

Transcript of Glosslip interview with Andreas Heldal-Lund

24 April 2008 ver 1.0

Interview by Dawn Olsen (**DO**) of Glosslip (www.glosslip.com) and Andreas Heldal-Lund (**AHL**), founder of Xenu.net / Operation Clambake

Audio available from: <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/stations/bc/glosslip>

Transcript produced by: **CherrieZ**, **Eff**, **an0n1nNZ**, and **it's.an0nym0us**.

Edited by: **anon1nNZ**, contact on enturbulation.org for any corrections.

Raw transcripts available from: <http://forums.enturbulation.org/42-english-composition-only/transcript-andreas-heldal-lund-xenu-net-11622/>

[[TRANSCRIPT BEGINS]]

[0:00]

DO: Good afternoon Glosslip Radio listeners, I am Dawn Olsen of Glosslip.com and I am super thrilled today to have a great guest, Andreas was kind enough to make time for us in his very busy schedule as well as calling all the way from Norway. If it is a little hard to hear, he has done everything he can and we've done everything we can so just try and turn up your speakers for this call across the pond, well across the pond! Andreas Heldal-Lund is the founder and webmaster of Operation Clambake, or on the net the URL is Xenu.net . From my perspective, Operation Clambake is the first place I went to when I started doing research on the Church of Scientology and it way of abusive practices.

[1:00]

DO: Andreas has a very rich history, started the site in '96 and it has continued on it's own impetus for the last twelve years now to expose the Church of Scientology. He has helped hundreds of people within the church, people outside the community, families wanting to reconnect with their loved ones, he has a personal stake in all of this and we're really thrilled to have him, so let's say Hello to Andreas, thank you for being here, Andreas!

AHL: Well, thank you for letting me, and Good Afternoon America.

DO: All the way from Norway! Andreas and I have been talking about, my husband's family, they're very proud of their Norwegian heritage and, he said to Mark yesterday, most American's who are Norwegians are even more [proud] than those that live there, maybe it's just being separated from the homeland. And you said it's nice there today?

AHL: It's nice weather – dry and no wind, there's a big change here where I live.

[2:00]

DO: Excellent, well I am glad you are having beautiful weather out there. We'll start from the beginning, what prompted you to start Xenu.net, and how did that all come about?

AHL: I had no relations with Scientology whatsoever before, but in 1996 the Church of Scientology were convicted all the way up to High Court for fraud in Norway, by one ex-Scientologist who refused to settle out of court. He took them all the way, despite all their offers to try and settle, and he won. I read about this church who had to pay this guy over one hundred thousand dollars, and that's a bit's strange in Norway because in Norway we don't have the same thing as in America where you can sue somebody for a million dollars because they hurt you in some way.

[3:00]

AHL: For every dollar you get, somebody has to prove that they actually lost that money. So that meant this guy actually paid them a hundred thousand dollars. All that just triggered my interest and I went onto the Internet, and I was hooked.

DO: So what was the first thing that you discovered that alarmed you, besides from the payment

issue for Spiritual services?

AHL: When I went on the Internet back in 1996 we didn't have Google. I was an IT professional at that time so I knew the Web well, I knew how to get around and search for information, and what I saw was that I had to use all my skills to find all the information. And I saw that Scientology was actually beginning to succeed to delete all criticism. I didn't at first take serious all their claims because they were rather wild, for someone who came from the outside and didn't know anything.
[4:00]

AHL: But there were a lot of testimonies of people I got in touch with who were scared, really really scared, and they didn't know what to do. They have all these stories to tell but they can't tell them because they are threatened, they are sued or they are scared and all that stuff. That's when I said, "Hey, I live in what I believe is one of the best countries in the world, I've got resources, I don't have any kids they can come after, and I think this is kind of important for free speech". That's when I started putting together Operation Clambake, as an index for people to use when they needed some reliable place to go and get all their information. It was first only a list of links, so when a document went offline and disappeared, I knew how to find it somewhere else and link to there. So there was a list of links.
[5:00]

AHL: But then all those other pages started to go away. There was no alternative, so I decided to host all the information myself. While the cult was trying to close me down, trying to threaten me, my ISPs, my network providers and everybody, somehow I managed a strategy to keep Operation Clambake online 24/7. More and more people started linking to it and depending on it, and it sort of grew out of control and it became it's own little beast that I had to update and keep alive.

DO: And keep alive you have, I know the forums have been a place for people to connect, those within the church who are trying to get out, those who have left and are looking for former friends and colleagues and members, so you really do provide a very important service to this community.
[06:00]

DO: From your perspective, I know this is a forgone conclusion but I'd like to hear you say it, do you think Scientology is a "cult"?

AHL: Absolutely.

DO: You're a person who's very erudite on the subject, you've been around for quite some time, over a decade, you have talked to all sorts of people from within the church and from out the church and you've determined that they are a cult. You seem like a reasonable and intelligent person who's not prone to fits of hysteria, you are so logical and analytical, and you've determined this. Several other very outspoken and very intelligent critics of the church have said the same thing, so I just wanted to get that out there because I think it's very important that we designate what we're dealing with.
[7:00]

AHL: I just want to add that it's important not to make this a debate about church and works because Scientology would like that, they want to distract us from the facts and it is a cult not a religion. That's a typical question I get all the time, and to me it's both a cult and a religion. If somebody comes to me and says "I believe in this and this is my religion", I don't say, "No, that's technically not a religion". I'd say "Fine, if that's your religion then it's a religion", because in my book you have to be responsible for what you do and no matter what you call it or what umbrella you have above it. If somebody does something wrong, it's wrong if it's a corporation, a volunteer organization, or a church or religion. I don't have copyright for the words "cult" and "religion", and many people put different things in those words, whether it's a cultural or language thing.
[08:00]

AHL: But understand how I define a "cult". I'm taking this from the Cult Information Center in the UK, they have a definition saying "Any group, religious or not, who have all of the following 5 characteristics:

- #1, it uses psychological coercion to recruit, indoctrinate and retain it's members;
- #2, it forms an elitist totalitarian society;

#3, it's founder or leader is self appointed, dogmatic, messianic, not accountable and has charisma; #4, it believes the end justifies the means in order to solicit funds and recruit people; and #5, it's wealth does not benefit it's members or society”.

[9:00]

AHL: And in my opinion the Church of Scientology definitely also falls into each of the five characteristics, so in my book it's a cult.

DO: I think that's a good distinction to make. They have tried to counter-react the criticism against their structure and their money-making machine behind this friendly face they give the world through celebrities and their spokespeople, that really what we have is their belief system which is based on L. Ron Hubbard's book “Dianetics”, the ‘tech’ as it were. And I do agree with you there are people who it works for and that's okay. Nobody wants to take that away from them anymore than anything else but they always cry religious bigotry anytime you say anything about them.

[10:00]

DO: If you take an example, I like to use the Catholic Church because they've weathered many a storm in the last decade themselves, there's a big difference in saying “Hey, your organization needs to be reformed and retooled and looked into but it has nothing to do with your actual inherent spiritual beliefs” and there really is a difference, so I think that's good that you have made that distinction.

AHL: I agree with you, it's important to make clear what we're talking about because it's not about disapproving their beliefs. I have an opinion about their beliefs and I love debating religion, beliefs, philosophy and stuff like that but that's something we do voluntarily. I'll meet somebody face to face as equals to debate anything on a voluntary basis.

[11:00]

AHL: The only reason I'm forcing myself into this debate is because I believe somebody is doing something very wrong and they're hurting people. That's where we have not only a right but we have an obligation as humans and participants in our society, to stand up, we have to say when we think something is wrong.

DO: Exactly. Now, I'm going to bring us up to what's going on right now before we go into some of the other opinions and feelings on the church. Recently, the well known actor Jason Beghe came out with a video slamming his experiences within the church. He was there for several years, I think he started in '92 or '94 with the church and he left in 2005 so he had a good decade under his belt of what goes on within the church.

[12:00]

DO: We know that celebrities' experiences are quite different than rank and file members within the church. There's a lot of allowances made for them that other members wouldn't have afforded to them, simply because the church itself sees celebrities as an outlet, as a public platform, in which to promote their ideals and beliefs. Jason came to you because you really are the authority on the cult aspect of it and how people need to be deprogrammed as they leave. He wanted your help and you put him in touch with Mark Bunker of XenuTV.com and together you guys with Tory Christman did an interview with Jason, and that interview caused quite a worldwide phenomenon. People were very interested in the video.

[13:00]

DO: There was lots of controversy with that and YouTube and having it taken down. We won't get into any specifics of that, I think anyone following the story knows what's going on there. But from your perspective, what do you think of somebody like Jason coming out, what kind of effect do you think that will have on the Church of Scientology as it relates to celebs and their public perception?

AHL: I think it's another crack in the Truman show and it's a major crack for a lot of the people connected with the Celebrity Centers. Jason was an opinion leader among several of the celebrities and this is getting known inside the cult and it will be another thing adding up on the good side.

[14:00]

AHL: There are no silver bullets to this, it's easy to be impatient because it's so bad, it's so obvious,

you get impatient that things don't turn around the next day when you find out. This will take time, and hopefully more will come out soon. Jason will be a helping point for them by being the first big celebrity to come out, maybe it will take a year, it's very difficult to say, but we know lots of these key figures that we read about in the media who supposedly are very committed Scientologists are struggling, they want to come out.

DO: From your perspective do you think Tom Cruise wants to come out and be disassociated because it's had a deleterious effect on his career and who he is as a human being.

AHL: I don't know Tom Cruise so I can only say what some of the things that Jason said, for example, in his interview.

[15:00]

AHL: He said that Tom Cruise technically was out for many many years but they managed to get him back in and from what I see he looks like a totally dedicated and 100% believing Scientologist. I think that he lives in his made up reality where what he does and what he supposedly achieves and everybody tells him. He's probably been told a lot of good things, that he's saving people, the whole world is supporting him and everybody thinks he's fantastic, and that is the universe he lives, in the reality that he and the people around him has created for him. I don't think he'll be the next one out but you never know.

DO: So your feeling is that at some point we're going to see more high profile Scientologists disassociating themselves from the church and it could take a while.

[16:00]

DO: Look how long it took Jason to come forward, he left in 2005 and it's taken him three years to be able to say how he really feels. I think it's painful for people to wake up one day and think "Wow, I've been duped for this long, I've lost this amount of money and I'm no closer now to spiritual freedom, I'm no closer now to having all these powers that they'd promised me than I was a million dollars ago or ten years ago". That's got to be hard for people to admit, I mean that's a big mistake, to say "Hey, I screwed up". Alright, can we talk about Kaja Ballo the young student who committed suicide a few weeks ago who has been linked to Scientology.

[17:00]

DO: Now, I think it's a very tentative link and it's hard to really draw conclusions, but I know her family wants this to be talked about so maybe you could just tell us what you know about it, whatever your comfortable with.

AHL: I'm only talking about it because the family has said that they want this public debate about it and that family and friends and even Norwegian politicians have been very vocal to connect Scientology directly with this tragedy. Kaja was a 20 year old girl who is Norwegian, she's the daughter of a highly profiled Norwegian politician in the parliament in Norway. She was in her second year studying in Nice, France.

[18:00]

AHL: Everybody says now, of course you go back and you look at somebody's life when they take their life, it's the biggest personal tragedy you can imagine when somebody actually kills themselves. It's not black and white. You can't point at anybody and say "It's your fault, this is the direct cause". It is probably very complex, but what is astounding in this tragedy is that Kaja left school that day and they had some great classes, she was positive she was happy, she left her neighbor in the students home, he went off to the airport to meet his father, she went out shopping, she bought one pair of trousers. Then she comes back, she's obviously gone by the Church of Scientology in Nice which is close to the students home and something happened there.

[19:00]

AHL: Two hours later she jumps out of her apartment, supposedly with a note left by her saying "I'm sorry I'm not able to do anything" or "I'm not good for anything", something in that direction. When they went to her home, they found the bags where she bought her new trousers on the floor, they also find the test results from her Personality Test at the Church of Scientology and the test result was quite harsh. People are talking about how the test is administrated, it can be quite gruesome. You can be told you're not good for anything, your low on this and that. This is my

layman's opinion and many agree with me that the test is rigged in a way that...

[20:00]

AHL: ...it's a recruitment tool, it's to push somebody down. A very good example is to imagine somebody walking on the edge of a cliff, if you push them and they grab onto you, you're their only hope, you're their only salvation – if they don't cling onto you and what you can offer, you'll die and that's the methodology behind these tests, it's rigged to crush you down to make you so vulnerable and so desperate that when they offer their solution, which is Scientology, you'll cling onto that. Many will see this, you could go in there yourself, you forget about yourself you don't feel bad you'll laugh at them and say "Ha ha ha, you're silly".

[21:00]

AHL: Or, you're vulnerable, a few people who come to this are vulnerable, and get into the cult this way. Now and again they push too hard and people who are too far out on the edge fall, which might have happened in this situation. That's the danger with this cult is that it gives an organization with unqualified people issuing mental claims about people, and it can be very dangerous and a lot of professionals have gone out and said this methodology can be very dangerous.

DO: It is very dangerous and I think you did an excellent job summarizing what happened. I know in a situation like that, even legally, I don't think Scientology can physically be held responsible.

[22:00]

DO: I don't know Norwegian law but I know here it would be very difficult to prove that they were directly responsible simply because unless they specifically said "Go kill yourself", which I'm sure even they wouldn't do in such a brief encounter, although I've heard rumor that that is sort of their policy when somebody can't move up the bridge, "Oh, well this life's a waste for you, it's time to drop the body and try over again because we're not getting any money out of you and you're not moving along, clearly you have too many body thetans..."

AHL: Have you seen the orientation film which is the introduction film they're shown when you come the first day?

DO: I've seen the one where it said, "If you walk out of here you might as well just blow your brains out". Is that the one you're talking about?

AHL: Yeah, or "jump from a bridge, it's your choice".

[23:00]

DO: Or jump from a bridge, right. So to zero in on Kaja's story, would you say that, and this of course is hypothetical, if you have a vulnerable person and I'd say anyone in their late adolescence is a vulnerable person really, we don't really know her history at this point but let's say that anybody who's willing to talk probably to the Church of Scientology is somebody who's looking for answers to maybe internal questions they're having. So let's say Kaja is a vulnerable person and she's seeking help and she reached out to the church and their response was to give her a personality stress test, as you said, 'rigged' to give everyone rather negative results, their job is to find your ruin or whatever it is about you that's keeping you from being the best you can be, and they give her this negative result and it says all these things that clearly it did. Do you think that's enough to push somebody who's on the edge over?

[24:00]

AHL: I'm total layman, in my little mind that sounds reasonable. If somebody is balancing on the edge and you push them, of course it's likely that's an outcome, but I'm more relying on all the professional testimonies I've read recently, and over these past 12 years exactly that is possible. Somebody who is in a difficult position can be abused and can also be pushed too far, absolutely. Most people who go to Scientology and do these tests don't kill themselves, it's not the test itself that makes people kill themselves. Most people, as I said earlier, would laugh at it or just push it aside. A few will become members or get interested in getting into Scientology, and a lot of those people that I've talked to who were introduced to Scientology by these tests tell all the same story.

[25:00]

AHL: "I was vulnerable, I was at a point in my life where they could push me down, where I was

looking for something and I was desperate. I was really, really hurt by that test and it put me in a position where I was screaming for help, I felt very bad”.

DO: Okay, so let’s take a civil and moral level of looking at this – does Kaja’s family have a case against Scientology? From your perspective, I know we’re speaking completely in the hypothetical. I think legally they don’t but I know here in the United States the burden of proof in a civil case is much lower than it is in a criminal case, I’m just wondering if her family might have enough in this case to sue them for pushing this poor young girl who sought them.

[26:00]

DO: They commend themselves as this ‘religious group’ giving answers to people who are in need of spiritual guidance – I don’t know of any other religious organization, mainstream, or otherwise that if you went to them for help would tell you what a failure you are without also saying “But, you know, there are good things in you, you have many good qualities”. I know at the church I go to, you don’t get that negativity, they forgive you and they say look no one’s perfect but here’s what you can do to make yourself feel better. I don’t know of any religious group that’s accepted in our society that would think it’s okay to turn someone loose after basically telling them that they are worthless. So I don’t know what Norwegian law is, but do you think that they have a civil case?

AHL: Yeah, I’m not a lawyer but I think that they might have a good case in Norway.

[27:00]

AHL: I have no contact with the family, I don’t represent them and I only know what the newspaper said – that they’re waiting for the French police to investigate it, and I trust that the French police will do everything possible to find out if anybody is to blame. I also know another story, Patrick Vit, which is a French young guy who also killed himself a few years back. You can search for it the family name is ‘Vit’, Patrick Vit. He also jumped out of an apartment after the Scientologists had pressured him so much for money that he just gave up. Scientology was actually convicted for that in France so, yes, I think that Norwegian or Scandinavian or even European law is very different from American. It is absolutely possible to get responsibility for something even though it wasn’t deliberate.

[28:00]

AHL: Not any Scientologists involved and not the Church of Scientology want to kill anybody. The sad thing is the people administrating these tests, using what they call the ‘technology’, are unaware of the harm. They think that this is the best thing that’s ever been invented, Hubbard was a genius. In their mind, they live again so even though people like Kaja died now, she’s now turning into a new person who will get a better chance to become a Scientologist next time. To them this might even confirm that they’re right, because in their mind she turned her back to Scientology and look what happened to her. If she only had listened to them she would have lived, of course, because what they offer is perfect.

DO: That is a very twisted and perverse use of one's power as a religious organization. I do appreciate your candid answers on these hypothetical questions.

[29:00]

DO: Now, you live in Norway which is European so its obviously different than the US. It seems as though Europe has a rather strict set of standards on how they apply what is a religion and what is not. They’ve been pretty hostile in several countries towards Scientology, as an organization anyway not necessarily towards people who want to practice it, but how they organize and proselytize and draw in their members. What do you think it is about that European mindset that makes them much more skeptical than they are here in the United States, they have a lot of things here that other countries wouldn’t ever allow.

AHL: Well, you can look at the Constitution of America, you have a very clear separation between the State and Church.

[30:00]

AHL: That comes from all these religious people going into America, everyone being very strongly convinced that their religion was right. So they could either fight it out, or they could agree to disagree, give equal rights and say that the State should be impartial to all religions. While in many

countries in Europe, like Norway, we have had one religion for a thousand years. We haven't seen much else, so we haven't had that complexity. We also have like the experience in World War II of being occupied by a very extreme Totalitarian society. In my opinion, this is one of the biggest reasons why Germany is so critical to Scientology, because they recognize the Totalitarian ideology in Scientology and the threat to democracy, they have been there, they have seen it, they know the damages if you don't take it or have watchdogs to look over it very early.

[31:00]

If you let it go, it is possible to lure good people with the best intentions into a scam, into a fascistic ideology, so being early in warning about this, addressing it, it's more obvious for us I think, and we're not that, you don't have to be blindly respectful to something just because it calls itself a religion or church. If an organization did what Scientology might have done in France now, of course we would have been even more focused on it. It does have some disarming effects, as it does call itself a religion, but maybe not as much as it does in America, I would guess.

[32:00]

DO: That's actually very good analysis of it, and I think you're right. In some ways, like World War II, when you're dealing with another Totalitarian, Authoritative leadership in Nazi Germany, you're caught unaware being invaded, so it's a direct threat at the borders, but I'm sure there were other countries before they were invaded who sensed something was wrong. I know your neighbors, Denmark, they knew right away that Hitler was bad, Nazism was bad, but look how long it took the United States to get involved. We had to be directly threatened before we threw our hat in the ring. I think as a country, we're the last people that catch on, the most reluctant, because we are insular, we feel protected. But what's the saddest part about all that is, this is a United States-birthed event and it's spread it's tentacles around the world so we of all people should be most responsible for curbing this really abusive organization.

[33:00]

DO: I read somewhere that they have a two hundred billion dollars in assets, and that's a lot of money for an organization that has maybe fifty thousand members, maybe half that now with all the negative things that have happened in the last ten years. So, I'd like to speak on how to address this on an activist format, because I know that's how you perceive yourself, old guard activist, sharing with the public. I am sure you are well aware of Anonymous, many of those people are on your site frequently, what are your feelings about Anonymous as this moving target enemy on the internet through, fighting against the church and trying to keep them from suppressing free speech and information?

AHL: Well, I've, I easily fall in love with people who are committed, socially committed to burn for things.

[34:00]

AHL: They might even be people who would burn for things that are totally opposite to what I believe in, but a lot of people who have love for something and do that openly. Not covertly but openly. I think that is great, because that fires their faith. That is the best way for me to have my opinions, is to throw them out there and see how they bounce back. Seeing all these young people, they started doing it more as a joke, as pranks, but it is growing into what it is today, it's fantastic. So, whatever they do, as long as they do it peacefully, within the law and openly, I think it's fantastic. What we are showing is as long as we are strong, as long as we stand up,

[35:00]

AHL: As long as we are open in our fight for freedom, freedom of expression and freedom of religion, everything. If we have enough people and we do that, we can be anything, and in time it will eventually crumble. I don't think Scientology has that kind of billions anymore, they definitely don't have as many members as they had only five years ago or ten years ago, we don't see ourselves as confined to the shadows but they are struggling. It's only because of people like Anonymous, coming, joining, standing up, giving in. All that I've been doing, what the internet actually has been doing over the last sixteen years has totally disarmed the cult, which had been totally beneath the surface. They were having a fantastic success before the internet.

[36:00]

AHL: They were really doing what they wanted to do and they were winning, a lot or it all. The internet gave us a method for individuals, without having an organization but just individuals, doing our own little part. I am a strong believer that there is not one silver bullet, not one person can solve all the problems in the world, and if everyone did their little bit it will be a really nice place for all of us. And that's what you're seeing. Many people doing they're little bit.

DO: That's right, and that's really the fundamental part of activism, the collective conscious, you know anyone seeking to hopefully put something positive. I think, like you said, Anonymous started out with supporting one aspect of it, that they didn't like censorship and suppression of free speech.

[37:00]

DO: They've certainly grown now, they are very well read, they know what the church is up to, they've caught up on what we didn't know fifteen years ago. And I see a broader impact for the future, hopefully this will send a message that if you want to get something done, if you want to fix all the wrongs in the world, that you need to come together and the Internet is a perfect place for that. You can be anywhere, you don't need to be in one place, you can be all over the world and all you need is that drive, ambition and mindset to come together. I think it's a very brave strategy, it seems to be very effective. Do you have any advice for what they should continue to do?

AHL: Be innovative, be passionate, and know that the cult will continue to do stupid stuff, they motivate us, they are their own worst enemies.

[38:00]

AHL: They created me, if they had left me alone and ignored me, I probably would have been doing this for a couple of months, maybe. Not for twelve years. So, learn from your mistakes, try to educate people around you, don't be impatient. This is a big ship, it won't turn around in a fortnight, it will take some time. But, Anonymous, whether that is a name or a label or a group, whatever you call it, the phenomenon Anonymous in this setting has been responsible for the biggest global demonstrations, peaceful demonstrations, against the Church of Scientology, ever, ever. That is something these people will remember for the rest of their lives. The writing hit's you. They're writing Internet history, and Democracy and free speech hit's you. And Scientology will never be the same afterwards.

[39:00]

AHL: Scientology, no matter how much they scream and pretend they are not hurt by this, this is the best time to speed up a little bit because they are very vulnerable, they don't have enough resources and people to handle all the critics, their problem have been when they send people out to handle the critics – they're being converted. They meet good people. So, it is important for us when we meet all these people, all these Scientologists coming out, meet them with friendliness. Don't be hostile, don't scare them back in their cages. Many of them, we know, we are learning this from the many who are coming out now...

[40:00]

AHL: Most of the people inside are scared, they're stressed, they're frustrated, many of them have burnt their bridges with their loved ones, many of them have done things they are embarrassed about, they feel no way out of it. What we need now is we want to disarm this cult and the management even more. We need to help these people come out without being judged, without feeling we are hostile or crazy people like the cult wants to make us look. You need to look like what we are preaching. I believe that I represent something better, that I have live that, I have to show that to the people inside and not be angry, aggressive or mistrusting all the time. That is the most important thing to do to help people out.

DO: That's very good advice, and I think most Anonymous members, the ones that are active in this, this particular movement feel that way.

[41:00]

DO: I am very proud, as you said these are young people. They're not all young people, there are lots, I am not a young person and I am certainly part of the whole. I am trying to be and I know you

are, there are just thousands of us who feel the same way. It is important to realize that while on one hand they are the enemy, of sorts, they as individuals are not enemies. They are victims in many ways, they are victims of their own making and certainly the making of the church. The percentage of people who are introduced to Scientology who actually follow it is probably very small, but those that do follow it very fervently, so the way I try to look at it, what if somebody decided my religion was hurting people and I was causing, you know, harm to others, how would I feel?

[42:00]

DO: What would be the best way to reach me? I would think a compassionate voice, a helping hand, sort of a slowly but surely, explain the abuses that were going on and any reasonable person would start to see it. Look at all the critics that have come out, these are some very intelligent people who were once in the church who are no longer in. These are smart people.

AHL: Absolutely, I have met so many fantastic people. These people: they're lovely, smart, resourceful, it's amazing. A lot of families and loved ones of victims still inside Scientology contact me, and their frustration is "What should I do, tell me? Tell me! I want to help my friend or my son or my daughter, to get out! Should I start a war against these people, or what should I do?"

[43:00]

AHL: My advice to all, each family member, is that they have one post, they have one important job in all this, that is to keep the communication lines with their loved ones. It is people like us who are out there and don't have that responsibility, we should be there pushing on the cult. We should slowly push and make it smaller and smaller and create awareness about it. But the family members need to keep the communication because when these people are ready to get out, they need to be there to take them in. I don't know if Scientology will collapse or be cut out, I doubt it, but if it does there will be a lot of people needing help. We need the families there to take care of most of them, we can't handle all that, so we don't want to create more victims. That's also our dilemma now that when we are attacking the cult is that the cult is held up good people with the best intentions.

[44:00]

AHL: Our direct calls are also hurting them. You might be shouting at David Miscavige, but he is out of sight. He has all the money, all the ships, the golf course and everything. So the people personally hurt by all the attacks are the poor staff and the poor Sea Org people who feel the pressure. You need to keep that in mind too and not create more victims.

DO: Or victimize them even further than they have already been victimized. I feel confident that people in the Sea Org, who've been put through the RPF, the rank and file members, they have been victimized both financially and emotionally, mentally. There are a lot of people who probably seek out the Church of Scientology because they are maybe suffering from a mental illness and they don't want to do, you know traditional methods.

[45:00]

DO: But traditional methods may be the only way to help these people, which of course is probably why the Church is against psychiatry and psychiatry medicines is because it is perceived as competition to them. If they're the authorities on the mind, how can psychiatrists also be the authorities on the mind too? You do have a lot of complications. You mentioned David Miscavige, and of course he's a favorite target of mine because I don't want to go after rank-and-file members. I don't even want to go after long-time Sea Org members because, again, they're just cogs in this huge system. I'd rather target the leader, the one who's the captain of the ship.

AHL: My personal opinion is: Scientologists and Scientology always talk about "Find the buttons"; if they want to get control of somebody or ruin somebody, find their buttons. The biggest button for this cult is David Miscavige. We need to focus on David Miscavige.

[46:00]

DO: How do we go after him?

AHL: We need to go after him not as a person, not as vindictive, but he's the guy who's responsible for the state everything is in now. He's responsible personally for all the tragedies. He's responsible for the organization. And he needs to know that his days are counted. Whatever happens after him, his days must be counted. We need to focus on how he's benefited from all this, how he rose to

power, where the money's going, what he's doing. Just the fact that he's changing all what they call the Tech is supposed to be, L. Ron Hubbard is supposed to be the 'source' and everybody goes around believing that they are — in my opinion, the bullshit Hubbard made — they believe they are getting the real stuff. But we know that David Miscavige, who isn't even top trained in this, is changing everything. People need to know.

[47:00]

DO: He's "squirreling the tech", as they say.

AHL: Absolutely. And we know this, it's documented. We also know that he hates getting the focus on him. So we need to put all our spotlights, well not all of them because there are other things to do, but we need to put more spotlights on David Miscavige and the people around him who are benefiting on this or having power. This is a huge power trip for him and whoever else is involved at that level. They got all these people who are slaving for them. They've got all the money, they get the cars and the motorcycles, the houses, the casino they go to, the cruise ship, everything! We need to threaten their luxuries and their possessions and their power. We need to take away their power.

DO: We do. So you're saying it's okay to target David Miscavige.

[48:00]

DO: What do you think the best way to do that is? To talk about how he's changed LRH's teachings? Talk about the changes in the church itself since he took charge? I think a lot of people in Anonymous, and I know for me personally as somebody who likes to talk about this in the media (though few do), what do you think is something that I could say to really impact him on a personal level and get the focus on him? From your expertise.

AHL: Well, I believe in this distributed network. That now there are all these fantastic brains around the world and we know what we want to achieve: we want the bad type of Scientology to disappear. So what I want to do is make a very very good website revealing all of David Miscavige's faults and methods and what he does, how he runs everything.

[49:00]

AHL: And also all the bad parts. Get that documented, get that on the net. Because this is a guy without a lot of education. He doesn't have a lot of things to fall back on, except whatever riches he's accumulated in his position. So we need to make sure that his name and his personality is revealed. We need to undress him publicly like he's been trying to do with myself and a lot of other critics, digging in our pasts to find our ruins or find our skeletons in the closet. We need to do that with David. And we know there's a lot of people out now who know so many sordid details of stories. That needs to be collected, put together, and presented to the world so that it's on the net. And if it's on the net, it can never be removed.

[50:00]

DO: Well that's actually very good, very specific detailed suggestions. These are some smart, savvy, very dedicated, creative people. They have access to all sorts of resources. Let's point out something, Anonymous isn't just people from the internet, it's also made up of ex-Scientologists and Scientologists right now who are looking to get out. I know we're getting tons and tons of data from inside the Church. That's a very good initiative, and I am going to try and spread that word from this interview.

AHL: I just think it's important we must be careful that we don't get too emotional on this. There are a few of us who tend to get over-excited. We're not addressing David Miscavige when we are talking about the cult and their sins. We have talking to the rest of the world.

[51:00]

AHL: When we get personal it gets ugly and we can look just as bad as the other one. It would be easy to attack David Miscavige because of his height, for example.

DO: That's right.

AHL: Some might believe they are pushing his buttons, but it looks like you're doing more harm, because, to the people outside, we are bad guys. The poor guy can't help it if he's short. It doesn't make any difference, he's not bad or good because he's short. The thing is what the guy's done. What can we prove, what can we document? So go on the acts and do not make us look bad by

being emotional and by being personal. Before you do something you should always think about, “What’s our goal?” And our goal should be public, we should share our motivation and our goals, and then we should remind ourselves of that all the time.

[52:00]

AHL: It’s very easy to get led astray, it’s very easy to get emotional and there’s a lot of ex-Scientologists coming out, being angry, frustrated, wanting their revenge or something. It’s easy to get caught up in all that and some people make more harm than do good when they are in that state and we need to help calm them down and get back to focus.

DO: I’m glad you said that, that is exactly what we need. I know I personally can be very emotional. I do have a lot of anger towards him on a personal level. I don’t know him personally, but the way I feel about this subject matter I am probably overly-passionate and I’m just that person by nature. That’s good, stay focused, stick to the details, don’t go after him about things that have nothing to do with what he’s done abusive-wise to members of the Church.

[53:00]

DO: That’s very good advice and I’m gonna try and see how much of this I can extract and pass out to the world at large. I really appreciate that advice, Andreas.

AHL: Another strength to us, too, is that we don’t have a leader. So don’t look at me or don’t look at anybody else as leaders. Do your own thing, but try to learn from everybody and be in communication. As soon as we get a leader, we get somebody or everybody says “Well, he’s the best” or “She’s the best” and everything. You will give Scientology people to go after. You need to be an anthill ruling the forest, not a big animal. We need lots spread out so that they don’t have any target they can pinpoint.

DO: Exactly. It’s more like an ant army. Anonymous has it’s own terminology for what they consider themselves, which I am not going to even pretend to know for various reasons.

[54:00]

DO: Well, we’re running out of time. There’s one more thing I want to get your thoughts on. What do you think the final outcome will be for the Church of Scientology if Anonymous continue to keep up the pressure? Can you guess a timeline of when we’ll see some dramatic results?

AHL: I would not dare to give a timeline. I have failed so many times in trying to do that over the last twelve years. But I do believe that Scientology will not disappear. Most cults disappear when their founder dies, Scientology survived that. That was a big difference from them and many other cults. They have developed a lot of tricks and a lot of material that always will tempt somebody to try to make something out of it. And it’s out there, so it will never go away.

[55:00]

I hope that by taking away the top and the power lines and the trademarks and copyrights, when the power’s away from that, when that’s spread out, it will be tons of Freezones and the Scientologists out there will be spread over many different regions and organizations and directions. That will take away their weapons of doing bad because it will be about people doing personal things that they can gain their personal life. Even though that we might think it’s crap, it’s going to be a personal thing not an organizational thing. So taking away their money-generating on the top, the trademarks and the copyrights and the current management, then something will hopefully happen within ... the foreseeable future.

[56:00]

DO: I know you’ve been tapped by the media, certainly there in Norway, but here also. As you see the wall crumbling around Scientology, how willing will you be to step in front of the cameras? I know you are almost a shy person on a personal level. Just in my interaction with you, you are very unassuming, which is quite sweet and a wonderful quality about you. But at some point people like you and Mark, and Arnie, and the Torys, the media is going to be seeking you out. How comfortable are you with that and what can we expect from you in this whole battle when it all comes down?

AHL: I do a lot of TV when I see there is nobody else coming up. But in Norway we don’t have a lot of Scientology churches. I’m convinced people like Jason, a lot of other people, are much better

in front of a camera than I am.

[57:00]

The group of critics and an awareness of Scientology is growing, and there's a lot of people coming out who will be able to do that much better than I will. My goal is to slowly get somebody else to pick up the stick. Many others pick up the stick

DO: Yes, many others have picked up the stick. You've made friends with a lot of these more outspoken critics. You created your own cohesive group. When you mention the anthill what it's made me think of is occasionally a big ant will step up and take everybody where they need to go, and then they'll go back down the hole, and then another one... So it could be you, it could be Mark, there could be people... Jason Beghe could be a person who emerges as a leader in all this if he wishes to. I think that it's more than one person simply because...

[58:00]

AHL: Absolutely.

DO: It takes the heat off of them for a while to have somebody else stand up for a while. Plus, Scientology is always looking to single someone out as a leader of Anonymous or a leader of this movement against them. If there are several well-known people it just ties up their resources, disperses their ability to really single anybody out and attack them. That's their biggest, their silver bullet is singling people out and going after them. If they can't do that, then their hands are tied.

AHL: Yeah.

DO: So I think it's great that you're one of several very articulate, smart people and I'm just so glad you took the time to talk to me. I think this is a really great interview. You have a lot of really intelligent things to say and people get to know you. Operation Clambake is, like I said, the quintessential site for anti-Scientology information on the net.

[59:00]

And you, like Mark and many others, aren't out to attack Scientologists for their beliefs, but you want to see a dismantling of the abusive practices. I think you have been at it long enough you'd know if you were approaching this in the wrong way. It's good that we have people already here that we can look to. I deeply appreciate your dedication to this, it's really great.

AHL: Well, thank you. You too, Dawn.

DO: I feel really special because I'm at a point where, having covered it, I gain access to these really intelligent people. I think the media wants to hear sensationalized stuff, but I think Anonymous, I don't want to speak for them specifically, but people who are fighting the Church, we need specifics that the media may not be covering. I like to ask questions that I think all of us want to know, and I'm really appreciative of the opportunity to do so. You were a great guest Andreas, thank you so much and I'm so happy to have you.

DO: Thank you too, take care

AHL: Take care

[[TRANSCRIPT ENDS]]