

= ScienTOMogy =

ScienTOMogy was a New Zealand @-@ based parody site lampooning actor Tom Cruise 's involvement with Scientology . Initially hosted at the domain name scientomogy.info , the site was created in 2005 in response to the extensive media publicity surrounding Cruise 's appearances on The Oprah Winfrey Show and The Today Show .

ScienTOMogy gained press attention after the site proprietor was contacted by the Church of Scientology with a cease and desist letter , alleging copyright infringement by claiming the word " Scientomogy " was too close to the word " Scientology . " The proprietor initially agreed to relent to the Church 's demands , but then decided to keep the site after consulting with attorneys . Internet traffic to the site later increased dramatically as a result of the media attention surrounding the Church of Scientology 's allegations of copyright infringement .

= = Development = =

New Zealand webmaster Glen Stollery created scientomogy.info in July 2005 , after Tom Cruise appeared on The Today Show in an interview speaking about " the dangers of prescription drugs , " and following the incident where he jumped the couch over his love for Katie Holmes during an interview on The Oprah Winfrey Show . The site 's stated goal was " exposing Tom Cruise 's moronic behavior in his relentless crusade to promote the Church of Scientology . "

The site was mainly used to store parody and satire material , including depictions of Cruise and Holmes in straight jackets , as well as a video showing Cruise shooting lightning at Oprah Winfrey . To clarify its position as a parody site , ScienTOMogy contained a disclaimer , which it requested that the reader " understand and agree to .. before continuing . " The site 's disclaimer stated : " Obviously www.scienTOMogy.info has ABSOLUTELY NO connection whatsoever with the Church of Scientology , it ? s [sic] affiliated organizations or , needless @-@ to @-@ say , Tom Cruise . It is designed for commentary and criticism within the limits of Free Speech . All content should be treated as opinion and all trademarks / copyrighted material herein are owned by their respective trademark owners . The Scientology site is here . Thank you . You may continue .. " On the site , a fake Cruise claims that the Church of Scientology should refer to itself as " ScienTOMogy " instead of Scientology , in order to clear up public relations problems . The parody version of Cruise states " It 's kind of like the word gummy bears . Bears by themselves are scary , but if you just add the word gummy to it , it now becomes a fun , enjoyable treat . "

= = Church of Scientology 's response = =

The Web site drew media attention when the Church of Scientology 's attorneys Moxon & Kobrin contacted Stollery , claiming the ScienTOMogy domain name was an infringement of their trademark , despite being a different word by one letter . In September 2005 , the Church of Scientology issued a cease and desist order to Stollery demanding he shut down the site and transfer ownership to the Church , threatening him with a \$ 100 @,@ 000 lawsuit . The Church 's law firm stated that " ScienTOMogy " would cause a likelihood of confusion with " Scientology , " violating the Lanham Act , 15 U.S.C. 1125 (a) . The Church of Scientology 's letter stated : " You are hereby on notice that the registration and use of this domain name in this fashion has caused your name to be falsely associated with our client ? s registered mark , SCIENTOLOGY .. The fact that you have changed one letter .. does not protect you from trademark infringement . " Helena Kobrin , a lawyer for the Church of Scientology , was quoted as saying : " You can 't use somebody 's trademark , regardless of what you 're saying , if you haven 't been given permission . "

The site responded with a statement : " The site is purely satirical and is for entertainment . It contains no fact nor claims to do so . The site clearly states in its header , ' This site has absolutely no connection whatsoever with the Church of Scientology , it 's affiliated organisations or , needless to say , Tom Cruise ' . " Stollery originally relented and agreed to change the domain name to " passionofcruise.info " on October 13 , 2005 , which E ! News took to be a parody of the film The

Passion of the Christ .

After consulting with his lawyers in October 2005 , Stollery responded to the Church with a far more aggressive stance . Now believing the accusation to be completely frivolous , Stollery publicly refused , challenging the Church with : " I 'm keeping my domain , see you in court . " Again in an interview with ONE News , Stollery reiterated that he was going to retain rights to " ScienTOMogy " , and not transfer the URL to the Church of Scientology , as they had requested . After the media attention , Stollery said he began to receive " annoying calls " from local Scientologists . " The first few I was stupid enough to answer , but now they just call and call and call . When I did speak to ' a church member here in Auckland ' he kept insisting over and over that we meet to talk about my ' vendetta ' with the church . "

= = Aftermath = =

The threats gave the Web site a cult following of its own , taking its normal traffic from one hundred hits per day to one million in a matter of hours . The Wall Street Journal carried reports commenting on the irony of the situation , noting the site 's message that the press exposure due to the threats from the Church of Scientology had increased its traffic over tenfold . Mel Gibson has not raised objections to use of the parody term " PassionofCruise " . E ! News reported that though Stollery had originally agreed to take down the site , it was still running and accessible as of July 2006 , when the United Nations ' World Intellectual Property Organization awarded Cruise rights to the domain name " TomCruise.com " over claims of a cybersquatter .

In addition to hosting the original cease and desist letter , the Berkman Center for Internet & Society also gives legal commentary on various issues pertaining to the " ScienTOMogy " controversy at a page provided by the organization Chilling Effects . They discuss " trademark tarnishment " , which may occur if a non @-@ owner of a trademark uses the work in an " activity that is likely to offend the average person . " However , the page also notes that the tarnishment would be non @-@ actionable if the usage was non @-@ commercial or parody . The Church of Scientology has not since filed a lawsuit or opened litigation on " Scientomogy , " though at present the site scientomogy.info was inactive . Internet Archive 's Wayback Machine last version of the site is from July 8 , 2007 .