Kenneth D. Barrett (1923–2005), Robert E. Nichols and Richard F. Steves all held the D.D. titles (Sanborn 1956, 2). Its usage was explained in the first issue of *Ability*:

‘Doctor of Divinity’ and ‘Doctor of Scientology’ actually mean, from their word roots the same thing. ‘To Divine’ means to know. ‘Scio’ means ‘to know in its fullest sense’. The best difference would be that Scientology is a more positive knowing. Veda, Tao, Dharma, and other such words mean the same thing as and are forerunners of ‘Scientology’—all these words mean, simply, ‘to know’ or ‘knowingness’ (Hubbard 1955c, 5).

The Journal of Scientology explained that Arizona gave it the right to issue “legal certificates in Dianetics, Scientology and the ministry” (HASI 1954a, 1 and 3). The honorary titles of B. Scn, D. Scn. and D.D. were used within the Scientology organization, which did not pose as an accredited university. It was these titles that Jon Atack confused with Sequoia University. True enough, John Bear conceded that “[u]ntil 1985 [...] Arizona had no laws whatsoever regulating universities and degrees, and so a good many degree mills operated from that state” (Bear 1988, 244). Even if Hubbard ran a degree mill from Phoenix, Arizona, why he would buy a degree from Sequoia University when he could create his own degrees for free and award them to himself and other

Scientologists undermines Russell Miller's and Jon Atack's very convoluted narratives.

A Conspiracy of Dunces

Ex-Scientologist and frequent Scientology critic Virginia McClaughry posits that L. Ron Hubbard was a CIA agent using Scientology in order to spread mind-control techniques and help bring about the New World Order agenda. Although that particular claim is beyond the scope of this paper, her two articles which discuss Sequoia University present numerous errors and unproven assumptions. One such example was the aforementioned false claim that a news article had revealed that Chief Justice Earl Warren had a degree from Sequoia University—when in fact the article referred to Roderick J. Wilson. This paper will analyze her website's claims due to it frequently appearing in online searches relating to Sequoia University, which even the AT Still Museum of Osteopathic Medicine had forwarded as information on Sequoia's osteopathic programs. Thus, her claims are worth further examination given their apparent popularity.

McClaughry linked Sequoia University with British intelligence agency MI-6 due to a Scientology Council flyer which showed that it shared a phone number briefly with talent agent “Maurine Oliver [1904–1997] ‘who specialized in representing beginning Englishmen.’” McClaughry further reasoned:

The reason that I'm bringing her [Maurine Oliver] up is that it was probably her [sic] that was connected to Richard DeMille [sic], the son of famous producer Cecil B. DeMille [1881–1959], who was Hubbard's ‘aide’ starting back in 1950 with the first Dianetics Research Foundation [...] so the fact that this Sequoia University/Department of Scientology flyer lists Maurine's phone number that matches up with her listing in The Radio Annual and Television Yearbook, 1954 on p. 117 [sic p. 107] under Radio and TV Artists Agencies—Which matches up with the last 4 digit numbers of Joanna and Hardin Walsh—*Can't be a coincidence*” (McClaughry 2016a).

McClaughry continued, “It was DeMille [sic] that arranged for the dang Ph.D. for Hubbard in the first place, through Hollywood agent Maurine Oliver and the ever-changing identity scientologists [sic]—Joanna and Hardin Walsh” (McClaughry 2016b). McClaughry expanded Miller's narrative about how Hubbard took his Sequoia University degree, claiming that Hubbard contacted Joseph Hough through Richard de Mille via British actor/literary (and intelligence) agent Maurine Oliver with the aid of the Walshes. McClaughry

apparently ignored or was unaware of the letters in which Hubbard distrusted the Walshes to the point that he had even shut down Scientology Council for a brief period. McClaughry was also unaware of the letters in which de Mille had stated that Hough had offered him the degree earlier as well as the 1950 Lamb and Seabury telegram awarding Hubbard the honorary Doctorate of Philosophy and Doctorate of Laws.

Despite McClaughry successfully pointing out Miller's anachronisms regarding the 1953 telegram, her narrative hinged on Scientology Council and Maurine Oliver working closely because of a HI 0257 phone number which briefly existed at both locations simultaneously. McClaughry's cursory online research also showed that she missed several pieces of evidence, such as the 1939 articles of incorporation which show The College of Drugless Healing renamed to Sequoia University, as well as reverse directories in Los Angeles from the 1950s. (Reader's note: refer to the full timeline of Sequoia University in the Appendix as the dates, phone numbers and locations are confusing without it). Using partial information to draw sweeping conclusions only further undermines theories which connect Oliver to de Mille, Sequoia and Hubbard.

McClaughry's theory that Oliver introduced de Mille to Hubbard sometime before 1950 ignored that Hubbard already had several Hollywood connections going back over a decade, such as his 1938 film *The Secret of Treasure Island*. McClaughry also either ignored or was unaware that in 1949 the talent agency Don Marlowe Ltd. had the HI 0257 number at 7070 Hollywood Blvd and retained it through 1950 (Quigley 1949, 9). While true that Maurine Oliver also had the same HI 0257 phone number in 1949, she was listed at 368 N. La Cienega Blvd. (Hollywood Reporter 1949, 764). This indicates that HI 0257 was a shared number and likely a call-in service. Don Marlowe (1919–1978) would therefore have been more likely to create a de Mille-Hubbard connection rather than Oliver, given that both Scientology Council and Marlowe shared the same number and an address much earlier than Oliver, and he was a talent agent to boot. Oliver kept the HI 0257 number but moved to 2100 Laurel Canyon Blvd in 1952 (Alicoate 1952, 583). Meanwhile, Scientology Council operated from 7070 Hollywood Blvd by August 1952 under the name "Scientology" (HASI 1952, 3), with the number HI 0257 when it became "Scientology Council" (Hart 1952b, 6). Later, Scientology Council had similar but different letters and numbers with additional digits: HO 4-0257 and HO 4-0255 in June 1953 and

HO 4-0255 in December 1953 (de Mille 1953d, Back Cover; Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1953b, 344; Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1953c, 346). By 1954, when Oliver moved to 7070 Hollywood, she also had two numbers: HO9-2993 and HO4-0257 (Alicoate 1954a, 688 and 1954b, 107). In short, although Oliver moved to the same address which Scientology Council had this was two years later and also well after Hubbard received his honorary PhD in 1950 or 1953.

McClaghry forwarded another link for her theory: *The Journal of Scientology* from December 1952 showed Scientology Council with the number HI 0257 (Hart 1952b, 6), whereas the 1953 radio directory listed Maurine Oliver with the number HI 0257 (Alicoate 1953, 107) while the Scientology/Sequoia flyer listed Scientology Council Executive Offices at 7070 Hollywood Blvd with number HO4-0257 (Scientology Council 1953, 1). McClaghry noticed that the last four numbers were similar, but that Scientology Council had an additional number and a different letter. McClaghry reasoned that this was likely intended to deceive as it did not match the earlier *The Journal of Scientology* listing:

I figure either Ma Bell must have changed the designation (they did that as more and more people got phones) or the number on the Sequoia flyer is deliberately wrong, which scam artists sometimes do to make it hard to contact them *in person* versus by mail, or its [sic] wrong in the JOS ad (McClaghry 2016a).

McClaghry argued that her theory was proven correct in the January 1953 issue of *The Journal of Scientology* which listed its number as HI-0257 (Hart 1953c, 5). She ignored that the Scientology Council began around August 1952 at 7070 Hollywood Blvd. under the name “Scientology” (HASI 1952, 3), then became Scientology Council with the number HI-0257 in December 1952 (Hart 1952b, 6), kept the HI-0257 number through January 1953 (Hart 1953c, 5), while also adding the number HO4-0257 (Scientology Council 1953, 1) and finally adding an HO4-0255 number in June 1953 (Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1953b, 344). Scientology Council had also operated since December 1953 at another address which was 621 S. Oxford Ave. (de Mille 1953e, Back Cover) with the number DU2-4377 where Hardin Walsh worked (Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1953c, 543).

In fact, both Walsh and Scientology Council worked through October 1957 at 621 S. Oxford Ave. with the numbers DU2-4377 and DU2-9528, respectively (Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1957, 604). This differed from 610

S. Wilton Pl. where Walsh lived and had the number DU4-5352 in the January 1953 reverse directory (Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1953a, 773). The 1953 Scientology flyer for “Scientology Council in Residence” also gave Walsh’s residential number and the HO4-0257 number, placing publication circa January 1953 (Scientology Council 1953, 1; Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1953c, 797).

Meanwhile, Oliver changed her number from HI-0257 in 1953, then to HO4-0257 in 1954 which she kept through 1955 while also having another number HO9-2993 at 7070 Hollywood Blvd. in 1954 (Alicoate 1953, 107; Alicoate 1954a, 668; Alicoate 1955, 107; Alicoate 1954b, 107). Oliver kept one number HI-0257 throughout 1953 while Scientology Council had up to four that year: HI-0257, HO4-0257, DU2-4377 and HO4-0255. By April 1955, Maurine Oliver moved to 1767 W. 47th with the number AX1-0847 (Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1955, 972).

While McClaughry had noted that dozens of other businesses operated from the same 7070 Hollywood Blvd. address, she did not realize that they also shared the same numbers. She observed “That 7070 address for the ‘Executive Offices’ tracks to a large building that seems to have been used in various sales/scam operations in the 1950’s, including an exact match on p. 90 in Life Magazine (July 19, 1954) for selling miniature cars” (McClaughry 2016a). Indeed, the following 27 businesses were listed at room 20 in 7070 Hollywood Blvd. and all shared the number HO4-0255 from at least June to December 1953: A Better Plaster Service, Burnett & Smith Construction Company Engineering, Burnett & Smith Construction Company Paving, Capricorn Music Company, Comet Music Company, Mary Croft L & K Enterprises, Electronic Research and Supply Association, Erickson R E Hollywood Floor Company, Evertite Roof Corp Hollywood Office, Graham Vance Radio Producer, Hollywood Call Board Telephone Secretarial, Hollywood Floor Company, Hollywood Telephone Answering Center, Kane Nellie Hollywood Call Board Telephone Secretary, L & K Enterprises, Paul Newman, Pac Mineral Industries, Porter Sandblast Co, Raquette River Paper Company, Relax Phone Rest, Ridley Sandblast Co, Sea Porter Sandblast Co, Scientology Council, Selco Emergency Light Co, Telephone Answering Center, Triplet Music Company, Geo M Wicke. Vann Edna Literary Consultant also had the same phone number but was not in room 20, bringing the total number of entities with the same phone number up to 28

(Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1953b, 344; Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company 1953c, 346). Had McClaughry researched any of these, then she would have noticed that many of these listings were for call boards and secretarial services which explains why the same address had several shared numbers, and explains why Scientology Council and Maurine Oliver shared a number, rather than an elaborate intelligence cover-up plot. Thus, McClaughry's entire theory linking Oliver, Scientology Council, de Mille, the CIA, British Intelligence MI-6, Hubbard and Sequoia University due to the briefly shared numbers HI-0257 or HO-0257 at 7070 Hollywood Blvd. has no support.

McClaughry also claimed that Richard de Mille explained why they used Sequoia degrees: "Mention of Sequoia, Universities, 'developers,' etc, is intended to impress bureaucrats and other authoritarians" (HAS 1954, 9). She concluded "In other words it's like I said. It's for intelligence cover purposes" because Richard de Mille would later work with DARPA (McClaughry 2016b). Unless McClaughry can show that Lamb and Seabury were also a part of the intelligence community in or before 1950, however, then she would be unable to explain Hubbard's honorary degree from 10 August 1950.

Although these findings did not disprove McClaughry's entire theory that Hubbard was a CIA agent, they do cast serious doubts on the quality and validity of her other research and conclusions. Occam's Razor suggests that something much simpler such as typographical errors or that the numbers changed due to Los Angeles' rapid growth—two options McClaughry raised and yet explicitly ignored—just as Heinlein's Razor suggests either incompetence or ignorance as the causes rather than secret or devious connections.

Playing Doctor

McClaughry also confused Hubbard's reference to having "attended school in California" on his 16 November 1957 letter to the Better Business Bureau as being a reference to Sequoia University (McClaughry 2016a). In fairness, the wording was somewhat unclear as it reads "[a]fter the war on the G.I. Bill I attended school in California and received a Ph. D. from Sequoia University, an adult education school from the City of Los Angeles" (Hubbard 1957, 1). As with the letter to Dr. Edward Condon (1902–1974) featured on Tony Ortega's website, this letter also ended in "/per md" which indicated that someone else

with the initials “md” wrote and signed it (Camacho 2018, 51). Furthermore, the school that Hubbard attended “on the G.I. Bill” in California was the Geller Theater Workshop, as the G.I. Bill primarily covered schools from 1944–49, before Sequoia University apparently existed, even unofficially. Hubbard’s 15 October 1947 letter to the Veterans Administration explained this in detail (Hubbard 1947). An unpublished summary from *The RON series* also confirmed that he attended Geller in 1947 (Groß 2015). Additionally, an inventory of the Church of Scientology items stolen by ex-Scientologist and ex-Hubbard archivist Gerald “Gerry” Armstrong available at the Los Angeles County Courthouse included a “3 ½ pg request from LRH to bank for GI loan 29 Dec 1945.” The fact is that Hubbard never attended Sequoia University before 1950 and thus never founded it, even unofficially, which eviscerates McClaughry’s intelligence cover-up theory as baseless.

L. Ron Hubbard

November 16, 1957
1812 19th Street, N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

Better Business Bureau
of Metropolitan Washington
507 Perpetual Building
Washington 4, D. C.

Attn: Mr. Leland S. McCarthy
Managing Director

Dear Mr. McCarthy:

Included are proper resumes of all organizations which I have managed or operated and financial statements to demonstrate their activity. I include the Distribution Center, Inc., although I do not manage it but since my wife is a member of its board.

None of these organizations has any debts of magnitude and have a good reputation for paying their bills when due.


I am married and have three small children. I am a member of the Explorer's Club and Capital Yacht Club. Washington, D. C. has been my home since boyhood. I served as an officer in the Navy during the war and was honorably discharged. I attended high school at Woodward Prep here in D. C., and studied nuclear physics at George Washington University. After the war on the G. I. Bill I attended school in California and received a Ph.D. from Sequoia University, an adult education school of the City of Los Angeles. I am primarily a writer of science fiction and technical material on the mind and am a registered minister with the government.

While companies using my name and work have existed in many states and may have good or bad credit, I have had no business connection with them. They have often conceived it to be to their advantage to represent such connection and I have had to take severe action from time to time to deny that connection. I have found myself powerless to prevent the use of my name and work in many cases. I am not financially situated so as to bear the vast legal expenses necessary to such denial.

The policy of the Founding Church in business matters is to refund all donations or charges to anyone who believes he has chosen wrongly in joining the Church. This has no exceptions.

The principal business of the Church, beyond its services each Sunday and its Thursday night meeting, is the training of persons to handle people and congregations and to communicate better. The ministers of all allied state churches are trained by us. They are further trained and usually ordained by their state churches. We ordain locally only those we need in our work and only after a severe training program and thorough

Figure 37. 1957 L. Ron Hubbard letter to Better Business Bureau.

Sincerely,

L. Ron Hubbard




Figure 38. L. Ron Hubbard signature on 1957 letter to Better Business Bureau with “/per md.”

RE: LaFayette Ronald HUBBARD,
C-7017422
Lt. USNR 113392

ADJ. VET. FILES
FILED
OCT 23 1947
B. C. AA. 25

Box 297
North Hollywood, Calif.
October 15, 1947

Medical
VETERANS ADMINISTRATION
Los Angeles, 25, Calif.

Gentlemen;

This is a request for treatment.

My residence is north of North Hollywood, but I attend school at Geller Theater Workshop, Fairfax and Wilshire, Los Angeles. It would be appreciated if any out-physician selected would be located near my school as I have a vacant hour and a half from 1 to 2:30 four days each week at school. I work at night six days per week.

I was placed on certain medication back east and have continued it at my own expense.

After trying and failing for two years to regain my equilibrium in civil life, I am utterly unable to approach anything like my own competence. My last physician informed me that it might be very helpful if I were to be examined and perhaps treated psychiatrically or even by a psycho-analyst. Toward the end of my service I avoided out of pride any mental examinations, hoping that time would balance a mind which I had every reason to suppose was seriously affected. I cannot account for nor rise above long periods of moroseness and suicidal inclinations, and have newly come to realize that I must first triumph above this before I can hope to rehabilitate myself at all.

I cannot leave school or what little work I am doing for hospitalization due to many obligations, but I feel I might be treated outside, possibly with success. I cannot, myself, afford such treatment.

Would you please help me?

Sincerely,

L. Ron Hubbard

Figure 39. 1947 L. Ron Hubbard letter Veterans Administration describing studies at Geller Theater.

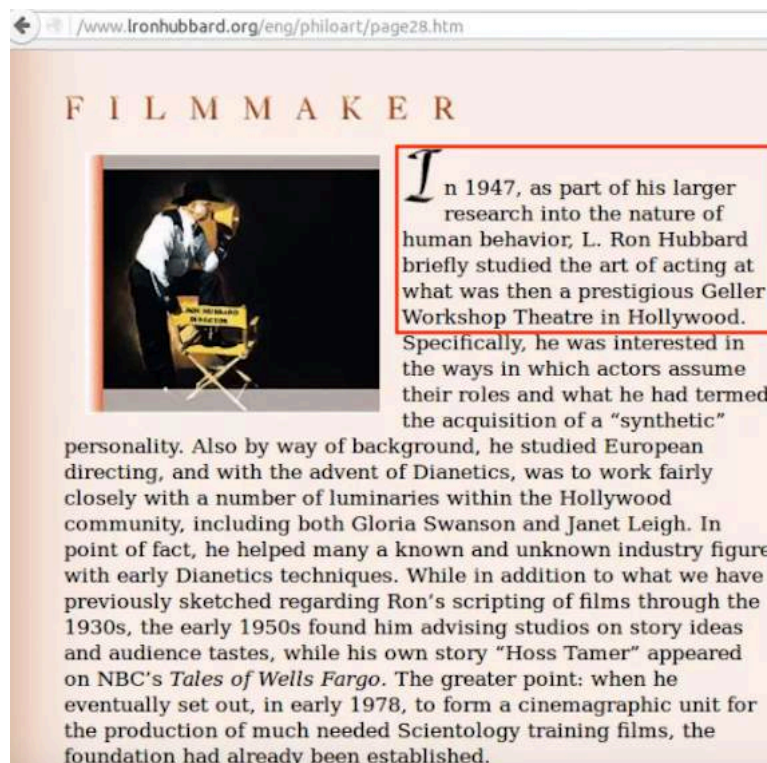


Figure 40. Church of Scientology biography of L. Ron Hubbard as filmmaker describing his 1947 studies at Geller Theater in Hollywood.

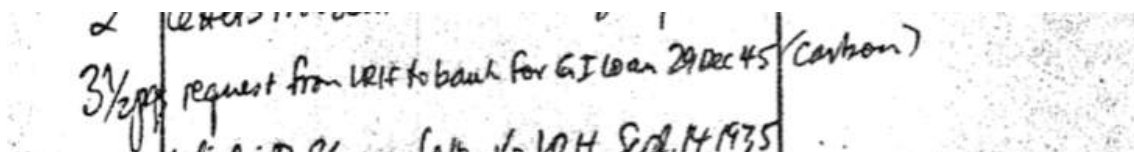


Figure 41. December 1945 letter from Hubbard to bank requesting loan per the GI Bill, as found in inventory of stolen items at Gerald Armstrong's trial.

Doctor Death

Eventually, Hubbard abolished the PhD title in February 1966:

This is the second time I have requested not to be so named [a Doctor]. The first was in the late 50s in Washington DC. But people have continued the practice against my wishes and I have not lately been active in correcting them (Hubbard 1974, 119).

No record appeared from the late 1950s, but the November 1953 *The Journal of Scientology* did show a public request (HAS of Arizona 1953, 3). In fact, on 21 February 1953, after Hubbard was awarded on 10 February but before he telegrammed de Mille for an expedited copy, de Mille wrote to Hubbard in a

postscript “Should I call you ‘Hubbard,’ ‘Dr. Hubbard,’ or ‘Mr. Hubbard’? I think ‘Hubbard’ is okay, but I will be more than glad to follow your suggestion” (de Mille 1953f, 4). Hubbard never answered the question, but continued to respond as “Ron” which de Mille also continued to use.

Hubbard later renounced the title in 1966, stating “[t]hrough the ages the term ‘doctor’ has meant ‘a learned man’ but in modern times has been stained by its preemption by medical doctors and psychiatrists and I do not wish to be associated in any way with faithless men or ignorant butchers or murderers” so as to differentiate his honorary PhD from an MD (Hubbard 1974, 119).

Cooper again cited L. Ron Hubbard, Jr. and an article so as to set up a straw man argument that she worked to dismantle:

Nonetheless, Hubbard apparently considered this “doctorate” to be significant because he renounced it in a public notice:

‘I, L. Ron Hubbard of Saint Hill Manor East Grinstead Sussex having reviewed the damage being done in our society with nuclear physics and psychiatry by persons calling themselves “Doctors” do hereby resign in protest my university degree as a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) anticipating an early public outcry against anyone called “Doctor” and although not in any way connected with bombs or “psychiatric treatment” or treatment of such and interested only and always in philosophy and the total freedom of the human spirit, I wish no association of any kind with these persons and so do publicly declare and request my friends and the public not to refer me in any way with this title.’

Even so, Hubbard is referred to as “doctor,” has used the title himself, and he does indeed have a D. Scn., or Doctor of Scientology. But that even this degree is haphazardly awarded became apparent when Hubbard’s son, L. Ron Hubbard Jr., who also has a D. Scn., testified at the United States Court of Claims that he didn’t have anything special to get the degree, and in fact, wasn’t certain whether he got his Bachelor of Scientology before or after he got his Doctorate of Scientology (Cooper 1971, 163–64; Hubbard 1966a).

Despite their claims, the February 1953 *The Journal of Scientology* issue stated that L. Ron Hubbard, Jr. got his B. Scn. and the August 1954 issue stated that he received the D. Scn.—well after his father and others (Hart 1953d, 2; HASI 1954b, 2). Just as with her C.E. claims, Cooper’s bibliography revealed almost no verification or authentication of L. Ron Hubbard, Jr.’s claims (Camacho 2018, 34–9).

Regardless, Cooper had no way of knowing whether L. Ron Hubbard knew about the 1957 California State Assembly investigation. L. Ron Hubbard’s

comment about Sequoia being “a perfectly valid doctor under the laws of the State of California” may have come from ignorance of its unaccredited status, which was the case for the faculty who testified in 1957, rather than from malice or deceit. Furthermore, Hough claimed in his affidavit that the degree “is of record with the Department of Education of the State of California” (Hough 1968, 1). In addition to suggesting that it offer a program that took four years to study Scientology, Hubbard had stated, “These are apparently good courses Sequoia has,” which suggested that he believed it was a legitimate university. Richard de Mille’s earlier letter to Hubbard even indicated that this was to be the plan:

We [Hough and de Mille] see our goals as two: (1) to teach a university course which has high standards and stiff requirements, (2) to follow your work to the letter, just as you have made it, weeding out all foreign elements and squirrely [arbitrary, altered and weird] notions which may try to keep in [...] As far as I can tell, Sequoia U. has a charter which is just as good as UCLA or USC. It is a genuine university which gives genuine degrees. Hough is, by my estimate, a white wizard [...] By the way, at Sequoia we do not intend to give degrees of B. Scn, M. Scn and D. Scn. That is your department—and should remain so, I think—unless you think otherwise. We expect to give Associate in Science (2 yrs), B. Sc., M. Sc., and Ph.D. in ‘Clinical Psychology, Counselling, etc.’ Scientology will be the subject matter—but no degree will be given in Scientology, according to present plans (28 January 1953 de Mille letter to Hubbard).

As per the course schedules with professors and testing requirements, which even the California inquiry deemed “borderline,” Hubbard’s reasoning appears much more consistent with an ignorance of the facts rather than from committing knowing fraud.

Despite Hubbard’s disassociation from the Doctor title in 1966, the 1973 book *Mission Into Time* stated that he accepted an honorary Doctor of Philosophy (Hubbard 1973a, 16). This book, however, was “compiled by staff of The Public Relations and Consumption Bureau of the Church of Scientology” and not written by Hubbard. *Mission Into Time* itself was based on *A Test of Whole Track Recall* from 1968 (which lacked a biography) as per its copyright note: “Part of Mission Into Time was formerly published as ‘A Test of Whole Track Recall’ in Limited Edition” (Hubbard 1968, Copyright Page; Hubbard 1973a, Copyright Page). Furthermore, and most telling, *Mission Into Time* originally published in September 1973 from the Publications Department at the Advanced Organization Saint Hill Denmark (Hubbard 1973b, Copyright Page). This same department published an *Expand* magazine issue in June 1973, which also

misquoted Hubbard's May 1966 Rhodesia interview by adding before his statement "Actually I have a degree [sic] in philosophy, a Doctor of Philosophy" (Fisher 1973, 11). In reality, this quote never appeared in the original 1966 interview (Hubbard 1966b, L. Ron Hubbard Library 1990, Snoeck 2012). These errors not only came from the same location around the same time, but also reflected the exact same mistake. This is further evidence that others had misattributed and published unapproved, incorrect biographical information without (or in spite of) Hubbard, who never reclaimed the doctor moniker after his disavowal.

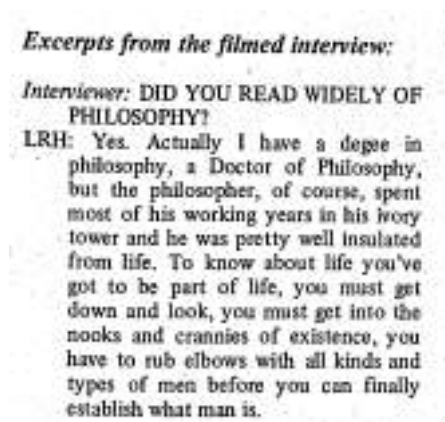


Figure 42. *Expand*, issue 21, June 1973, misquotes Hubbard's 1966 interview making it appear as if he reclaimed his honorary Sequoia University diploma after distancing himself from it.

Conclusion

While Sequoia University was not accredited, it was also not a diploma mill; it was a non-profit which offered courses at various locations and even the California State Assembly inquiry did not find it to be one, as it would have ordered it closed immediately. Though it did not meet state required academic criteria, most of its many faculty and alumni appeared to believe that it was valid and accredited initially, and were of varying backgrounds and prestige, many of whom were not Scientologists. Hubbard also did not appear to know that the school was unaccredited, nor did its staff or alumni, nor did reputable, accredited schools which published its credentials. Hubbard also never created, owned, bought or ran Sequoia University, nor did he purchase or self-award his honorary PhD, let alone give one to others. In fact, he was initially reticent to associate with

Sequoia and distrusted the operation until their plans and courses became clearer. Hubbard, Sequoia University and Scientology Council also had virtually no contact with Maurine Oliver aside from perhaps sharing a call-in service number. Hubbard seems to have been initially awarded the degree in 1950, which was reissued in 1953 under new ownership. Furthermore, Hubbard often downplayed his honorary PhD as he did not mention it for several years, often deleted it from correspondence, and even asked to remove the title. Had prior scholars, critics and researchers looked at more evidence objectively, then these conflicting narratives would vanish.

APPENDIX: A CHRONOLOGY OF SEQUOIA UNIVERSITY

1939 June 6

College of Drugless Healing formed.

Apparently located at 256 West Florence Ave, Los Angeles.

1945

Name changed to College of Drugless Healing, Naturopathy.

Relocates to 1173 South Hoover Street, Los Angeles.

1945 Nov 17

“Nota” William Walter Nichols DC, PhD has his ND from College of Drugless Healing, Naturopathy.

1945 Dec 29

Hubbard writes a request to a bank for a GI Bill loan.

1947 Oct 15

Hubbard writes a letter to the VA regarding Geller Theater Workshop.

1948

Mason H. Rose, IV gets an honorary M.S. from Sequoia University or College of Drugless Healing.

Don Marlowe Agency listing (CR-6-2019).

Maurine Oliver listing (CR-5-7862).

1949

Don Marlowe, Ltd. at 5540 Hollywood Blvd, Hollywood 28.

Marlowe (Don) Ltd. at 7070 Hollywood Blvd. Hollywood 28 (HI 0257).

Marlowe (Don) Ltd. also at 1501 Broadway, New York, NY (GR 8367).

Maurine Oliver at 328 S. Beverly Dr., B.H. (CR-5-7862).

Maurine Oliver at 368 N. La Cienega Blvd, Los Angeles 46 (HI 0257).

1950

Alan Weaver Hazelton gets honorary PhD from Sequoia University.

David Seabury is President of Sequoia University of Adult Education.

David Seabury has honorary PhD from Sequoia University.

Don Marlowe Ltd at 7070 Hollywood Blvd (HI 0257) [radio directory].

1950 June

Seabury School of Psychology at 535 S. Hoover (DU9-3127).

Boorman writes bulletin on Dianetics.

1950 June 17

Sequoia University offices at 5617 Hollywood Blvd. (HI-1274).

1950 July

Dr. William R. Boorman lectures on Dianetics at Sequoia.

1950 Aug 2

Hubbard telegram from Lamb for Sequoia degree at 5617 Hollywood.

1950 Aug 10

Hubbard gives a demonstration at Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

1950 Aug 12

Award ceremony for Hubbard's honorary degrees of PhD and LL.D; attendance status unknown.

1950 Sep 15

Seabury University affiliated with Sequoia University, open houses held at First Congregational Church at 6th & Hoover Streets (DU9-3283).

1950 Nov

Seabury/Sequoia at 535 S. Hoover, Rm. 426 (DU3-3369).

Joseph Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953).

1950–51?

Flash Reader mentioned in 2 reading method studies was published by Sequoia University Press at 5617 Hollywood Blvd.

1951

Maurine Oliver at 368 N. La Cienega Blvd (HI 0257).

Frank Cunningham gets an M.A. and Litt. D. from Sequoia University.

Mason H. Rose, IV gets an honorary PhD from Sequoia University.

1951 Feb 19

Paul Reps' *Unknot The World In You* copyright from Sequoia University Press; winner of the 1951 Sequoia University Award.

1951 June 22

Sequoia University at 5617 Hollywood Blvd., Rm. 103 (HI-1274).

Sequoia University at 2610 W. 8th, Rm. 3 (DU9-1497).

Sequoia (DU3-3369) / Seabury (DU9-3125) at 535 S. Hoover, Rm. 426.

Joseph Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953).

1951 Aug

Sequoia University at 5617 Hollywood Blvd., Rm. 103 (HI-1274).

Sequoia University at 2610 W. 8th, Rm. 3 (DU9-1497).

Sequoia (DU3-3369) / Seabury (DU9-3125) at 535 S. Hoover, Rm. 426.

1951 Nov 8

Chancellor Dr. Charles A. Lamb and President Joseph W. Hough of Sequoia speak at a meeting for writers.

1952

Nicholas V. Feodoroff gets an honorary PhD in CE.

W. E. Green gets an honorary Doctor of Laws.

Roman Novins gets an M.A. from Sequoia University.

Roman Novins is a staff member in the Department of Slavic Studies.

Frank Cunningham is Associate Director of Sequoia University.

Maurine Oliver at 2100 Laurel Canyon Blvd (HI 0257).

First B. Scn. awarded to Alpha Hart per The Journal of Scientology 3-G.

1952 Jan 31

Joseph Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953) / Sequoia University / Seabury (DU3-3369/DU2-8481) at 920 S. Grandview Seabury University at 535 S. Hoover (DU9-3125).

Sequoia no longer at 2610 W. 8th or 5617 Hollywood.

1952 April 15

David Steinman gets an honorary CE degree from Sequoia.

1952 June 16

Fremont College ratified at 915 S. Grandview.

1952 June 27

Dr. George Orington MacGregor received an honorary Doctor of Laws.

1952 July 7

Gov. Murray Johnston and William E. Green get an honorary Doctor of Laws from Sequoia University of California.

Allen Green Oliphant gets an honorary Doctorate of Science in petroleum engineering.

1952 July 8

Sequoia University is ratified at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

1952 July 11

Seabury and Sequoia University at 920 S. Grandview (DU3-3369).

Dorcas Palmer at Seabury School 920 S Grandview (DU3-3369).

Paul P. Brainard at Seabury School 920 S Grandview (DU2-8481).

Paul P Brainard, Vocational Planning rm 4, 920 S Grandview (DU2-0578) Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953).

1952 Aug

“Scientology” runs from 7070 Hollywood Blvd (HI 0257).

1952 Aug 20

College of Drugless Healing officially renamed to Sequoia University.

1952 Aug 27

Sequoia University ratified at 915 S. Grandview, Los Angeles, CA.

1952 Sept

Joseph Colburn Smith received Master of Science and Doctor of Science.

1952 Nov

Hubbard Association of Scientologists in Phoenix, AZ publishes *Scientology 8-80* with a D. Scn. after Hubbard’s name.

1952 Dec

Scn Council, 7070 Hollywood (HI 0257) in Journal of Scientology 8-G.
Hardin Walsh is contact, not affiliate yet.

1952 Dec 1–18

Philadelphia Doctorate Course, results in awarding of honorary D. Scn.

1952 Dec (late)

Jack Horner awarded the first D. Scn.

1953

Alan Weaver Hazelton is Vice-President of Sequoia University.

Frank Cunningham is Assistant to the President of Sequoia University.

Frank Cunningham is also a Fellow of Sequoia Research Institute.

Nicholas V. Feodoroff gets an honorary Doctor of Civil Engineering.

Russell A. Meyers gets an A.S. from Sequoia University.

Roderick J. Wilson gets an honorary Doctorate of Laws at Sequoia.

Maurine Oliver at no address (HI 0257) [radio directory].

1953 Jan [ca.]

Scn Council flyer “Executive Offices” at 7070 Hollywood (HO4-0257).

Scn Council flyer “in residence” at 610 S. Wilton Pl (DU4-5352).

Teachers include: Hardin and Joanna Walsh, Richard de Mille, Ricardo Estrada, Gina Cerminara, William Wood, Frank Bannister, Richard Steves, Edward Romero, Jose Otero.

1953 Jan

Scn Council at 7070 Hollywood (HI-0257) in *Journal of Scientology* 10-G. Unofficially affiliated with Sequoia University. Joanna Walsh is contact.

Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953) Seabury School & Sequoia University at 920 S. Grandview (DU3-3369).

Dorcas Palmer, Seabury School 920 S Grandview (DU3-3369).

Paul P Brainard & David Seabury at 920 S Grandview (DU2-8481).

Paul P Brainard, Vocational Planning rm 4, 920 S Grandview (DU2-0578) Hardin D. Walsh PhD at 610 S. Wilton Pl (DU4-5352).

Journal of Scientology says only B.Scen. awarded from Hubbard Professional College in Phoenix.

1953 Jan 20

Richard de Mille writes Hubbard about Sequoia University and Scientology Council affiliation.

1953 Jan 28

Richard de Mille writes Hubbard about Sequoia's plans with Scientology; states that he does not have his PhD, but is working on it by writing *Introduction to Scientology*. Hough wants to give Hubbard a PhD.

1953 Feb

de Mille announced as Sequoia professor in *Journal of Scientology* 11-G.

L. Ron Hubbard, Jr. received a B. Scn. per *The Journal of Scientology*.

Russell Meyers studies at Sequoia.

1953 Feb 10

Hubbard awarded in absentia an honorary PhD from Sequoia University.

1953 Feb 21

Richard de Mille asks Hubbard if he should call him doctor.

1953 Feb 27

Hubbard telegram to Hough to expedite honorary PhD.

1953 Feb 28

Purported Hough response telegram to Hubbard.

1953 Mar 12

de Mille writes Hubbard that he finished his book *Introduction to Scientology* about two weeks ago; PhD will follow.

1953 Mar 20

Hubbard writes de Mille stating displeasure with Scientology Council.

1953 Apr 15

David Steinman awarded honorary Doctor of Science in Engineering.

1953 May (end)

Hubbard reticent whether Sequoia should grant Scientology certificates in Associate Newsletter #4.

1953 June

Mention of Senator Jack B. Tenney's honorary Doctorate of Humanities.

1953 June 12

Sequoia / Fremont / Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953).

Seabury at 920 S. Grandview (DU9-6251, DU3-3369, DU2-8481).

Scientology Council at 7070 Hollywood, room 20 (HO4-0257, HO4-0255 & HI-0257).

Last known date of Hardin D. Walsh PhD at 610 S. Wilton Pl (DU4-5352).

1953 June 26

Copyright date for *Introduction to Scientology* published through Sequoia.

Hubbard is associate, Scientology Council is affiliate (HO4-0257).

1953 Aug (end)

Hubbard associates with Sequoia using correspondence courses in Associate Newsletter #8.

L. Ron Hubbard, Jr. received his D. Scn.

1953 Sept 26

Copyright date of Richard de Mille's *Scientology I-A* published through Sequoia University which states Scientology Council is an affiliate.

1953 Nov

Journal of Scientology 21-A publishes request not to call Hubbard doctor.

1953 Dec

Scientology Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (2nd ed. Intro to Scientology).

1953 Dec 22

Sequoia / Fremont / Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953).

Sequoia Healthwise Normalizing Correction also (DU9-3953).

Seabury School at 920 S. Grandview (DU3-3369).

Dorcas Palmer, Seabury School 920 S Grandview (DU3-3369).

Paul P Brainard & David Seabury at 920 S Grandview (DU2-8481).

Paul P Brainard, Vocational Planning rm 4, 920 S Grandview (DU2-0578).

Hardin D. Walsh PhD at 610 S. Wilton Pl (DU4-5352).

Hardin D. Walsh at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-4377).

Scientology Council at 7070 Hollywood room 20 (HO4-0255).

1954

IRS grants 170(c) nonprofit status to Sequoia University.

Maurine Oliver at 7070 Hollywood Blvd = (HO9-2993).

Maurine Oliver at unlisted address (HO4-0257) [radio directory].

Sequoia University Press publishes *False Freedom* by Edward L. Delaney.

David Seabury listed as President of Seabury University of Adult Education and Pacific International University for Adult Education.

1954 Jan

Sequoia / Fremont / Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953).

Seabury School at 920 S. Grandview (DU3-3369).

Dorcas Palmer, Seabury School 920 S Grandview (DU3-3369).

Paul P Brainard & David Seabury at 920 S Grandview (DU2-8481).

Paul P Brainard, Vocational Planning rm 4, 920 S Grandview (DU2-0578).

1954 Jun 11

Hardin D. Walsh PhD at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-4377).

Hardin D. Walsh PhD Scn Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

Frank Bannister Scn Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

Scn Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

1954 Aug

L. Ron Hubbard, Jr. gets D. Scn. per *Journal of Scientology* 33-G.

1955

Maurine Oliver without address (HO4-0257) [radio directory].

IRS grants 170(c) nonprofit status to Sequoia University.

Alan Weaver Hazelton ends term as Vice-President.

Frank Cunningham promoted to Director and to Vice-President.

Dr. Robert Walter Deobler holds chair of clinical psychology and psychotherapy.

1955 Jan

Sequoia / Fremont / Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953).

Seabury School at 920 S. Grandview (DU3-3369 & DU2-8481).

Paul P Brainard at Seabury School 920 S Grandview (DU2-8481).

Dorcas Palmer at Seabury School 920 S Grandview (DU3-3369).

Paul P Brainard, Vocational Planning rm 4, 920 S Grandview (DU2-0578) Hardin D. Walsh PhD at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-4377).

Hardin D. Walsh PhD Scn Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

Frank Bannister Scn Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

Scn Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

1955 May

Latest when Professor Erik Larsen received his honorary Litt. D.

1955 June

Maurine Oliver at 1767 W 47th (AX1-0847).

Hubbard letter to Scientologists showing D.D., PhD with a strikethrough.

1955 Jul 6

Sequoia / Fremont / Joseph Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953).

David Seabury & David Seabury School at 920 S. Grandview (DU2-8481).

Paul P Brainard, Vocational Planning rm 4, 920 S Grandview (DU2-0578).

Hardin D. Walsh at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-4377).

Hardin D. Walsh Scn Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

Scn Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

1955 Jul 29

Hubbard letter to FBI showing D.D., PhD without a strikethrough.

1955 Aug 24

Sequoia University Press rejects H. Keith Thompsons' book proposal.

Sequoia University Press at P.O. Box 4007, Village Station, LA 24.

1955 Sept 7

Hubbard letter to FBI showing D.D., PhD without a strikethrough.

1955 Dec

George Atkinson studying for degree in business administration.

1955 Dec 22

Ruby Lawrence Cunningham's *Momo's Christmas Party and Little Sister* published by Sequoia University Press.

1956

No further mentions of Sequoia University in David Seabury's biography.

1956 Feb

Sequoia / Fremont / Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953).

Joseph Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3954).

David Seabury & David Seabury School at 920 S. Grandview (DU2-8481).

Hardin D. Walsh at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-4377).

Hardin D. Walsh Scn Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

Scn Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

1956 March

Rev. Howard E. Mather gets honorary Doctorate in Divinity.

1956 May

Sequoia / Fremont / Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953).

Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3954).

David Seabury & David Seabury School at 920 S. Grandview (DU2-8481).

Sequoia / Fremont / Joseph Hough at 5625 Melrose Ave (HO4-7336).

Rev. H. Waldo Manley gets honorary Doctorate of Divinity.

Mickey Rooney receives an honorary fine arts degree from both Sequoia University and Fremont College.

1956 May 1 to June 12

Translator's Edition of Scientology mentions Doctor Hubbard and a PhD.

1956 June

Sequoia at P.O. Box 282, Gardena CA (Associate Superintendent of Public Instruction).

1956 July 5

Sequoia / Fremont / Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953).

Sequoia / Fremont / Hough at 5625 Melrose Ave (HO4-7336).

Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3954).

David & David Seabury School at 920 S. Grandview (DU2-8481).

1956 Jul 6

Hardin D. Walsh at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-4377).

Hardin D. Walsh Scn Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

Scn Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

Dr. Elizabeth Field at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU3-6569).

1957 Feb

Mark L. Gallert works as an extension instructor in department of psychology.

1957 Mar 13

Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953).

David & David Seabury School at 920 S. Grandview (DU2-8481).

Sequoia University / Fremont College at 5625 Melrose Ave (HO4-7336).

Sequoia University at 5625 Melrose Ave (HO5-2149).

Hardin D. Walsh at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-4377).

Hardin D. Walsh Scn Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

Scn Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

Dr. Elizabeth Field at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU3-6569).

1957 Apr 13

Hubbard gives a lecture in London, mentions that he got a degree in the subject (of the mind), no university mentioned.

1957 Apr 27

California Medical Association admits that it spearheaded inquiry.

1957 Apr–Jul

Sequoia University at 5625 Melrose Ave per Popular Mechanics ads.

1957 Oct 21–3

California State Assembly hearings on diploma mills.

Gladys M. Hough, Dr. Willoughby W. Sherwood and Jack Lang (aka Paul R. Pitts) testify; Joseph Hough pleads the fifth amendment 12–22 times.

1957 Oct 30

Joseph Hough at 915 S. Grandview (DU9-3953).

Sequoia University / Fremont College at 5625 Melrose Ave (HO4-7336).

Sequoia / Sequoia Health Dept at 5625 Melrose Ave (HO5-2149).

Last known date of Hardin D. Walsh at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-4377).

Last known date of Scn. Council at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

Totality The University of Totology at 621 S. Oxford Ave (DU2-9528).

1957 Nov

Journal of Scientology insert requests people not call Hubbard “Doctor.”

1957 Nov 16

Hubbard letter to the Better Business Bureau regarding his studies, Geller School misconstrued to be Sequoia University.

1958

Frank Cunningham ends positions as Director and Vice-President.

Joseph W. Hough, President of Sequoia University, is quoted on Jennings Cropper Wise’s historical book *Sunrise of the Virginia Military Institute as a School of Arms: Spawn of the Cincinnati*.

1958 Oct 17

Fremont Christian Clinic at 5625 Melrose Ave, room 220 (HO4-7336).

WW Sherwood / Fremont Christian Clinic 5625 Melrose Ave (HO5-2149).

1959

Who’s Who In the East shows Hubbard’s PhD was from Sequoia in 1950.

Dr. Sydney V. Golinsky graduated Sequoia University School of Homeopathic Medicine with a Doctor of Medicine.

David Steinman omits mention of Sequoia University from autobiography.

1959 Dec

Ability 111 states that Hubbard received his PhD in 1950 from Sequoia.

1960

Sequoia University at Box 637, Winterhaven, CA per Worldwide Register of Adult Education.

Roman Novins is a Russian lecturer at University of Southern California.

1962 Oct

Roman Novins is a Russian lecturer at California Institute of Technology.

1963 Jan 10

Unauthenticated transcript “An Interview Granted to the Australian Press on January 10th 1963 at Saint Hill Manor” contains a mention of Hubbard’s PhD from Sequoia University.

1963 Sept 12

Dr. “Nota” William Walter Nichols is Professor of Mathematics and Basic Sciences at Sequoia University per letter to California Secretary of State.

1963 Nov 30

Unauthenticated transcript “An Interview Granted to the Australian Press on January 10th 1963 at Saint Hill Manor” purportedly published.

1963 Dec 10

Hubbard mentions being a Doctor of Philosophy (but not Sequoia) in lecture “Scientology Zero” at St. Hill.

1964 Jan

Sequoia at P.O. Box 282, Gardena CA per a Popular Mechanics ad.

1964 Aug

L. Ron Hubbard, Jr. received a D. Scn. per *The Journal of Scientology*.

1964 Aug 5

Letter to Peter Williams purportedly by Hubbard states that his Sequoia PhD was awarded in 1950.

1966 Feb 14

Hubbard renounces his Sequoia University PhD to Scientologists.

1966 Mar 8

Hubbard publishes renunciation of doctorate in *The Times* of London.

1966 May 25

FBI arrests Carl Lovelace Clement for using a device to circumvent long distance calling costs. Records show a Mechanical Engineering degree from Sequoia University. Graduation date unknown.

1967–1970

Hough and Sequoia University at 1418 Second St, Santa Monica per “Nota” W.W. Nichols’ 1967 letter (394–5590).

1968

Dr. Davendra P. Varma gets a fellowship from Sequoia Research Institute.

A Test of Whole Track Recall publishes with no mention of Sequoia.

1968 Jul 30

Joseph W. Hough signs an affidavit stating that he was Sequoia University President and awarded Hubbard a PhD on 10 February 1953.

1969 April

Sequoia Research Institute of Sequoia University awards Forrest J. Ackerman as a Fellow.

1970

Mason H. Rose, IV has his 1948 and 1951 honorary degrees from Sequoia listed as 1948–1953 per *Who's Who*.

1972

Kelly Lee Segraves gets an honorary M.A. from Sequoia.

Fred Theodore Kolosick gets an honorary Doctorate of Religious Education from Sequoia.

1972 Sept

John Francis Crane graduates from Sequoia Research Institute, subsequently works as a professor.

1973

Alex Szabo claims to have received his degree from Sequoia University in Inglewood, CA.

Mercein “Jack” Baskin gets an honorary Doctor of Laws from Sequoia after being honorary speaker at graduation ceremony.

Robert Gerald “Gerry” Craft gets an honorary Doctorate of Religious Education from Sequoia.

1973 June

Expand Issue 21 (Denmark) misquotes Hubbard by adding a nonexistent statement regarding the Sequoia degree.

1973 Sept

Mission Into Time (Denmark) mentions Hubbard's Sequoia degree.

1974

Sequoia University at 1418 Second St, Santa Monica 90401.

1979

"Sequoia University Total Health Manpower Pilot Project" grant application rejected, Joseph W. Hough at 1418 Second St, Santa Monica 90401, John Leon Minasian M.D (1929-2018) is listed as Project Director.

1979 Dec 4

Sequoia changes to Combinathics Institute of America in Chula Vista, CA.

1981 Dec

Dr. Lawrence Mitchel Weinberg convicted of issuing degrees for nonexistent schools, has a Doctor of Medicine from Sequoia University, Oklahoma.

1982 Mar 22

Alex E. Szabo lawsuit involving qualifications from Sequoia University.

1983 Aug

George Cook Lyon convicted of issuing degrees for Sequoia University, Oklahoma, despite no connection to the University.

1986 Sep 11

Last statement of notice by Combinathics Institute of America filed in California.

1987

Mason H. Rose, IV has his 1948 and 1951 honorary degrees from Sequoia listed as being from 1953 as per *Who's Who*.

1990 Feb–Mar

Council on Naturopathic Medical Education responds to American Naturopathic Medical Association's accusations that CNME attorney James McConkey has a degree from Sequoia, noting that Dr. John Minasian (indirectly referenced) of ANMA also has one.

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