

Newsweek

MICHAEL JORDAN
Crumbling Man

Could Dinosaurs Return?

Behind 'Jurassic Park'—
The Science of Cloning



-003495-

Scientology in the Schools

Is L. Ron Hubbard's morals text harmless?

BY KENNETH L. WOODWARD
AND CHARLES FLEMING

When Carol Burgeson received a copy of "The Way to Happiness" in the mail 18 months ago, she read it through and decided it was the perfect non-religious vehicle for teaching moral values to her senior students at Thornton Township High School in Harvey, Ill. So Burgeson ordered more free copies of the book by L. Ron Hubbard and used them to stimulate discussions in her classes. "It seemed so harmless," she says. "Brush your teeth, do your work, don't be tardy—what's wrong with that?"

Nothing. But she was more than a little surprised to discover that the late Hubbard, who is identified in the pamphlets by name only, was the founder of the Church of Scientology, and that the pamphlets are distributed by a foundation tied closely to his controversial religion. She's not alone. With little fanfare, Hubbard's text has found its way into the nation's schools. According to the Scientologists, 8,300 public-school teachers and administrators have used the morality text since it was first published in 1981. Altogether, church officials estimate, 6.8 million pupils in 7,000 U.S. schools have studied Hubbard's moral principles; internationally, more than 34 million copies in 17 different translations have been distributed—sometimes, say Scientologists, by major corporations. "That book," says the Rev. Heber Jentzsch, president of the Church of Scientology International, "has probably had more popularity than anything Mr. Hubbard has written."

The need for books on values has long been recognized by public-school educators. Strapped for cash and under pressure from parents to deliver a values-oriented education, many teachers and administrators welcome any text that promises—as Hubbard's does—to deliver sound moral principles on a "nonreligious" basis. But when NEWSWEEK checked with public-school educators who received the text, some said that they had been misled. In Brooklyn, N.Y., Lawrence Herstik, principal of PS 238, initially welcomed "The Way to Happiness" as "a values-oriented book about righteousness and peace." But he stopped using the text after he discerned "an undercurrent of a religious nature." In Bellflower, Calif., Jeanie Cash, principal of the Frank E. Woodruff Elementary School,

ordered copies of the Hubbard book but refused to put them into her classrooms when she discovered that they came from the Church of Scientology. "They sent a brochure saying it was a self-esteem program," says Cash. "I feel that I was deceived. We feel very strongly about the separation of church and state."

lishing house, and promoted through The Way to Happiness Foundation, one of several independent corporations designed to propagate Hubbard's thought.

All of these putatively "secular" organizations are coordinated by the Association for Better Living and Education (ABLE), which is an organ of the church. The "Way to Happiness" book is itself part of Hubbard's extensive philosophical and religious writings, which for Scientologists, says Jentzsch, "are the same as the Bible is for Christians and the Koran is for Muslims." What makes "The Way" acceptable for public-school use, Jentzsch argues, is that students who read the book do not have to follow Hubbard's moral

1. TAKE CARE OF YOUR-
SELF 2. BE TEMPER-
ATE 3. DON'T BE PRO-
MISCUOUS 4. LOVE AND
HELP CHILDREN 5.
HONOR AND HELP YOUR
PARENTS 6. SET A GOOD
EXAMPLE 7. SEEK TO

Since "The Way to Happiness" claims that it is "not part of any church doctrine," Scientology officials insist that its use by public schools poses no problems. Hubbard wrote it in 1980, they report, the year the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that public schools in Kentucky could not display the Ten Commandments in the classroom. Like Scientology itself, says president Jentzsch, the book merely teaches "common sense." However, the volume is published by Bridge Publications, the church's own pub-

'Way to Happiness':
Hubbard's
'secular'
text

principles, while members of the Church of Scientology must.

On the surface, there is little in the book that would trouble any educator who believes in cleanliness, honesty, integrity and tolerance. Among Hubbard's 21 moral principles is this curiously relaxed restatement of the golden rule: "Try not to do things to others that you would not like them to do to you."

Martyrs for Multiculturalism

Courses that students at UCLA might die for

But Hubbard's catechism is also studded with jarring axioms. It declares, for example, that "the way to happiness does not include murdering your friends, your family or yourself being murdered."

More important, anyone familiar with Scientology will find that the text uses key words and concepts taken directly from Scientology's religious lexicon. For instance, Scientology teaches that the fundamental point of life is "survival," and that only those who become the "cause" of their own actions can be truly happy. This is also a major theme of "The Way to Happiness." More significant, Scientology teaches that the truth is "what is true for you." This relativistic view is repeated with emphasis in the book. On the other hand, the text is silent about most of Scientology's central tenets: for example, its belief that people suffer from evil deeds done in past lives that the church's ministers can correct through expensive counseling courses, and its adamant opposition to psychiatry.

Front group? Critics of Scientology, including some former officials, argue that "The Way to Happiness" is primarily a recruiting tool for the church. According to Vicki Aznaran, who once served as inspector general of the Religious Technology Center, the church's highest ecclesiastical organization, The Way to Happiness Foundation is "a front group to get people into Scientology" and the book is designed "to make Scientology palatable to the masses." Another former church member, Gerald Armstrong, claims that Hubbard wanted "rich Scientologists to buy huge quantities of this book for distribution. He wanted to go down in history as a scientist or a philosopher or both." Both Aznaran, who runs a private detective agency in Dallas, and Armstrong, who works for an anti-Scientologist attorney in San Francisco, are currently locked in prolonged and bitter litigation with the church over a variety of claims.

Church officials strongly deny that "The Way to Happiness" is a lure to attract potential converts. Still, the church is anxious to broaden its appeal by promoting Hubbard's various "technologies" for combating drugs, reforming criminals, teaching morality and learning how to study—and doing it through its sundry satellites: Narconon, Criminon, Applied Scholastics and The Way to Happiness Foundation. The church's encyclopedic reference text, "What Is Scientology?," claims that 23 corporate giants have used Hubbard's study technology. Yet a check of three of them—Mobil Oil, General Motors and Lancôme—brought denials of any corporate involvement with the church. But if the nation's public schools are any measure, Hubbard's tracts will continue to turn up in the most surprising places. ■

For 20 years, the University of California, Los Angeles, has offered courses about Chicano culture and history. But last April, on the eve of the funeral of Cesar Chavez, the farm workers' union leader, officials announced that they would not create a special department devoted to Chicano studies—instead they pledged to im-

content themselves with interdisciplinary majors taught by professors from traditional academic departments. That arrangement is unsatisfactory, say the demonstrators, because faculty members have little time or encouragement to concentrate on ethnic studies. Their solution: full academic status for Chicano studies. "We cannot continue to the next necessary step without departments," says Luis Torres, an English- and Chicano-studies professor at the University of Southern Colorado who also heads the National Association of Chicano Studies. (About 17 percent of UCLA's 23,000 students are Chicano; many have not joined the campus demonstrations.)

UCLA administrators insist that a field like Chicano studies—touching on history, sociology, literature, feminism and other disciplines—is best left as an interdisciplinary program. That structure encourages the flow of ideas among Chicano-studies faculty and other specialists. Creating separate departments, says UCLA Provost Herbert Morris, encourages a "Balkanization" that the university wants to avoid. "We need the ethnic perspectives to pervade all the departments," says Morris, who does agree that the Chicano program needed improvement.

Chancellor Charles E. Young offered to take several important steps to bolster the Chicano-studies program. First, all ethnic- and gender-studies programs would be exempt from funding cuts for two years—a critical gesture because the UC system is strapped for cash. Second, new faculty would be appointed jointly to Chicano studies and an existing department—history, say, or languages. Also, Young insists that this year's decision need not be the final one. He suggests that the idea of a full-fledged department can be re-examined in a few years. Seeking an end to the demonstrations last week, university officials offered even more funding and more faculty for the program. So far, the protesters have rejected his offers—as well as food. In a state where minorities now account for nearly half of the student body at some public universities—and sometimes more—the bitter conflict at UCLA will not be the last.

CONNIE LESLIE with ANDREW MURR at UCLA



LESTER SLOAN—NEWSWEEK

A fight to the death: Protesters at UCLA

prove the existing program. Since then, the campus has reverted to '60s-style protests. Students—mostly Chicanos—took over a faculty center, then trashed it. City police arrested 99 demonstrators. And now, on the lawn outside the administration building, nine demonstrators have taken a page from the Chavez manual, pledging to fast until a department is created—or they die.

Is this a cause worth dying for? "We are risking our lives to save lives," says hunger striker Jorge Mancillas, assistant professor of biology at UCLA's medical school. More academic attention, he thinks, will eventually pay off in a more prosperous, stronger Chicano community. But UCLA does not have separate departments for any special-interest group. Asians, blacks and women have all had to