

# \$cientology: Church of the Holy Censor

One of Scientology's preferred sayings is "Think for yourself". Why, then, does Scientology censor its own members?

It all started on March 13th 1998, at the L. Ron Hubbard birthday celebration in Los Angeles. Mark Ingber, a Church of Scientology official, announced that Scientologists would be given an opportunity to sell Scientology books and recruit for Scientology through nearly-identical promotional websites (getting 10% of the money that these recruits end up spending in Scientology, but that's another story). To put up one of these sites, a Scientologist has to sign a contract. Here's a short excerpt from that contract:

"If you wish to use this authorization regarding the Marks and the Works, you must:

...

(6) agree to use the specific Internet Filter Program that CSI [Church of Scientology International Incorporated] has provided to you which allows you freedom to view other sites on Dianetics, Scientology or its principals without threat of accessing sites deemed to be using the Marks or Works in an unauthorized fashion or deemed to be improper or discreditable to the Scientology religion;"

"Deemed improper or discreditable", eh? Boy, aren't Scientologists lucky to have someone there to decide for them what facts about their religion they can and cannot see. If they didn't use this filter, they might find out about the suspicious deaths in Scientology and the uncomplimentary things that judges have said about Scientology. Can't have Scientologists finding out the ugly facts behind Scientology, can they? So, Scientology tries, through this internet filter, to prevent its members from reading negative information about Scientology on the internet.

This internet filter does 4 things to words and websites that Scientology doesn't like:

The filter blocks a list of websites. Anyone with the filter installed can't access these websites, AT ALL. Examples of blocked sites include: <http://www.xenu.net>, <http://www.enttheta.net>, <http://www.lermanet.com>, all websites containing information the "Church" of Scientology doesn't want its members to see.

The filter blocks a list of newsgroups. Anyone with the filter installed can't access these newsgroups, AT ALL. Some of these blocked newsgroups include: [alt.religion.scientology](mailto:alt.religion.scientology), [alt.support.ex-cult](mailto:alt.support.ex-cult). Since scientology claims it's not a cult, why would it need to block an ex-cult newsgroup?

The filter blocks a list of words, that will be removed from a web page or email message. Some words blocked lead to odd combinations: NOTs and Anima are blocked, so "I'm not sure that animal is healthy" gets changed to "I'm ure that l is healthy". Other words blocked are peoples' names: Deana Holmes (a critic of Scientology), Bob Minton (another critic of Scientology, who appeared recently on NBC's Dateline). Why does Scientology try to prevent its members from reading about these people? What does Scientology have to hide?

The filter has another list of words, that will stop an internet page from loading, or kick a user from an IRC channel (remove him from the discussion). If the filtered computer sees one of these words, the computer will stop receiving data through the present connection. These words include: Enttheta (refers to <http://www.enttheta.net>), xenu, Fishman Affidavit, Bare Faced Messiah (a critical book on Scientology, in the Books on the Net section at <http://www.xenu.net>).

These words and websites are only some of the terms blocked by the Scientology internet filter. The whole list can be found at: <http://www.taniwha.com/crack.list.html>

Some information sources, for further reading:

Operation Clambake: <http://www.xenu.net> (Lots of information!)

Canadian Critical Scientology Information: <http://xenu.ca>

Occupied Clearwater: <http://www.xenu-city.net>

Deaths in Scientology: [www.b-org.demon.nl](http://www.b-org.demon.nl)

Church of Scientology Censors Net Access for Members: <http://www.xenu.net/archive/events/censorship/>