

= Blown for Good =

Blown for Good : Behind the Iron Curtain of Scientology is a memoir written by Marc Headley , a former Scientologist and Sea Org member , about his life and experiences in the Church of Scientology . It was self @-@ published in the United States on November 5 , 2009 .

= = Background = =

Marc Headley was raised in Los Angeles , California . Headley 's mother was a Scientologist , and she raised him within the church from an early age . He began work as an employee for the church at age 16 . Headley soon after joined the Sea Org and worked at the international headquarters of Scientology in Hemet , California , for 15 years . Headley claims he escaped from the international headquarters of the organization in 2006 . He received the help of police during his escape from the organization .

In Headley v. Church of Scientology International , the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals wrote , " The record overwhelmingly shows that the Headleys joined and voluntarily worked for the [Sea Organization] because they believed that it was the right thing to do , because they enjoyed it , and because they thought that by working they were honoring the commitment that they each made and to which they adhered . " The court also noted that the Headleys had private quarters outside the base , and had access to vehicles and multiple opportunities to leave .

After leaving the organization , Headley wrote about his experiences in Scientology . His writings were published in the media including news magazines , publications on the internet and other websites . In 2008 , Headley was invited to speak in Hamburg , Germany , at a conference discussing abuses within Scientology , alongside actor and former Scientologist Jason Beghe . In 2009 , Headley lived in Los Angeles , California , with his wife and two children , where he opened a business .

= = Contents = =

The book 's title is a reference to the Scientology terms " blow " or " blown , " which describe one who leaves Scientology without prior authorization from the organization .

Headley recounts episodes from his years as a member of the Church of Scientology , most of that time as part of the order called the Sea Organization , or Sea Org . He details his experiences while working hundred @-@ hour weeks at Scientology 's secluded international headquarters known as Gold Base (or " Int Base ") at Gilman Hot Springs , California , about eighty miles southeast of Los Angeles .

The book includes a forward written by former high @-@ ranking Scientology official Mark Rathbun .

= = = Golden Era Productions = = =

Headley worked out of the film @-@ production studio facilities of Scientology from 1989 through 2005 . He held multiple positions while employed by Scientology at Gold Base , mainly focused on the production of video and audio materials to disseminate the message of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard . He helped originate scripts of videos to introduce new members to Scientology methodology . He also supervised large scale Scientology public events presided over by Scientology 's leader David Miscavige . Headley reproduced thousands of copies of audio recordings of speeches by Hubbard .

= = = 2004 Tom Cruise video = = =

The author describes a 2004 event where Tom Cruise was awarded the organization 's Medal of Valor from David Miscavige , the video of which was leaked to the Internet in January 2008 . Initially

, the video intended for the event featured Cruise and other celebrities including Will Smith appearing on camera and praising the actor . Miscavige disapproved and instructed Scientology staff to create a video where Cruise would speak about himself and his views on being a Scientologist . " Dave Miscavige later said that his Tom Cruise video was one of the most important videos that had ever been produced , " writes Headley .

= = = Departure from Scientology = = =

Headley states he gained approval to sell old Scientology materials on eBay to recoup money for the organization ? he was later accused of embezzlement for doing this . In 2005 , when he knew he would be faced with being sent to the organization 's prison @-@ like program the Rehabilitation Project Force , Headley decided to leave . Headley worried that leaving Scientology would mean becoming separated from his wife Claire , to whom he had been married for 13 years , and other family members in accordance with the Scientology practice of disconnection . Headley alleges that left Gold Base on his motorcycle but was followed by Scientology security guards , which resulted in Headley falling off his bike by the side of the road . Riverside County , California police arrived , and they helped Headley safely get further away from the Scientology compound . From there he traveled to his father in Kansas City . He was later reunited with his wife who had also been an employee at Gold Base . Prior to his wife 's departure from Gold Base , she was monitored closely day and night by the organization .

The author credits multiple sources for introducing doubts about his conditions while living at Gold Base . He writes that he listened to The John and Ken Show on KFI , and that their discussion of Scientology allowed him to think more critically during his time at the compound . He says that viewing Conan O 'Brien make fun of Scientology celebrities changed his views on individuals that the organization had only spoken of internally with reverence .

= = Scientology response = =

When Headley and a Danish film crew went to the Gold Base , Headley was confronted by Gold staff , Catherine Fraser , who said Headley 's account of his escape was untrue .

" Marc lived in another place , not even on the property , another place altogether , " Fraser said in one of the [video clips of the incident] . " And that day when I explained that to the sheriff -- the sheriff looked at me and said , ' Oh , you mean he could have left at any time ? ' I said , ' Yes , he could have left at any time and he did . ' "

After reviewing the evidence , the 9th Circuit agreed with the Scientologists that the Headleys lived outside the base , they had many opportunities to leave the Gold staff , and they had no problem leaving on their first try .

= = = Suppressive Person declare = = =

In an interview on The John and Ken Show on KFI , Headley was asked if he experienced retaliation from Scientology for speaking critically about the organization . He said that he had been issued a declaration that he was to be considered a " Suppressive Person " by members of the organization , and explained , " That 's basically the thing that goes out to anyone and everyone who is in Scientology , saying , ' This person is a Suppressive Person , and you can no longer speak to him ever again . ' If you are in Scientology , and you speak to somebody who is a Suppressive Person , you yourself can be declared a Suppressive Person . " Headley said when he left Scientology the organization gave him a " freeloader statement " , a bill for US \$ 62 @, @ 000 , for courses he had received in Scientology . " It 's actually illegal , because they are basically charging me for on @-@ the @-@ job training ? in California you can 't charge somebody for on @-@ the @-@ job training . It 's of no real value , but you don 't know that , when you 're in Scientology . You think , ' Are they going to garnish my wages , are they going to sue me ? ' You don 't know , " said Headley .

= = Reception = =

The book was self @-@ published November 5 , 2009 , and was made available through the author 's website at www.blowntoforgood.com and on Amazon.com. Blown for Good was selected as a finalist in the 2009 " Book of the Year Awards " , by ForeWord Magazine . The Editor in chief of The Village Voice , Tony Ortega , described the book as a " remarkable account " . Ortega noted , " Headley 's story provides a damning account of life working for Scientology ... " He concluded the review by commenting , " Perhaps the best service that Headley provides with Blown for Good is giving non @-@ Scientologists the sense of what it 's really like to work , day in and day out , in such a strange organization , from the lowliest laborer mucking out excrement in a Gold Base pond (Headley says shit was coming out of his ears and pores for days) to what kind of luxuries the celebrities and high @-@ ranking members enjoy . "

On the KFI talk radio program The John and Ken Show , commentators John Kobylt and Ken Chiampou talked about Blown for Good and discussed Scientology . Paul Beaumont , Toni O 'Loughlin and Paul Harris of The Observer commented that Headley 's book , " details ? as others have ? allegations of systematic abuse and bizarre episodes " of experiences in Scientology . They noted , " Headley 's book follows a year in which Scientology has been plagued by unwelcome revelations from high @-@ profile defectors and fresh media investigation into its practices . " Catholic Online associate editor and former Archbishop of the Charismatic Episcopal Church , Randy Sly , characterized Blown for Good as " a bold insider memoir " . Sly reported on criticism of Scientology in the Australian Senate by Senator Nick Xenophon , and commented , " Headley provides vivid accountings of activities within Scientology that confirm the Australian Senator 's concerns . " Sly noted , " A number of comments left on the Amazon.com website were from those who indicated they were ex @-@ Scientologists and confirmed the author 's accounts . " Ian Punnett of Coast to Coast AM commented that the song " We Gotta Get out of This Place " , " certainly would be a theme of several of the chapters of Blown for Good " .

Hamilton Nolan of Gawker described the book 's design as " featuring a dramatic , action @-@ scene @-@ type cover " , and called the work " a new tell @-@ all book " . Star described Blown for Good as an " explosive new book " . Pete Samson of The Sun called the book " a revealing account of goings @-@ on within the church " . The Flemish daily newspaper published in Belgium , De Standaard , noted the book discusses " remarkable experiences " the author underwent as a Scientology staff member . In a 2010 article in New Humanist , Paul Sims noted , " Since its release at the end of last year , Blown for Good has made the kind of impact its author hoped . Having built up an online buzz courtesy of Anonymous , and sold thousands of copies in the US , Headley says he has been receiving letters and emails from Scientologists , many of whom have said the revelations in his book have confirmed their suspicions about the inner workings of the Church . "