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Managing to Recruit: Religious Conversion in the Workplace

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New Religious Movements, like other social organizations, must generate economic strategies to ensure survival. The Church of Scientology has a long-established system of therapeutic counseling and self-improvement courses to offer potential recruits and existing members in exchange for monetary resources. A recent development in Scientology's resource mobilization efforts involves a series of associated companies offering L. Ron Hubbard's "management technology" to medical professionals in the form of practice management consulting. Consulting programs may lead to conversion into the religious organization and often involve the introduction of Scientology doctrine into the workplace. Utilizing content analysis of both primary and secondary documents, as well as personal interviews, this article explores the relationship between Scientology, its consulting companies, and medical professionals (n=59) who became involved in religious ideology through management consulting. Since resource mobilization theory does not offer adequate provisions to explain individual participation in specific social movements, the author utilizes Lofland and Stark's conversion model as a supplement.

One of the central arguments of resource mobilization theory is that social movements need resources in order to survive (McCarthy and Zald 1987: 28). New Religious Movements with expressed goals of effecting change in society fall within McCarthy and Zald's conceptualization of a social movement, and as such researchers have examined the resource mobilization strategies of a number of these social groups (Bird and Westley 1988; Bromley 1985; Johnston 1980; Khalsa 1986; Richardson 1988; Robbins 1988; Tipton 1988). One new religious movement, however, that has not been examined extensively regarding its resource mobilization strategies is the Church of Scientology.[1]

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[1] According to McCarthy and Zald, a social movement is a voluntary collectivity "that people support in order to effect changes in society" (McCarthy and Zald 1973: 2). While critics might dispute the voluntary nature of Scientology's members, no one would dispute that Scientology strives to change society. As the movement's own literature states, the organization and its members aspire to the goal of "clearing the planet" (Church of Scientology International 1994: 9-10). This goal involves recruiting as many individuals as possible and convincing them to achieve a status known as "clear." By converting the world's population to its doc-

This article utilizes resource mobilization theory's general precepts to examine a specific component of Scientology's economic activities.[2] It focuses on the movement's recruitment of medical professionals through medically-based practice management companies (PMCs). Through a licensing agreement with Scientology, the PMCs have obtained the right to use the writings of Scientology's founder, L. Ron Hubbard, to teach management skills to medical professionals, including dentists, veterinarians, podiatrists, and chiropractors (among others). In addition to practical management advice, PMCs also offer their clients an introduction to the Church of Scientology. The link between PMCs and Scientology provides an example of the mediation of ideological recruitment through front companies, as originally described by Bird and Westley (1988).[3]

Although resource mobilization theory allows us to explain the economic activities of social movements, it does not offer provisions for analyzing the motivations of individuals who join them (Kent 1982). In order to amend this theoretically-based oversight, I use Lofland and Stark's conversion model to explain how and why some individuals become involved in particular social movements. In essence, Lofland and Stark's conversion model offers theorists an opportunity to examine the motivation of individuals in joining ideological organizations, which strategy heretofore has been missing from resource mobilization theory. The model allows researchers to identify the social factors that foster individual involvement in a social movement such as Scientology, and is thus particularly appropriate for application to the present study.

Interaction between medical professionals, PMCs, and Scientology generally follows a pattern of increasing commitment that I divide into three distinct stages: initial contact, practice management consulting, and direct participation in Scientology. This article outlines the general pattern of interaction between the medical professionals and Scientology, then examines this interaction in the context of resource mobilzation theory and Lofland and Stark's conversion

trines, Scientology aspires to "reverse the downward direction of the current civilization and actually bring about a cleared planet" (Church of Scientology International 1994: 3).

[2] Scientology's considerable financial holdings and extensive membership base warrant an economically-based sociological analysis. Currently the organization operates in 86 countries and, according to author Richard Behar, controls a four hundred million dollar empire (Behar 1986: 315; Lopez 1993: H5). In addition, one recent statement by an organization official in New York State indicates that approximately eight million people worldwide have participated in Scientology courses, and a further five hundred thousand take their first Scientology course each year (Lopez 1993: H5). Thus, investigation into the organization's financial and membership components is imperative.

[3] At least three published sources identify the link between Scientology and its PMCs. For example Passas states that "the [Church of Scientology] recruits well-to-do individuals through a number of consultancy firms with secret ties to it. Stirling (sic) Management Systems, for example, allegedly targets health-care professionals with the promise to help them dramatically increase their income, offers seminars and courses priced at $10,000, and lures them to the [Church of Scientology]" (1994: 221). See also Passas and Castillo (1992) and Zellner (1995).

model in order to explain the motivations of both the social movement and its potential members.[4]

Interaction between medical professionals and Scientology's affiliated practice management companies generally begins with a PMC-initiated meeting either for an introductory seminar or free analysis of the medical practice. During the introductory seminars, recruiting staff present L. Ron Hubbard's management principles and provide examples of how the professionals can apply these techniques in both professional and personal arenas (WISE 1988: 8). Following these introductory seminars, PMC consultants arrange individual consultations with each medical professional, during which they discuss training programs appropriate to the doctor's medical practice (WISE 1992: 5; Hall and Kent 1995: 6). If the practitioners agree to purchase consulting services, then the next step in the process is a practice analysis.

Practice analyses generally involve intense and exhaustive examinations of the individual medical practice.[5] In addition to providing PMC staff with information about the general financial accounting and patient loads of the practice, the medical professionals also provide personal information about

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[4] Three distinct research methods provided information necessary to examine the relationship between Scientology, its PMCs, and their clients. First, I conducted a content analysis of primary documents, including Canadian dental, veterinary, and chiropractic school calendars along with media and legal accounts of professionals' experiences with Scientology's practice management programs. Second, I conducted personal interviews with medical/dental professionals previously or currently involved in the Scientology-affiliated practice management courses. And third, I completed a literature review of Scientology internal documents and the course contents of one of the practice management training programs. Available internal documents included Scientology textbooks and dictionaries and World Institute of Scientology Enterprises (WISE) advertisements and publications.

Because it was difficult to locate a large sample of medical professionals to interview regarding experience with the practice management companies of interest to this study, I chose to supplement my interviews with content analysis of secondary data, in the form of media accounts. I was able to obtain thirteen individual media accounts of personal experience with Scientology's medical practice management programs. Together, the articles recounted the experiences of fifty-four medical professionals, including dentists, veterinarians, chiropractors, and podiatrists, as well as former and current employees of the practice management companies in question. Furthermore, I obtained one legal affidavit, which summarizes the personal experience of a dentist with one of Scientology's affiliated practice management programs.

Coding and collecting data occurred in three stages. First, I coded the information contained in the media and accounts into sixteen conceptual categories, so that I could accumulate and compare information contained in each individual's experience with the practice management programs. Second, I conducted personal interviews with medical/dental professionals previously or currently involved with Scientology-affiliated practice management courses. I personally conducted interviews with one veterinarian, one dental office manager, and one chiropractor, and participated in the interview of an additional dentist. In addition, I obtained a transcript of an interview with a former Scientology staff member involved in one of the practice management companies. The interviews involved general open-ended questions, and essentially followed the practitioners in a linear sequence through their involvement with the PMC and Scientology. I conducted and audio-taped interviews both in person and via telephone. Interviews ranged in length from one to four hours. Interviewee involvement ranged from participation in an introductory seminar to full membership in Scientology. I utilized snow-ball sampling to access individuals who had contact with the PMCs that are of interest to the study.

[5] The analyses usually takes place in two stages. The first stage involves an extensive conversation between consultant and client, and the second stage involves a close scrutiny of the medical professional's practice documents, staff, and in some cases, interviews with patients (Hall and Kent 1995: 10).

themselves, their spouses, and their staff through a personality profile, the Oxford Capacity Analysis. These personality profiles represent an essential element of the practice analysis, and according to one subject, "from [the PMC's] point of view, we were not allowed to have employees who didn't want to answer the test" (Hall and Kent 1995: 9).

Often practice analyses go beyond professional issues and enter into the personal life of the practitioner. According to one subject, "[The consultant] asked me a lot of very, very personal questions about me: 'Are you a drinker? Do you do drugs? Do you have sex outside of marriage?'" (Dexheimer 1991: 12). The subject's wife added:

> After the [practice analysis] meeting, they knew everything about us. They knew how much life insurance he had, with whom, his parents' income, any inheritance he was coming into, every checking account, our mortgage. They knew how much I paid for my horse-trailer. They knew how many portable radios we have in the house. They knew more about our finances than I do (Dexheimer 1991: 13).

PMCs can use this extensive knowledge of the professionals' financial situation to counter individual refusals to sign up for courses based on a lack of financial resources (Geary 1994: 9, 10, 14; Hall and Kent 1995: 36; Hall and Kent 1994: 56). As we shall see, the PMCs also can use this information at a later date to convince medical professionals that they need Scientology courses to handle personal problems. Following their practice analysis, practitioners attend their first practice management training program.

The practice management training program generally consists of supervised reading, twelve hours daily for five to eight days (Gorman 1990: 28). During training, generally offered at PMC's training facilities, PMC consultants will identify for the doctors potential "problems" supposedly indicated by their Oxford Capacity Analysis personality profile. [6] The consultant will suggest that unless the professional "handles" these personal problems, all of the time and money invested in the management course will be wasted. The consultant then will suggest or recommend that the professional consult with a recruiter from Scientology (Ochart 1993a, 124; Ochart 1993b, 230, 237, 249; Hall and Kent 1995: 17). During this Scientology consultation, the Scientologist recommends a specific program of both courses and auditing (which is a form of psychological therapy and ideological instruction), to help the person deal with the personal issues identified by the personality profile.

According to interview subjects, these meetings occur late at night, after several long days of training. Often the meeting results in PMC clients agreeing

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[6] The test contains 200 questions to which respondents reply "yes," "maybe or sometimes," or "no" regarding how they would respond in specific situations. Scientology uses test results to determine that an individual would benefit from Scientology auditing (counselling therapy) (Dexheimer 1991: 12). Indeed, a Scientology policy letter instructs test evaluators to say at the low points on the resulting graphs, "Scientology training can raise that'" (Hubbard 1960: 164).

to join Scientology in an effort to gain Scientology's assistance in alleviating these newly identified alleged personal problems. One interview subject commented on this process as it occurred during his practice management training program.

> The scuttlebutt was that . . . this guy was a recruiter for Scientology, and everybody knew that. So everybody, all of us, all the dentists and podiatrists, . . . and periodontists and chiropractors that were there with us, we all went in [to the private meeting with the Scientology recruiter] with our eyes open, knowing that this guy was going to try to get us to sign up for Scientology. And so we all had this sense of invulnerability, that we were tough and we weren't going to fall for this. . . . None of us were going to sign up for this. In reality, every single one of us did, *every single one of us did* (Hall and Kent 1995: 17–18).

Although it is difficult to access specific percentages, the data indicate that medical professionals do enter Scientology through PMC management programs. Officials for one PMC, for example, acknowledge that about 20 percent of the chiropractors who sign up for management consulting also wind up in Scientology courses (Koff 1987). In fact, a number of WISE publications, including the 1989 Western United States Business Directory, refer to one of the PMCs as being Scientology's most effective recruiting organization (Ochart 1993b: 249, exhibit 5; Wilson 1993: 99, exhibit 2; WISE 1989).

Although PMCs do not force practitioners to undertake Scientology training or counseling, some evidence exists that they pressure their clients to do so. For some practitioners, the pressure was very subtle, for others it was a "hard sell" approach that did not appear to offer opportunities for refusal (Geary 1994; Hall and Kent 1994; Hall and Kent 1995).

In summary, during the initial stage of the conversion process, the PMCs introduce the professionals to Hubbard's ideology as a potentially effective management tool. After the initial professional management introduction, PMC staff arrange for their clients to meet with Scientology recruiters to discuss the possible applications of Hubbard's ideology to their personal lives. By licensing individual companies to promote Hubbard's ideology, and then utilizing those companies as funnels into itself, Scientology has generated a successful and lucrative recruitment and resource mobilization vehicle.

INITIAL INTERACTION[7]

Resource Mobilization Theory

In addition to acquiring finances, another primary task of any social

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[7] The remaining discussion identifies the three stages of recruitment (initial interaction, practice management training, and participation in Scientology). For each stage I discuss the appropriate components of both Lofland and Stark's model and resource mobilization theory.

movement involves obtaining and maintaining constituents[8] (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1221). Because of their increased access to resource pools and control over their own discretionary time and money, elites — in this case medical professionals — are the most valuable constituents of any social movement (McCarthy and Zald 1973: 11). The elite socio-economic status that medical professionals share makes them attractive potential constituents for Scientology's PMCs.

Initial interaction between Scientology's PMCs and the medical professionals generally occurs when the professionals receive an invitation in the mail to attend a free introductory seminar or participate in a free practice analysis. In addition to contacting potential clients through direct-mail solicitations, the PMCs also mail newsletters and magazines to professionals (WISE 1988: 8).[9] These magazines contain advertisements for consulting services, testimonials from present clients, free personality assessments, advertisements for L. Ron Hubbard publications, as well as articles promoting the benefits of practice management consulting. They also introduce L. Ron Hubbard's administrative ideas to the professionals (WISE 1988: 8). Thus, without ever having met with a PMC representative, some professionals may already have been introduced to Scientology doctrine.[10]

The combination of an existing predisposing need for practice management consulting among medical professionals and the PMCs' ability to market an attractive product has led to a number of medical professionals becoming indirect constituents of Scientology.[11] In other words, both individual moti-

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[8] Individuals who support the social movement financially.

[9] Scientology's WISE division licenses individual Scientologists to use L. Ron Hubbard's ideas in personal or corporate ventures outside of Scientology. WISE ensures correct implementation and adherence to Hubbard's doctrine and ideology.

[10] Advertising through direct-mail and the media is a characteristic common to McCarthy and Zald's "professional social movements" (1973, 1987: 59-60). McCarthy and Zald used the term "professional social movements" to describe a new form of social movement that evolved out of the "bureaucratization of social discontent" (McCarthy and Zald 1973: 3). In this evolutionary development, functions historically served by a movement's members were being taken over by highly skilled, paid workers. Professional social movements were able to use their monetary resources to hire specialists in the areas of marketing and promotion, fundraising, legal counsel, lobbying, and leadership (McCarthy and Zald 1973: 15-16, 20-23).

According to John McCarthy (1987: 59-61), direct-mail and media solicitations represent attempts by professional social movements to develop social networks, or infrastructures, among loosely affiliated potential adherents (ideological supporters), where they do not already exist. PMC advertisements that highlight testimonials from established medical professionals offer an example of attempts to develop movement-generated social networks. These testimonials serve as validation of the PMC programs among individual professionals that are similar to, but isolated from one another. They are a means of generating a social network for the purpose of sharing a potentially valuable service, or mobilization tool — in this case, practice management training based on the works of L. Ron Hubbard. In addition to publishing their own journals, the PMCs also advertise in respected professional journals (Hall and Kent 1995: 3-4).

[11] Through a licensing agreement between individual PMCs and WISE, Scientology receives a royalty of approximately ten percent on all money invested in training and materials by PMC clients (Koff 1987).

vation on the part of medical professionals (as described by Lofland and Stark) and Scientology's interest in gaining elite constituents (as described by resource mobilization theory) form much of the explanation for the success of this recruitment strategy.

Conversion Model

Lofland and Stark (1965: 864) view conversion as a series of seven sequential stages that converts follow en route to total commitment.[12] They divide the conversion process into two distinct categories: predisposing conditions and situational contingencies. Predisposing conditions include some form of tension, a problem-solving perspective aligned with the ideology of the recruiting organization, and a self-designation by the pre-convert as a seeker. These background factors offer necessary, but not sufficient, motivation for conversion.

Tension.[13]The consulting packages that Scientology's PMCs offer their clients are attractive to the medical professionals for a number of reasons. First, analysis of the contents of professional medical training indicates that professionals obtain very little practice management training during their formal education, creating a deficiency of skill in this area.[14] Second, medical professionals are facing increasing intraprofessional competition and declining profitability. These social and economic conditions often lead professionals to seek some form of management assistance (Crain 1989: 25).

Regardless of whether PMC clients choose to actively join Scientology, a portion of their consulting fees supports it, making them financial constituents of the social movement.

[12] Lofland and Stark (1965: 864) operationalize total conversion as a state in which converts express both active and verbal commitments to the organization.

[13] A number of economic, social, and personal strains may impinge upon a medical professional at any one time. Presumably, individual responses to these factors will vary considerably. The issue that is of importance to this study is the process that occurs when these individual tensions lead to a determinable social pattern of response, which in this case involves medical professionals obtaining practice management training from Scientology and its affiliated PMCs.

[14] In order to establish a cursory but objective measure of the amount of practice management training that students receive during their professional education, I obtained information regarding the proportion of educational hours devoted to imparting these skills in dental, veterinary, and chiropractic colleges in Canada. In procuring this information, I utilized two complimentary methods. First, whenever possible, I acquired information directly from university calendars. Second, when that information was not available, I contacted the colleges and requested the appropriate information. By using both methods, I was able to obtain usable data from ten of the fifteen colleges in the sample. This summary does not evaluate the content or quality of information imparted to students during their coursework. Instead, it represents an objective measure of the amount of time spent on training medical professionals in practice management skills. The analysis indicates that the percentage of instructional hours devoted to imparting practice management skills within designated practice management courses to dental, veterinary, and chiropractic students in Canada ranged from 0-1.7 percent of their total time spent in coursework and training. The apparently low to non-existent emphasis on developing these skills supports subjects' claims that their professional training did not prepare them to effectively manage their practices.

Both interview and media data indicated that the professionals felt a need to supplement the management training they might have received during their university education. One dentist indicated that:

> [The Scientology-based practice management program] really filled a void for me as far has having a management technology. . . . Dental school provides you with the technology of dentistry so you can practice, but it doesn't give you an education in administration and communication. When it comes down to treating patients, you have to deal with staff and communicate with patients on dental needs and treatment plans. Anything that can help you do that is a tremendous asset to the profession (Jakush 1989: 15).

Other professionals in the sample agree that professional education offered little assistance in preparing them to manage their practices (Hall and Kent 1994: 87; Hall and Kent 1995: 52).

Lack of formal training in practice management skill is only one of the economic challenges facing contemporary medical professionals. A second challenge relates to declining incomes among medical professionals. According to one recent Canadian estimate, average 1990 incomes for full-time dentists was almost five thousand dollars less per year than it was in 1980 (Coutts 1995: A7). Decreasing wages partly are a result of increasing competition, since the total number of practicing dentists increased by almost 3,000 during that ten year period. Increased competition, along with better oral health in the general population have placed significant strains on the profitability of Canadian dental practices (Coutts 1995: A7).[15]

Limited management training, increased intraprofessional competition, and decreased profitability can lead to financial tension for some medical professionals. The existence of finanial tension represents the first of a series of steps leading to conversion into Scientology via PMCs. Presumably, not all medical professionals experience financial tension, and not all medical professionals experiencing financial tension seek management assistance. It is clear however, from an examination of the subjects in both the interview and media samples, that professionals who sought management consulting felt a need to augment their existing administrative skills. Professionals who encounter this tension experience the first of Lofland and Stark's predisposing conditions and, in some cases, continue on the path towards conversion.

Problem-Solving Perspective. In addition to the experiences of tension, Lofland and Stark suggest that individuals who hold problem-solving perspectives similar to the ideological organization have an increased likelihood of

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[15] Veterinarians also appear to be encountering significant financial pressures. In 1989, the average annual salary for American veterinarians was only $48,000, while medical doctors' salaries averaged $110,000 (Crain 1989: 25). Similar to Canadian dentists, American veterinarians' income also has been declining relative to the cost of living. In addition, more professionals are entering the field than leaving it, increasing intraprofessional competition (Crain 1989: 25).

conversion.[16] Subjects in this study offer examples of a preference for an objective, scientific approach to problem solving. One dentist referred to an appreciation for the "black and white," "concrete" nature of the PMC approach to management (Hall and Kent 1994: 30–31). The dentist believed in the authenticity of consultants' recommendations because consultants presented them in the form of statistical graphs, a media that appealed to the dentist's "science background" (Hall and Kent 1994: 30). A veterinarian also expressed a preference for the PMCs supposedly scientific approach to management.

> They call it "technology". . . . I didn't realize that management had become so scientific that you would actually call it technology, but that's the word they use. And it certainly gives you an impression that they have everything so codified, and so well defined that there's no art to it at all. Its pure science. . . . Management is easy to do, if you just learn it the right way, their way (Hall and Kent 1995: 14).

Having learned a scientific approach to problem-solving during their formal education, subjects appeared to be relieved that they could apply the same method to practice management (Hall and Kent 1994: 17–18; Hall and Kent 1995: 6, 14).

Seekership. Lofland and Stark (1965: 368) suggest that when problems arise, individuals actively will seek strategies that support their problem-solving preference. Thus, medical professionals with management difficulties who have a scientific problem-solving perspective probably will seek a scientific or rational solution to those problems. The medical professionals in the study offer evidence of seekership, to the extent that they sought outside assistance with their management difficulties, through apparently rational management programs. Regardless of the individual situation, however, the professional presumably must feel some need for management training in order to seek consulting services.

In summary, practice management companies that offer Hubbard's ideology in the form of management techniques mediate initial interaction between medical professionals and Scientology. Because professional education provides little if any practice management skills, professionals may be predisposed to need or want some form of management assistance. By capitalizing on this dearth of management skills and training, Scientology is able to use its preexisting management technology to turn thousands of medical professionals into con-

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[16] Lofland and Stark (1965: 867-868) documented the necessity of converts holding a religious problem-solving perspective prior to their conversions to what we now know was Unification Church. By analogy, I argue that professionals heighten their chances of joining Scientology through a PMC if they value a scientific or rational problem-solving perspective that parallels the PMCs view of management "technology." The scientific/rational perspective that the PMCs emphasize focuses on record-keeping that allows professionals to measure and reward business expansion and punish productivity decline, in a manner similar to Frederick Taylor's Scientific Management (Krahn and Lowe 1998: 213-216).

stituents.[17] If Scientology can increase this initial commitment, then it converts these constituents into adherents[18] of its social movement efforts to "clear the planet."

PRACTICE MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Resource Mobilization

The relationship between Scientology and its PMCs is similar to a recruitment pattern originally described by Bird and Westley (1988). They describe New Religious Movements (like Scientology) as active missionary movements, ever eager to spread their message by direct and particularly by indirect methods (1988: 51). One such indirect method of Scientology recruitment, specifically of medical professionals, is through its practice management training programs.[19]

PMC consulting is an indirect recruitment method because it introduces clients to Scientology through their involvement in managment training. Although PMC executives deny any relationship between Scientology and their companies, several factors indicate strong ties between the organizations (Cartwright 1990: 1, 4; Dexheimer 1991: 12; Koff 1987: 5; Lopez 1993: H1; Witt 1989: 11; Zuziak 1991: 2039). The first indication is that Hubbard's management technology forms the basis of the PMCs' training programs. PMCs obtain the right to use Hubbard's ideas through the World Institute of Scientology Enterprises [WISE].

The purpose of WISE is "getting L. Ron Hubbard's administrative technology broadly disseminated and used in the business world" (Church of Scientology International 1989: 20). Towards this end, WISE licenses individuals and businesses to use Hubbard's administrative technology. WISE markets and promotes programs designed to expand its own membership and the

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[17] Between 1983 and 1992, thirty-five thousand North American health care practitioners took part in Sterling Mangement Systems' basic analysis and consultation services (WISE 1992: 5). In 1988, after a four-year association with Scientology, Singer Consultants had an annual client base of between eight hundred and one thousand medical professionals, with an associated financial intake of approximately eight million dollars (Koff 1987; WISE 1985: 8).

[18] Adherents are individuals who support the social movement ideologically.

[19] Bird and Westley (1988: 51) indicate that the fee-for-service mobilization techniques that these groups utilize have two distinct purposes. They serve both as a method of raising money and as a proselytization tool. The groups offer their services to a largely transient body of clients who have little or no initial ideological commitment to the group. Bird and Westley also note that the groups' initial interest in clients is in obtaining financial resources (1988: 53). Important to realize, however, is that the groups eventually may seek to obtain more involvement from clients. Groups need greater commitment from at least some constituents because "drop-out" rates in these various programs are very high (Bird and Westley 1988: 53). By encouraging constituents to make ideological commitments and become constituent-adherents, social movements such as Scientology assure that individuals involve themselves both ideologically and financially.

dissemination of Scientology doctrines. Thus, the first link between Scientology and its practice management programs is organizational.[20] Medical practitioners who enroll in PMC courses learn the same organizational and management techniques that the Church of Scientology uses (Ochart 1993a 60; Ochart 1993b: 293–295, 303; Hall and Kent 1995: 13, 15).

Even if medical professionals choose not to enroll in training and auditing directly from Scientology, they nonetheless receive exposure to Scientology doctrine and practices. The Modern Management Technology that PMCs use is the same technology offered within Scientology to its own executives (WISE 1983: ii; Hall and Kent 1995: 13,15). Consequently the management companies' training programs mimic those of Scientology in both content and format.[21]

The Oxford Capacity Analysis personality profiles represent an additional tie between Scientology and its PMCs. As previously discussed, PMC consultants administer the profiles to the medicial professionals and their staff early in the consultation process, and refer their clients to Scientology based on the results. One PMC president summarized the referral process in this way: "We do not deal in personal problems, marital problems, or any problems but business problems. . . . If [clients] don't have anybody to help them, we will tell them about Scientology . . ."(quoted in Zuziak 1991: 2040). The CEO of another PMC made a similar statement when he claimed that PMC consultants will direct clients toward Scientology for help with personal problems because they feel it is "the best help around" (quoted in Jakush 1989: 4). In other words, as part of their practice evaluation, the consulting firms utilize a personality profile

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[20] In addition to its stated goal of information dissemination, WISE has additional objectives of a more religious nature. Within WISE publications, the organization describes itself as a "religious fellowship organization" formed "in order to promote and foster [Hubbard's] Administrative Technology in society" (WISE 1992: 1). In an interview with Prosperity magazine, Alan Hollander, president of Hollander Consulting, summarized the relationship between WISE, WISE members, their clients, and the Church of Scientology:

> PROSPERITY: What is your objective as a WISE member?
> HOLLANDER: My objective is to get as much technology into the environment as possible because that is contributing to Clearing the Planet. In fact, our real product here is clients who are winning with L. Ron Hubbard's Technology and reaching for more. We have gotten literally hundreds of people on the lines. In 1986 alone, we got 82 people started on the Bridge. From March 1986 to March 1987 the income to [Scientology] organizations from our clients has been $362,197. My feeling about this is that WISE members like ourselves can have a great impact on Clearing the Planet in terms of dissemination (WISE 1987: 9).

In this case, Alan Hollander described one of the goals of his organization as directing clients into Scientology in an effort to support the movement's goal of "Clearing the Planet." Thus, PMCs operate on behalf of Scientology, mobilizing resources of both money and new members towards its ideological ends.

[21] The similarities in the content and format of courses that both PMCs and Scientology offer reflect the fact that almost without exception, employees and executives of Hollander and Sterling also are practicing Scientologists (Cartwright 1990: 1, 4; Jakush 1989: 7; Koff 1988; Lopez 1993: H1; Ochart 1993b: 193, 263; Witt 1989: 11). At one PMC, raises and promotions depend upon acceptance of and enrollement in Scientology courses, so that even if employees are not Scientologists when they are hired, they may be pressured to become church members (Cartwright 1990: 1).

that almost invariably indicates a need for some form of counseling or therapy. Once they have identified this supposed need in clients, the PMC consultants refer them to the Church of Scientology.

Conversion Model

In their conversion model, Lofland and Stark suggest that the identification of personal problems, which they label "turning points," is an essential element in recruitment into an ideological organization. The theorists note that the effectiveness of turning points in contributing to the conversion process hinges on the timing of the event (Lofland and Stark 1965: 870). Essentially, preconverts who reach turning points in their lives shortly before or concurrently with their encounter with ideological organizations are more likely to convert than are individuals who are not at such significant life-junctures (Lofland and Stark 1965: 870).

In the context of the Lofland and Stark conversion model, Scientology uses the Oxford Capacity Analysis to create or highlight turning points for medical professionals. These turning points involve the "identification" of personal problems that supposedly are hindering business performance. Subsequently Scientology, via its PMCs, offers a convenient solution to these problems. In this way, the organization attempts to develop a "situational contingency," either by emphasizing existing problems or suggesting potential difficulties.

Lofland and Stark (1965: 864) refer to situational contingencies as conditions that arise from "confrontation and interaction" between the potential convert and the ideological organization. The theorists argue that these conditions lead to the successful recruitment of predisposed individuals. Toward this recruitment end, Scientology utilizes the personality profiles to generate the first in a series of situational contingencies that bring the medical professionals closer to ideological conversion.

ENTERING SCIENTOLOGY: BECOMING A CONSTITUENT-ADHERENT

Resource Mobilization Theory

McCarthy and Zald (1977: 1221) suggest that a significant goal of any social movement is to develop constituent-adherents who will both believe in and support the movement (1977: 1221). Because a social movement's primary goal is survival, and it needs resources to achieve this goal, the movement must generate a large pool of committed supporters to provide those necessary resources (McCarthy and Zald 1987: 28). Selective material incentives (such as increased wealth) and social-emotional incentives (such as status, friendship, and self-esteem) that the movement can exchange for donations bind indivi-

duals to an organization, thus ensuring continued involvement and support (Bailis 1974; Gamson 1975; summarized in McCarthy and Zald 1987; 28). Medical professionals become constituent-adherents when they both contribute to Scientology financially as PMC clients and enter the group as members, supporting it ideologically.[22]

Conversion Model

If the professionals accept Scientology's offer of assistance in solving personal problems, then they sign up for counseling and become active members of the social movement. Lofland and Stark identify three additional stages of increasing involvement: increasing *cult affective bonds*, decreasing *extra-cult affective bonds*, and *intensive interaction* with group members.

Cult-Affective Bonds. Lofland and Stark (1965: 871) refer to cult-affective bonds as the "development or presence of some positive, emotional, interpersonal response" that facilitates acceptance of the organization's message.[23] For some subjects, the affective bonds developed with Scientology recruiters or PMC consultants, and for others the bonds developed with Scientology counselors. For one interview subject, the formation of these bonds occurred during discussions with a Scientology recruiter about his personality profile. The medical professional was impressed by the recruiter's ability to identify personal problems in his marriage, and by the recruiter's offer of a solution that fit well with his own scientific approach to problem solving. In addition, Scientology's offer of assistance provided an alternative to psychological counseling, an option that this individual did not wish to consider (Hall and Kent 1994: 27–33).

For another interview subject, the development of cult-affective bonds occurred later in the interaction process, during auditing sessions. This medical professional described auditing as an "incredibly powerful" experience and indicated that it was integral to his continued involvement in the organization (Hall

[22] Prior to purchasing courses directly from Scientology, PMC clients represent isolated constituents of the social movement (McCarthy and Zald 1987: 29). Isolated constituents have no direct involvement with the larger social movement, and are thus tied only tenuously to the organization (1987: 30). Recruiting these isolated constituents directly into the social movements and converting them into constituent-adherents ensures an increased level of solidarity and financial support (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 9, 1987: 29-31). Thus, from a resource mobilization perspective, Scientology utilizes PMCs to locate and obtain potential elite constituent-adherents to help ensure its continued existence.

When medical professionals purchase management consulting from a PMC affiliated with Hubbard's teachings, the PMC forwards a portion of that money to the Scientology social movement. In this stage of involvement, the professional is a constituent of the social movement. If the professionals agree with the results of the personality profile and agree to participate in Scientology counseling or training, then they accept the social movement's ability to assist them in personal issues. In this stage of involvement, they become both constituents and adherents of the movement.

[23] In order for an individual to join a movement, "an affective bond must develop, if it does not already exist" (Lofland and Stark 1965: 871). The development of a positive, interpersonal tie between a prospective member and one or more movement members is the strongest precipitating factor in organization entry (Snow and Phillips 1980: 440).

and Kent 1995: 30). Beyond these two examples, the size of the study makes it difficult to assess whether or not cult-affective bonds are essential to continued involvement with Scientology. Important to note however, is that other researchers have supported Lofland and Stark's suggestion that it is integral to the conversion process (Griel and Rudy 1984: 316; Kox, Meeus, and Hart 1991: 238; Snow and Phillips 1980: 440).

Weak Extra-Cult Affective Bonds. In Lofland and Stark's original study, individuals with strong extra-cult affective bonds did not engage in continued involvement with the ideological organization (1965: 873). This same effect appears in the experiences of a number of subjects in the present study. In other words, in cases where outside interest compete with an individual's intentions regarding conversion, conversion is unlikely to occur.

The families of two of the interview subjects engaged in considerable efforts to withdraw the professionals from Scientology involvement. One professional's spouse prevented him from obtaining financing for Scientology courses by contacting financial institutions and requesting that they delay processing his loan applications (Hall and Kent 1995). To further hinder her husband's financial arrangements, the spouse arranged for a team of ex-Scientology members and an exit-counselor to discuss the group with him (Hall and Kent 1995: 38). These discussions led to the professional's decision to discontinue his Scientology involvement.

Intensive Interaction. The final stage in Lofland and Stark's conversion model is intensive interaction between the recruit and members of the organization. In support of the original formulation of the model, both Snow and Phillips (1980) and Greil and Rudy (1984) found that intensive interaction was essential to cementing the conversion process. Because friends and family of the professionals in the present sample interfered with the conversion process, it is difficult to assess the relative importance of intensive interaction in maintaining member loyalty in Scientology.

Important to note, however, is that Scientology staff members made significant efforts to have the practitioners continue their involvement as soon as possible after agreeing to enter the organization. In some cases, Scientology arranged for staff members to accompany medical professionals into their own homes to ensure that they were making appropriate arrangements for financing and efforts to begin courses (Geary 1994: 11; Hall and Kent 1994: 75). In these cases, the organization appears to have attempted to arrange for circumstances involving intensive interaction between new and established members beyond the physical boundaries of the organization.

CONCLUSION

This article identifies issues that contribute to the social scientific discussion of Scientology, the training of medical professionals, and social movement

theory. Regarding Scientology, the organization's practice management activity in the secular realm has potential implications for its claims to be a religious organization. While some authors conclude that the church of Scientology "is a deviant business" (Passas and Castillo 1992: 110), they nevertheless conclude that it "must remain a deviant business that borrows from science, renews its imaginative jargon, updates its spiritual techniques, and remains a religion" (Passas and Castillo 1992: 115). In a practical sense, however, this conclusion means that a religious body denies its religious connection in order to train medical professionals in secular office practice skills. Moreover, its use of these practice management courses as recruitment efforts suggests deception toward its target population of professionals, who do not know of the religious connection of the programs when they sign up to learn accounting and office skills. New developments in the relationship between Scientology and the American IRS, which included an agreement to dissolve WISE no later than 31 December 1995, may make Scientology's claims regarding the secular nature of its management training programs even more difficult to substantiate.[24]

Medical professionals may find this study interesting, since apparently they do not realize how their deficiency in financial and office management training predisposes them to become converts to an ostensibly religious group. Deficiencies in management training have provided Scientology with an opportunity to identify and fill a market niche for these professionals and at the same time increase its own membership rolls. Ironically, the emphasis in professional schools on scientific training to the exclusion of management training makes these degree-awarding institutions unwitting participants in the eventual recruitment efforts of Scientology (and probably other ideologies that recognize the vulnerabilities of medically trained professionals).

Finally, this analysis contributes to social movement literature in at least two ways. The incorporation of a conversion model in the context of a resource mobilization understanding of recruitment strategies illustrates the benefits of viewing the motives of the potential converts in relation to organizational demands. Likewise, the combined analysis of predisposing factors among potential converts to an ostensible religious movement provides an expanded understanding of a context to conversion and a social psychological dimension to organizational recruitment efforts. And even though Scientology's goals of 'clearing the planet' differ significantly from the more limited personal self-improvement goals of medical professionals, the two coincide in the involvement of professionals in PMCs.

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[24] The agreement between Scientology and the IRS required that Scientology "no later than 31 December 1995, effectuate the dissolution of WISE, Inc. and transfer all of its assets, including but not limited to the Scientology religious marks, to the Inspector General Network [a high level Scientology management structure]" (Department of the Treasury — Internal Revenue Service, 1993). A new variant of the old WISE, Inc., however, now operates under a slightly different name, as indicated by the continued publication of Prosperity magazine (WISE 1997).

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