

By: April 2008, Entertainment News Editor

Former Scientology Member Claims the Cult Is a "Gossip Factory"

Veteran TV actor Jason Beghe is speaking out against the cult to which he dedicated 12 years of his life

Scientology is presumably one of the planet's most controversial cults, and over the past months, its glamorous facade came under heavy attack from both the outside and high-profile former members of the organization, who spoke out against the self-proclaimed church's alleged abuses. The latest such example is TV veteran Jason Beghe, whom we've all seen in a string of successful TV shows like *Melrose Place*, *Criminal Minds*, *Picket Fences*, *Chicago Hope*, *JAG*, *Veronica Mars* and *Numbers*. Beghe is a former Scientologist who is now speaking against Tom Cruise's religion and accusing the Church of Scientology of being "destructive", a "rip off" and a "gossip factory". Beghe - who starred in several Scientology promotional clips himself - is the first celebrity insider to sit down and publicly talk about his experiences after leaving the group. He recorded an interview with two of the cult's best-known critics, and used strong words to give his side of the story. Beghe spent about 12 years being a Scientologist, and left the church seven months ago due to a series of personal frustrations. Prior to that, he was one of the cult's favorite success stories. "I was [David] Miscavige's favorite boy," he claims in an interview with *Village Voice*. Among his most shocking claims is the fact that recruiting celebrities was one of the cult's major concerns, but that once the unsuspecting new recruits are brought in, their "auditing sessions" (which the cult claims can help individuals "rid themselves of unwanted spiritual conditions and increase awareness and ability") are recorded by hidden cameras. "Not one auditing session - which are supposed to be private - is not recorded on film," Beghe claims, especially at the Scientology Celebrity Center in Los Angeles. "Will Smith is supposedly dabbling in Scientology. Let Will Smith know that his s**t was f***ing recorded. And tell him to look them in the eye and see if he believes it when they deny it. Everything's supposed to be confidential. But all they do is chat about it," he adds. "I did movies for them. I remember asking, who do we cast in this thing? How about this dude? No, he's been cheating on his wife," he claims he was told in reply. "It's just a gossip factory. And I'm not talking about auditors. All over the place. The celebrities don't know that their private troubles are gossiped about by Scientology employees," he reveals. For the moment, only a three minute preview of the whole interview was released on the Internet, but stay tuned and we'll follow up on this story and keep you up to date.