

Since "Dianetics" became a national craze, Americans are asking:

Can we doctor our



In dianetics "audit," Eleanor Dove writhes as forgotten memories surge from subconscious "reactive" mind.

..but psychiatrists think there may be danger in dianetics



He started "Dianetics"...

● L. Ron Hubbard (above) is the man behind the new mental health craze, "dianetics." He is also the father of the world's first "dianetics baby," an infant named Alexis Valerie who was carefully shielded during the pre-natal period from any kind of loud noise, bump or parental talk lest this produce an "engram" (see story). Result: the baby talked at three months, crawled at four, and is free from phobias.

THERE'S BEEN NOTHING like it since Canasta, Aimee McPherson, and the Pyramid Clubs.

It's the new "science"—some call it cult—of dianetics, called by its founder and major prophet, L. (for Lafayette) Ron Hubbard, 39, "the most clearly presented method of psychotherapy and self-improvement ever invented."

Not one to court undue modesty, Hubbard flatly compares the creation of dianetics to the discovery of fire and the wheel.

Hubbard's crusade started last May with the publication of a 452-page book (now known to initiate as "The Book") called "Dianetics, the Modern Science of Mental Health" which he claims to have written in three weeks at Bay Head, N.J.

Since then dianetics has spread like a brainwave. "The Book" has sold 85,000 copies and stands fourth on the best-seller lists. The dianetics movement has

established headquarters in Los Angeles, reached mid-western college campuses and small-town groups, set up an outpost ("Hubbard Foundation") in Ellizabeth, N.J., and carved out a beachhead among New York's upper East Side intelligentsia.

Like Coué's "better and better every day" philosophy, and the "science" of phrenology (skull-bumps), dianetics seems here to stay. *Why?*

Partly, perhaps, because dianetics claims cures of psychosomatic (mental-physical) ills.

Some Dianetics "Case Reports"

ONE MAN reported he had tried dianetic treatment on a friend who had had bursts of years: "Why, after a session, he played 18 holes of golf the next day!"

Other reports are even more impressive. Sonya Bianchi, a favorite student of founder Hubbard, and

minds at home?

a winsome graduate student at Wellesley College, made this report to 6,000 dianetics enthusiasts in Los Angeles: "I had violent sinus trouble. I also had a strange and embarrassing allergy to fresh paint—for days after I came in contact with it I had a painful itching in my eyebrows. Both conditions have cleared up, and I feel like a million dollars." End of Miss Bianchi's report.

More usual is the experience of a young California couple, Larry and Thea Van Runkele, who lately have been parking their baby with Thea's mother and settling down (see pictures) to three hours of what dianetics fans call "auditing."

"Larry was neurotic and spending money on psycho-analysis," said Thea. "I had painful hives and was depressed. Both of us are much better after fifty hours. We audit each other."

Adds Thea's mother: "Somehow, she's much better. No more depression."

So far, the "healing miracles" of dianetics have failed to attract across-the-board approval from the medical and psychiatric professions. True, some representatives of both groups have climbed over the tailboard of Hubbard's bandwagon. Others, however, eye its progress with a markedly fishy stare, partly because its methods, in certain types of mental cases, could cause definite harm. "Dianetics is like trying to teach music in six easy lessons," said one university psychologist recently. "It'll be popular—until some other new scheme comes along."

How Dianetics Works

TO UNDERSTAND DIANETICS, you must get a firm grip on orange-haired Mr. Hubbard's geography of the human mind.

Your mind, he insists, has two parts: an analytical, or conscious mind; and a reactive, or subconscious mind.

Of these, your reactive, subconscious (Hubbard avoids the word) mind is the more important. Throughout life it collects all sorts of painful experiences, and instead of forgetting them stores them much as a squirrel hordes a nut. Trouble is, the nut (which Hubbard officially calls an "engram") can have a very bad effect on your body. The bursitis mentioned, by his reasoning, was evidently an "engram" on the rampage. Dianetics' job is to purge the mind of its trouble-making engrams.

Not easy—but absolutely possible, says Hubbard.

You simply lie down, toss your shoes off: make yourself comfortable, and go into a *reverie*. Beside you is an auditor, who may be a friend or a professional, but who is always well versed in "The Book."

You let your mind slide back on its *time track*—back to youth, to boyhood or girlhood, to childhood, finally to the time when you were a baby. *And ultimately you may get all the way back to the prenatal state, where you can actually remember and repeat (says Hubbard) things your parents said before you were born!* (Sample: "I hope it'll be a boy.")

Now as you think back, you release "engrams"—those buried memories of unpleasantness which

have been hoarded in your reactive mind for goodness knows how many years.

As you reveal these engrams, as you tell them aloud to your auditor, *you deprive them of their strength over you!* You're freed of the engram incubus—your bursitis is gone, your eyebrows don't itch, you get over that depressed feeling!

How You Get to Be a "Clear"

WHEN YOU START OUT in dianetic treatment, you're known as a "pre-release" (of your engrams), or a "pre-clear" (a *clear* is one whose engrams have been entirely purged). Later, if your time-track doesn't have a trestle washed out, you become a *release*, which means that engrams no longer get in your hair. To a *clear*, "full memory exists throughout the lifetime, with the additional bonus that he has photographic recall in color, motion, sound, etc., as well as optimum computational ability." Not more than 50 Americans are "clears," Hubbard says.

► "Dianetic treatments" are now given in many U.S. cities. Some of them are given by the "group method," in which enthusiasts sit together and listen to the pre-natal and other recollections of one of their number stretched on a couch.

► More frequent are private sessions (at \$25 per hour if a professional auditor is engaged) in which the "pre-release" scampers down his time-track in surroundings used by any good psychiatrist.

► Unavoidably, perhaps, the informality of dianetics has led some critics to suggest that its popularity rests largely on its social possibilities.

► After all, it has been pointed out, an auditor having only a nodding acquaintance with a patient becomes rather well acquainted after a journey back along the time-track.

► Some followers of Hubbard have already faced this problem. "At our club," reported one woman, "any one can apply to the secretary for an 'auditor' of either sex to arrange sessions at home. By its very nature, dianetics, and its probe into the sexual background could lead to abuse. The very intimacy of the tête-à-tête could lead to a scandal, and Hubbard would be ruined. We will have to check the backgrounds of everyone who joins the club."

Shows Demand for Better Mental Care

WHO CAN YET SAY whether dianetics and all its claims ("You will not be a god, but you will be a superman") will prove to be a contribution to the field of mental health, or merely another fad like phrenology and the eating of live goldfish?

Hubbard is insistent, and the medical profession has yet to pass judgment. In the circumstances, perhaps one conclusion is justified: that dianetics, in providing a "poor man's psychiatry," has demonstrated the craving of many Americans for improved mental care.

Hubbard may yet drive home the desperate need for inexpensive and competent agencies for mental health. If this happens, the engram will have served a useful, not to say noble, purpose.

Larry Van Runkele guides his wife, Thea, back along her "time track."



DURING two-hour dianetics "audit" professional "auditor" puts Thea in "reverie"



... she starts back to childhood, recalls embarrassing case of stage-fright.



Husband Larry takes over, urges her back to "basic basic" or pre-natal memories.



Finally Larry releases her from "reverie." She's dizzy at first, later feels better.