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## L. Ron Hubbard's wife testifies to 'mental rape'

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LOS ANGELES—The wife of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard testified in Superior Court here Monday that a 37-year-old California man stole thousands of sensitive documents which belong to her and the Clearwater-based sect.

Mary Sue Hubbard also testified she has been "mentally raped" knowing that others have seen the papers.

Mrs. Hubbard, wife of the reclusive Scientology founder and science-fiction author, said Gerald Armstrong, a former Scientologist and sect archi-

vist, has no right to the documents. She also testified Armstrong's attorney, Boston lawyer Michael Flynn, is using the court-sealed papers "across the whole United States to drum up business and destroy my religion."

The non-jury trial centers on Mrs. Hubbard's contention that Armstrong stole more than 20 boxes of documents, papers and photographs when he left the sect in December 1981. She is asking for their return and unspecified damages.

A Scientologist from 1969 to 1981, Armstrong said he fled the organization when he became suspicious of many of Hubbard's claims because of informa-

tion in the documents.

Armstrong had been appointed as a sect archivist to aid in the production of a biography of Hubbard.

The 14,000 documents, sealed by the courts since 1982, include letters from Hubbard to his various wives and family members, photographs, an unpublished book manuscript "and just oodles of stuff," Mrs. Hubbard testified.

Yet Flynn contends the documents can prove Hubbard systematically victimized tens of thousands of Scientologist by misrepresenting himself

(Please see \* TRIAL, next page)



Mary Sue Hubbard testified she was 'mentally raped' knowing others have seen thousands of sensitive document she says were stolen.

# \* Trial

(from page 1A)

and his background in a scheme to defraud them of their money.

Although the courts sealed the documents, to a great extent information reportedly contained in the sect's papers already has been made public through allegations in court documents.

In depositions filed by Armstrong, the former church official claims that "materials and documents collected by (him) ... reveal a consistent pattern of fraud perpetrated by Hubbard through his agent, the plaintiff, upon members of the Church of Scientology and the public at large."

In a countersuit Armstrong filed against the sect, he states, "It was false and fraudulently represented to me ... that Hubbard had served four years in actual combat ... and was crippled and blinded in World War II but healed himself completely through Dianetic auditing."

Armstrong says that claim is just one of many falsehoods Hubbard has perpetrated to further his fraud.

"A major factor in my leaving the church was uncovering the thousands of misrepresentations about Hubbard made by Hubbard," Armstrong told the *Clearwater Sun*.

"The man and much of what he says is fraudulent," he said. "He is a corrupt, cowardly old man and (if) he is its (Scientology's) finest example, then that proves conclusively it doesn't work."

Mrs. Hubbard's attorney, Barrett Litt, said the sect had contracted with freelance writer Omar Garrison to pen a biography of Hubbard. Armstrong, an archivist, was responsible for gathering documents from around the world pertaining to Hubbard.

Litt accused Armstrong of violating his "sacred trusts" to protect the materials for the sect and of giving them to Flynn, who represents more than 20 persons in lawsuits against the sect.

Flynn was instrumental in organizing and orchestrating the weakling Clearwater City Commission hearings two years ago into the alleged criminal activities of the Church of Scientology, which made Clearwater its headquarters in 1975.

Mrs. Hubbard, pale after spending one year in prison on a federal conviction for conspiracy against the United States government, testified in slow, halting sentences and often contradicted herself.

On Monday she testified that her husband had not been seen publicly since he went into seclusion in late 1979. She later testified he went into hiding in February 1980. But in response to a question posed by Flynn based on one of the sealed documents, she amended her answer to say he actually disappeared in January 1980.

She said she had not seen him since, "but I've written him personal letters ... but I don't believe he's getting them."

She said he hasn't written her back.

Although it was clear the lawyers for Mrs. Hubbard and Armstrong dislike each other, there were moments of levity in the packed courtroom.

Since the documents are sealed, lawyers were unable to talk about them in specific terms and each document was given a number to be referred to. Although the specific nature of the documents was unknown, peals of laughter erupted when Mrs. Hubbard said she was "mentally raped" and "emotionally distressed" by document "4-L."

When asked by a reporter why Hubbard, a prolific writer, would have contracted to have his biography written, sect spokesman Sandy Block said, "He just hasn't the time. It's my understanding that he's really not even interested in having it done."

That statement seemed to contradict Mrs. Hubbard's testimony that her husband had an attorney to represent him in negotiations to have the book written. She also said her husband had final approval on the written text of the book.

Mrs. Hubbard is expected to continue testifying through Wednesday, and Flynn said he may put a witness on the stand who has information on Hubbard's location and can expound upon Armstrong's claims. The trial is expected to last another week.