

## Acclaimed director sets sights on Scientology



By Andrew Stewart  
STAFF WRITER

Scientology's lawyers and the late Isaac Hayes' devotion to Xenu led to the early departure of the iconic character "Chef" from the television show "South Park" in a gnarly and gruesome death at the hands of a bear and mountain lion.

Finally, a film director not affiliated with the belief system will take a satirical crack at a thinly veiled Scientology, exploring the extremely odd stuff they believe.

The acclaimed director of instant classics such as "Boogie Nights" and "There Will Be Blood," Paul Thomas Anderson, finally has the funds to tackle the elephant on Hollywood's back — Scientology.

Anderson's film, tentatively titled "The Master," has received from a private benefactor the necessary \$35 million — a price that Universal Pictures "balked at," according to NYMag.com.

Since Scientology has played such a crucial role in the success of many actors, actresses and directors in Hollywood, very few people that make their living in the movies have been willing to set their sights on exposing the weirdness that is Scientology.

There are troubling accounts of

Scientology "essentially conscripting members into slave labor to build Tom Cruise an airport hangar, a luxury SUV, and a trailer-style bus where Katie Homes could undergo purification rituals — all 'for the betterment of mankind,'" according to AVClub.com, an online pop-culture magazine.

However, Scientologists have the right to fight how their beliefs are represented in the public eye, but other, actual mainstream religions, such as Judaism and Islam, have not had much luck either.

Jewish people did not appreciate their portrayal in "The Passion of the Christ" by director Mel Gibson, whose racist, misogynistic rants are best never heard in the first place.

"South Park" also courted controversy when the show featured the Prophet Mohammed in an incredibly censored episode that, nonetheless, led radical Islamists to post pictures and the address of the mansion "South Park" creators Matt Stone and Trey Parker share.

Scientologists rallying against the show probably led to the many episodes "South Park" aired making fun of the cult. And yes, Scientology is a cult. The public-at-large did not know of the truly insane and cultish views of Scientology hold until they were aired on the Comedy Central show.

A recent article in The New Yorker about Oscar-winning director and producer of "The Facts of Life" Paul Haggis maintains that he did not know about lizard god Xenu and the

other things in the religion that really show Scientology was created by a science fiction writer when he entered it.

Haggis just thought that Scientology was a cool outsider philosophy for a better life that would also help him move up in Hollywood circles.

Then Haggis moved up the "levels of study" to Operating Thetan III, which is when they unleash in a flurry the odd beliefs that Scientology creator L. Ron Hubbard dreamed up when he was in the Navy.

Haggis defected because he could no longer take Scientology's toxic stance on homosexuality. There are rumors that a major purpose of Scientology for John Travolta and Tom Cruise, especially, is to cover up their homosexuality. It seems their careers would be fine if they came out of the closet, though.

It was stated best on AVClub.com when they jokingly claimed that, "revelations of the various facets of Scientology's far-reaching plan to install Suri Cruise as our future-and-eternal despot have already forced its leaders to fight back."

Scientologists' many efforts to dissuade anyone from discussing the religion have made it a more enticing target for satire. Scientology's disturbing practices involving alleged slave labor and the high monetary price to move up the ranks make it hard to believe Scientology is anything but a cult that warrants investigation to ensure no one drinks the Kool-Aid to meet Xenu sooner.

## Planned Parenthood fights for funding



By Julia Solheim  
STAFF WRITER

Thanks to a recently passed amendment, the House of Representatives has their hands in our reproductive organs.

On Feb. 18, the U.S. House of Representatives passed an amendment to remove funding to Planned Parenthood and the government-run Title X program, both of which provide reproductive health care services to low-income people.

According to ABC News, the measure, if passed by the Senate, would eradicate close to \$330 million from Planned Parenthood and Title X funding by the end of September. This money would normally go to Planned Parenthood and Title X to provide family planning, birth control, and medical services such as cancer screenings and HIV testing.

Rep. Jackie Speier from California responded to comments made during the debate against abortion funding by declaring, "that procedure that you just talked about was a procedure that I endured. I lost a baby."

"There is a vendetta against Planned Parenthood," Speier said. "For you to stand on this floor and to suggest, as you have, that somehow this is a procedure that is either welcomed or done cavalierly or done without any thought is preposterous ... Planned Parenthood has a right to offer abortions. Last time I checked, abortions were legal in this country."

So what does this amendment mean for those who rely on these crucial services?

"Your vote was not only against those who seek care at Planned Parenthood health centers," reads "An Open Letter to Congress" posted on the Planned Parenthood website; "but against every one of us who has ever sought care there, and against every one of us who knows that when we are healthy, when we are in charge of our lives, we thrive."

The consequences of eliminating funding for both Title X and Planned Parenthood services — which according to The Washington Post provides health care to a combined 8 million women each year — could be devastating. Just how devastating was documented in a survey conducted by the Guttmacher Institute, in which six in 10 clients view family planning services — such as Planned Parenthood — as their main source of health care.

With the advancement of this amendment to the Senate, those who cannot otherwise afford these vital health services are one step closer to being left in the dark. An unplanned pregnancy can devastate educational and professional opportunities, especially for young women. They may never be able to live the life they long for.

As with many diseases, the survival rate for cancer patients is much higher the earlier it is detected. Women deprived of screening services may not know of a malignant tumor until it is too late.

Without Planned Parenthood's care, more people will undoubtedly contract an STD. Many STDs, when left untreated, can lead to sterility and life-threatening situations. And if people are unaware of an infection, there is a greater risk of spreading it to others. We all know the outcome of the HIV virus.

Cutting funding to Planned Parenthood and Title X could lead to an epidemic. It could lead to broken dreams, slammed doors. It probably will lead to chaos. Call me melodramatic, but this amendment is truly a matter of life and death, and it is unbelievable that Congress should even consider putting their citizens at such risk.

## BURSTING THE BUBBLE

### Hands and belly dancing

With strong feet rooted on the floor, her soft belly moves to music. Elegant arms frame the look of regal confidence on her face. She demands your attention and respect. She is young, mature, black, brown, white, voluptuous and svelte.



Terah Kelleher  
STAFF WRITER

As I sat at the Carolina Theatre on February 5, I saw these images. The show "Get Your Shimmy On" by Troupe Bellissima, a belly dancing troupe headed by Daliana Diane Carter-Simons, performed on stage.

The troupe's dance roots lie in the Turkish cabaret style of belly dancing but they incorporated other types of dance into their performance.

This show demonstrates a new stage in Carter-Simons' career as a dancer and teacher. She recently opened her own dance studio, Daliana Dance, on Guilford College Rd.

Instead of teaching at different gym locations, the studio brought all Carter-Simons' followers to one location and incorporated other forms of dance, including African, hip-hop, ballet, tap, jazz, lyrical, and cheerleading.

Carter-Simons, five months pregnant herself, also offers pre-natal belly dancing. The doula-trained teachers understand the special needs of a pregnant woman. This type of dance helps a woman in all stages of her pregnancy.

Carter-Simons began as a ballet dancer at age three and started belly dancing at age 11. Seven years ago, after many years of performing professionally, Carter-Simons' teaching career started at the Ragsdale YMCA and other gyms followed.

Carter-Simons thought belly dancing was a spectator sport and not something people actually wanted to learn. She admits how wrong she was. When the minimum requirement to teach a class at the YMCA was five people, Carter-Simons had 40 women show up.

"Dancers go through phases where they want to be the actual performer, and for a long time, that's what I thought I wanted to do," said Carter-Simons. "My focus now is on creating dynamite dancers. The goal is to create dancers better than I am and for people to say, 'Wow, who's your teacher?'"

Besides improving dancers' skills, these belly dancing classes help form a great connection with your body and the glorious movements that it can create.

"As you start to look at your body and at your skin, that starts the passion in the dance," said Carter-Simons. "The passion is in you, which comes out in the dance. So early on I teach that connection."

In the beginners' belly dancing class for all ages, Carter-Simons has you look at your hands and see how they move. This leads you to look at other body parts and develop an appreciation for them.

I remember watching my nieces in their beginners' belly dance class. She had the class sit in a circle and do this exercise of looking at their hands. She wanted them to see how beautiful and unique they were and to look at how they moved.

"My focus is on girls developing a comfort with their bodies and appreciation for their bodies," said Carter-Simons. "That's a beautiful thing no matter what shape, size, or color."

I am amazed by the diversity of color, background, age, and shape that flock to Daliana Dance studio. You will see beautiful ebony to alabaster skin and every shade in between. There is no age limit, dance level, or shape requirement.

"It's about developing a comfort level no matter how 'juicy' you are, no matter how many rolls you have," said Carter-Simons. "And if you got those extra rolls? What can you do with them that that 'skinny minny' can't? It's appreciating the looks of every body."